

Country and Marine Parks Board
Summary Report of the Public Relations Committee

1. Purpose

1.1 To inform members on issues discussed at the Public Relations Committee (PRC) meeting held on 21 October 2014. Major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below.

2. Progress Report on the Country Parks Education Programme 2014-15

2.1 Members were briefed on the details of the Progress Report on the Country Parks Education Programme 2014-15, which summarised the result of the activities held during April to August 2014 and reported on those to be held in the new school year from September 2014 to March 2015. They were informed that the activities held during April to August 2014 included the Country Parks Hiking and Planting Day 2014, public talks in relation to climate change, the “Seasons • Excursions” Country Parks Photography Competition and the Country Parks Volunteer Scheme. Activities to be held during September 2014 to March 2015 fell into school programmes and special programmes. School programmes included school visits, field orienteering and the “My Country Parks Waste Reduction Plan” Role Play Competition for Kindergartens, while special programmes included the Country Parks Waste Reduction Campaign, the Mountaineering Safety Promotion Day, the Professional Driver Keep-Fit Party 2014 Hiking, the Fun with Nature Carnival, roving exhibitions and the Country Parks Education Programme 2014-15 Prize Presentation Ceremony. Members remarked that the Country Parks Education Programme has been very comprehensive.

2.2 Members discussed and commented on the publicity and promotion of the Country Parks Education Programme, including the suggestion of sending promotional posters or leaflets to district council members and management committees of housing estates by mail. Their comments would be duly considered.

2.3 The Chairman suggested that the AFCD may turn the mascots Green Cascade Frog and Common Kingfisher into icons for promoting the Country Parks Waste Reduction Campaign, thereby utilising more channels to advocate waste reduction.

Her suggestion would be considered.

3. Publicity and Media Coverage

3.1 Members were briefed on the promotional and educational activities on country and marine parks for the period from 1 July to 10 October 2014, including the promotion of mountain biking safety, newspaper and radio interviews of staff of Tai Tong Forest Nursery and front line officers of country parks, precautions against hill fire during Mid-Autumn and Chung Yeung Festivals, interviews of Reef Check volunteer divers with disabilities by the news.gov.hk and a television station, a newspaper interview of winners of the Hong Kong Underwater Photo and Video Competition, the “Ocean protection starts with us” Web Banner Design Competition, the opening of the Volcano Discovery Centre, the Asia Pacific Geoparks Network - Roundtable Conference 2014, and the launch of definitive stamps on geological features. Various topics, such as the announcement by the AFCD on 1 September about the plan for the designation of Southwest Lantau Marine Park and Soko Islands Marine Park, the decision of the Advisory Council on the Environment in mid-September to conditionally accept the Environmental Impact Assessment Report of the third runway of the Hong Kong International Airport, and the interim assessment of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China next year, etc. had also been covered by the media.

3.2 Members discussed and commented on the interim assessment of the Geopark, including the suggestion to explore the possibility of adding new scenic spots within the Hong Kong Geopark in the next five-year plan. Their comments would be considered.

4. Publicity and Educational Work on Cycling and Camping Activities in Country Parks

4.1 Members were briefed on the details of the publicity and educational work undertaken by the AFCD on cycling and camping activities in country parks, as well as corresponding enforcement actions against unauthorised cycling and camping activities. They were informed that relevant messages on cycling and camping in country parks had been conveyed in the regular publicity and educational activities of country parks. To step up publicity, broadcast of Announcements in Public Interest (API) on radio and video clippings in the programme “Police Magazine” have been arranged to remind the general public that cycling and camping are only permitted at

designated sites in country parks, as well as the regulations laid down in the relevant legislations. Information signs and warning signs have been erected respectively along all designated mountain bike trails and at entrances of roads where cycling is prohibited. Publicity and educational activities focusing on cycling and camping are conducted by the AFCD staff on patrol in country parks through distributing leaflets to hikers, explaining the relevant legislations, and urging members of the public to cycle or camp at the designated sites. Other than publicity and educational work, corresponding enforcement actions are also undertaken by the AFCD against unauthorised cycling and camping activities. With due regard to the actual situation, the AFCD will take appropriate actions, such as distributing leaflets, giving advice and warning, and initiating prosecution, so that reasonable and appropriate enforcement actions can be ensured.

4.2 Members discussed and commented on the publicity and educational activities and enforcement actions of frontline officers of the AFCD regarding cycling and camping. The AFCD expressed that after consulting members, an internal guideline would be formulated for frontline officers to follow, so that frontline officers working in different districts could adopt a consistent approach in this regard. The AFCD will also report the progress of publicity and educational activities and enforcement actions to the Committee as suggested by the Chairman.

5. Presentation

5.1 This paper is prepared for members' information.

Country and Marine Parks Authority
February 2015