

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

1. Purpose

1.1 This paper aims to inform members of issues discussed at the Marine Parks Committee meeting held on 11 July 2017. Major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below.

2. Detailed Design of the Proposed Marine Park for the Integrated Waste Management Facilities Phase 1

2.1 The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) updated members on the latest development and future work of the proposed marine park for the Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWWMF) Phase 1. Members noted that the proposed marine park boundary remained the same as the boundary proposed in the 1st round stakeholder consultation.

2.2 In response to some members' suggestion to expand the boundary of the proposed marine park, EPD explained that further expansion of the boundary was not feasible because sufficient buffer distance had to be maintained from the major Traffic Separation Schemes and the Hong Kong S.A.R. boundary to provide an unrestricted vessel passage around the proposed marine park. In addition, it was required to avoid direct encroachment into the Open Sea Disposal Area at South Cheung Chau as well as the long-listed reclamation site being considered by the Civil Engineering and Development Department.

2.3 Members expressed their views on the proposed fisheries enhancement measures which included the deployment of artificial reefs (ARs) and the release of fish fry in the core area of the adjacent proposed Soko Islands Marine Park. In general, they were of the view that there should be a long-term monitoring programme to evaluate and review the effectiveness of these two measures on enhancing fisheries resources in the surrounding areas. Some members asked EPD to reconsider the suggestion of releasing fish fry of the Hong Kong Grouper and

Orange-spotted Grouper, because the salinities in South Lantau waters might not be suitable for these two species which were not originally found in the area. In addition, they worried that the release of Groupers might have impact on the existing fish community of the area because they are predators.

2.4 There was also an opinion that the release of fish fry of the commercially valuable species might attract illegal fishing, and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and Marine Police should therefore seek extra resources to strengthen patrol and law enforcement in the surrounding waters. Some members also expressed their concerns on the cumulative impact on the proposed marine park due to the nearby proposed project, such as the Hong Kong Offshore LNG Terminal.

3. Proposed Artificial Reef Deployment and Fish Fry Release in The Brothers Marine Park

3.1 The Highways Department (HyD) introduced to members their proposals to deploy ARs and release fish fry/ fingerlings in The Brothers Marine Park (BMP), as required by the Environmental Impact Assessment reports and Environmental Permit conditions set out for the operation and construction of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge - Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Project.

3.2 Members were generally concerned about the suggestion of releasing the fry/ fingerlings of the Hong Kong Grouper and Longtooth Grouper. They worried that it might bring adverse impact on the existing fish community of the area because they are predators. They advised HyD to review the current fisheries resources of the western waters and re-consider the suitable fish species for the fish fry release exercise.

3.3 Members in general had no strong opinion on the deployment of ARs, but they stressed the importance of having a long-term monitoring programme to evaluate and review the effectiveness of the proposed fisheries enhancement measures. The Chairman also gave some comments and suggestions on the material and structure of ARs.

3.4 After discussion, the Committee suggested HyD to focus on the deployment of ARs at this stage. HyD should proceed with the AR deployment first

and seek further advice from members on the fish fry release proposal at a later stage. HyD was also advised to take into account members' views given in the meeting in finalising the AR proposal before formally submitting it to AFCD for approval. On request of the Chairman, HyD agreed to come back and report the findings/ results of AR deployment at a suitable juncture during the monitoring period.

4. Marine Traffic Management for Three Runway System Project Construction Vessels

4.1 The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) informed members of the marine traffic management for the Three-Runway System (3RS) Project construction vessels in general and under emergency situation or during the passage of typhoon.

4.2 Members noted the establishment of the Marine Traffic Control Centre for the monitoring of the construction and transportation vessels of the 3RS project. Members also noted that for the reason of marine safety, mega size 3RS construction vessels might be required to anchor at the mooring sites in BMP (i.e. Sham Shui Kok Anchorage No. 1 & 2) after exhausting available berthing spaces in the nearby River Trade Terminal under emergency situation during the typhoon season in 2017 and 2018. On the confirmation from AAHK that the use of the mooring sites in BMP is the last resort and such an activity is temporary in nature, members had no strong views on the proposal.

5. Advice sought

5.1 This paper is prepared for members' information.