

BSAP Business Focus Group Report

Objective

The primary objective of the Focus Group is to disseminate the BSAP concept and process information to the business sector and to encourage feedback/participation from the sector.

Scope & Methodology

The Focus Group is led by Mr Samuel Kwong, member of the Awareness, Mainstreaming and Sustainable Use Working Group. An inception meeting was conducted on 12 November 2013 with representatives from the chambers of commerce, NGOs, private sector and BSAP steering committee. The organizations contributed to the meeting are:

- Australian Chamber of Commerce
- British Chamber of Commerce
- Canadian Chamber of Commerce
- Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce
- Business Environment Council
- Civic Exchange
- World Wildlife Fund Hong Kong
- Swire Pacific
- Pacific Andes

The participants could relate sustainability (air quality, waste, climate change and natural capital services etc) well with business operations but did not see direct and significant relevancy of biodiversity in Hong Kong to business. Only limited business activities might have direct impact to local biodiversity e.g. real estate development in rural area. However, the supply chain that supports most business operations in Hong Kong could have significant impacts to biodiversity in the region and the world. These impacts could eventually affect local biodiversity and quality of life.

It was suggested that the BSAP concept be introduced to the business sector through the chambers of commerce and professional societies in Hong Kong. A lead-by-example approach would be adopted by inviting early movers to share experience on how business could incorporate biodiversity considerations into business process. One of the aims of the forum is to develop a seminar module and business champions who can disseminate the message at future events in appropriate languages and relevant focuses to specific audience. Engagement exercise could be rolled out to professional association and SMEs using the module and with the help of the champions.

Outcomes

A discussion forum for the business sector was conducted on 13 February 2014 at BEC Auditorium. Approximately 100 participated mainly from the business sector. The event was supported by the chambers of commerce (Australian, British, Canadian and Hong Kong General) and Business Environment Council (BEC). There were two panel sessions: one on corporate & supply chain; and the other on development project & finance.

The speakers include: Undersecretary for the Environment - HKSAR Government, Convenor of Awareness Mainstreaming and Sustainable Use Working Group, and representatives from Hong Kong Airport Authority, Swire Pacific, Pacific Andes, Credit Suisse, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Hong Kong Institute of Environmental Impact Assessment (HKIEIA) and BEC. The programme of the Forum is shown in Appendix 1.

Response was good and discussions were fruitful. Two written feedback forms were received. Other feedbacks were collected during the panel discussions and Q&A sessions. Participants showed interest to know more about BSAP and suggested ways to encourage public participation of the process.

Summary of Discussions & Feedbacks

The key issues of discussions and feedbacks from the Forum are as follows:

- Transformation from sustainability as a responsibility to business opportunity is ongoing gradually but the majority of the business sector is still profit oriented.
- Financial sector and supply chain companies are amongst the early movers in adopting biodiversity policy into operations. The level of execution varies and is usually low.
- Business is expected to drive changes faster more than governments because of the possession of talent, resources, contacts and employment power. Business can be one of the solutions to a sustainable society, not an obstacle. A sustainable society will generate opportunities for business development. Business perspective is important in the BSAP process.
- BSAP can help in establishing baseline/priorities to the society and provide information for a better informed debate on potential conflicts between development and conservation.
- Communication between government and business sector should be a real partnership showing the benefits of business in biodiversity instead of regulations and enforcement.
- It is necessary to have accurate biodiversity mapping and priorities in Hong Kong. Outline Zone Plan is inadequate to determine the biodiversity value of the agricultural zoned land.
- BSAP consultation and engagement should provide a clear framework, specific topics for evaluation and a timeframe for feedback return to facilitate discussions.
- Some sustainable supply chain model has shown to be successful e.g. FSC. Further roll out of the model may require legislative support and capital incentive.
- Biodiversity is an unfamiliar term to business/general public. It relates more with micro-organisms and wildlife usually. Terms such as sustainability, ecological services and natural capital etc usually are better understood and more accurate descriptions of the core subject of BSAP.
- BSAP outreach to business sector is encouraged. Support and knowhow transfer are useful for the business sector. Engagement of the business through the chambers is supported.



The Environment Bureau and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department have embarked on an exercise to develop a city-level Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP). As a government-community collaboration, BSAP will be developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity (an international treaty on the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits deriving from the use of genetic resources).

In this Business Focus Group Discussion Forum, there will be an introductory video on what biodiversity is and how it is relevant to Hong Kong, an introduction of the BSAP process, and sharing of business, NGO and environmental practitioners' views.

You are invited to join and share your views and aspirations and help formulate the action plan.

Speakers

- Ms Christine Loh, Under Secretary for the Environment, HKSAR Government
- Mr Mike Kilburn, Steering Committee, BSAP
- Ms Jacqui Dixon, Group CSR & Sustainability Manager, Pacific Andes
- Mr Ben Ridley, Asia Pacific Head, Sustainability Affairs, Credit Suisse AG
- Mr C W Cheung, Head of Footprint Programme, WWF Hong Kong
- Mr Henry Leung, Chairman, Hong Kong Institute of Environmental Impact Assessment
- Mr Samuel Kwong, Group Sustainable Development Manager, John Swire & Sons HK Ltd
- Mr Hendrik Rosenthal, Director – Policy and Research, Business Environment Council

Details & Registration

Date:	13 February 2014 (Thursday)
Time:	9:30am – 11:30am (registration starts at 9:00am)
Fee:	Free-of-charge
Venue:	BEC Auditorium, G/F, 77 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong (Opposite to Festival Walk, Kowloon Tong MTR Exit C2)
Language:	English

For further information and registration, please contact Ms Amy Hung of John Swire & Sons HK Ltd (T 2840 8881 | E amyhung@jsshk.com).

Note: Alistair Monument, Asia Pacific Regional Director, FSC also joined as one of the speakers.