

## **COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS BOARD**

### **Summary Report of the Marine Parks Committee**

#### **1. Purpose**

1.1 This paper aims to inform members of the major issues discussed at the Marine Parks Committee (MPC) meeting held on 14 July 2020.

#### **2. Proposed Marine Park for the Expansion of Hong Kong International Airport into a Three-runway System**

2.1 The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) attended the meeting and briefed members the results of stakeholder consultations, and the proposed design and management plan of the proposed marine park for the expansion of Hong Kong International Airport into a Three-Runway System (3RS) (hereinafter referred to as “the proposed marine park”). The proposed marine park would connect with the existing Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park and The Brothers Marine Park to form a large marine park matrix in northern Lantau waters for better protection of Chinese White Dolphins (CWDs) and their habitats.

2.2 During the discussion session, AAHK answered members’ questions concerning the proposed marine park design and fisheries enhancement measures, and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) responded to questions on the fishing permit for the proposed marine park and other fisheries management measures. Members generally considered that increasing fisheries resources was crucial for the recovery of CWDs in the waters in question. Therefore, they supported AAHK to carry out fish restocking and deployment of artificial reef trials in the vicinity and they advised AAHK to closely monitor and evaluate the performance of these fisheries enhancement measures. Members also suggested AFCD to strengthen cooperation with the relevant authorities in the Mainland in this aspect and to consider measures to manage the fishing effort in the proposed marine

park, such as control on the types of fishing gear through imposing conditions on the fishing permits.

2.3 Members noted that AAHK would consult the Country and Marine Parks Board on the finalised design and management plan of the proposed marine park and targeted to designate the proposed marine park in 2024 to tie in with the full operation of the 3RS.

### **3. Consultancy Study on Enhancement of the Recreation and Education Potential of Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park**

3.1 AFCD and its consultant briefed members on the progress of the consultancy study on enhancement of the recreation and education potential of Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (the Study), which included the key findings of the stakeholder engagement workshop and the initial enhancement proposals. AFCD advised that the stakeholders generally supported the Study and agreed that conservation element should be duly considered in developing the enhancement proposals.

3.2 Considering the likely increase in the number of visitors following the enhancement of visitor services, members were concerned about the carrying capacity of Hoi Ha Wan. They pointed out that most visitors took buses/ minibuses from Sai Kung that passed through Pak Tam Chung to reach Hoi Ha Wan at present, and they advised that the related traffic and environmental issues should be taken into consideration. Apart from transportation, they also advised that other supporting facilities and services in the area around Hoi Ha Wan, such as toilets, sewage treatment facilities and mobile network coverage should be improved in light of potential increase in visitors. Moreover, some members suggested the consultants should explore the opportunities of engaging fishermen and/or the local community to organise or support the proposed recreational activities, such as kayaking, guided tours and water expeditions.

3.3 AFCD and its consultant emphasised that the primary objective of the Study was to enhance the quality of the educational and recreational services to promote marine conservation. The number of visitors to Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park and the new Hoi Ha Visitor Centre would also be closely monitored. Public access to Hoi Ha Wan could be further improved through liaison with the Transport Department and minibus service provider. Furthermore, AFCD would also study the hiking trails or

marine route nearby with a view to diverting the visitors flow to other nearby sight-seeing and/or departure points. Nevertheless, some long-term planning and engineering issues, such as the sewerage infrastructure for the entire drainage basin around Hoi Ha Wan as mentioned by members, might have policy implications and were beyond the ambit of this Study. The consultant informed members that they would next evaluate the environmental acceptability, public perceptions, sustainability, financial viability and overall operation of the initial enhancement proposals, and based on the evaluation results to form a list of recommended proposals for further assessment.

#### **4. Consultancy Study on Reef Fish Diversity in Hong Kong – Results and Conclusion**

4.1 The study team from the State Key Laboratory of Marine Pollution, City University of Hong Kong, briefed members on the findings and conclusion of the consultancy study on the diversity and distribution of reef fishes in Hong Kong, as well as recommendations for the long-term monitoring and management on the reef fish communities in Hong Kong. In brief, the study recorded 287 reef fish species at the 26 study sites in Hong Kong and it revealed that the local reef fish community was characterised by the dominance of low-level predators and the sizes of the recorded species were generally small. Greater reef fish diversity and higher relative biomass of top predators were found at some locations inside the marine parks and marine reserve. Besides, the study observed clear spatial, seasonal and diurnal patterns in reef fish assemblages and found that underwater visual census appeared to be a better census method for reef fish monitoring in Hong Kong.

4.2 Members appreciated the efforts of the study team and agreed with their recommendations concerning reef fish management and scientific research. Moreover, they suggested that AFCD could combine the data collected from the study and the previous fisheries resources surveys conducted by the Department for analysis, which might provide some insights on the changes in reef fish abundance.

#### **5. Advice sought**

5.1 This paper is prepared for members' information.

Country and Marine Parks Authority  
October 2020