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Supplementary note to  
the “Final Report of  
the Sustainable Use,  
Ecological Footprint  
and Ecosystem  
Services Focus Group”

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Date: 12 September 2014

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## Why this Supplementary Note?

Based on the discussion in the last BSAP WG meeting, the Sustainable Use, Ecological Footprint and Ecosystem Services Focus Group is submitting this supplementary note to provide additional information and updates to the “Final Report of the Sustainable Use, Ecological Footprint and Ecosystem Services Focus Group”, (Referred to as “the Report” in this document). We believe this is of particular importance when it comes to the prioritization of recommendations as proposed by the Report.

## With reference to Section I – Ecological Footprint

### *Strong Relevance of Ecological Footprint to CBD BSAP*

The theme of Aichi Biodiversity Target 4 is about sustainable consumption and production. The target is for a range of stakeholders “to have taken steps (by 2020) to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits”. One of the possible indicators as suggested by CBD is Ecological Footprint<sup>1</sup>, which directly measures the level of natural resources any nation or city utilizes. The Ecological Footprint has been calculated for Hong Kong by WWF since 2008, and the tools have also been widely used by a range of nations and cities worldwide, as detailed in Appendix I in the Report. Ecological Footprint, as a tool, is powerful to act as an indicator for Hong Kong’s CBD BSAP achievement for this Target.

A recent issue of European Commission’s Science for Environment Policy<sup>2</sup> and the research by Galli *et al* (2014)<sup>3</sup> reported that, while Ecological Footprint could be further improved before a holistic use at global scale, it is relevant for Parties to the CBD to use at a national level. While in the NGO sector, WWF uses Ecological Footprint as a key indicator to measure the success of its global Footprint Goal, which is to reduce humanity’s global footprint in areas of energy, carbon, and consumption of a range of natural resources. The analysis in WWF latest research, which was shared with participants in the 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, reported that Ecological Footprint is one of eleven indicators common to the measurement system of both WWF and Aichi Target<sup>4</sup>.

The CBD-mandated Biodiversity Indicator Partnership brings expertise from worldwide to work on indicator development to provide most comprehensive information on biodiversity trends. A total of 12 headline indicators have been identified by CBD Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicator for

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/doc/strategic-plan/targets/T4-quick-guide-en.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/362na2.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Galli, A., Wackernagel, M., Iha, K. and Lazarus, E. (2014) Ecological Footprint: implications for biodiversity. *Biological Conservation* 173, 121 – 132.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-18/information/sbstta-18-inf-13-en.pdf>

the Strategic Plan, and Ecological Footprint fits in as a primary indicator for Target 4<sup>5,6</sup>. In addition, Ecological Footprint is also suggested as a relevant indicator to Aichi Targets 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 14<sup>7</sup>.

### *Wide Adoption of the Ecological Footprint by Governments around the World*

In recent months, there has been increasing adoption of Ecological Footprint in different countries. Information below is to supplement the 23 countries/territories that have adopted Ecological Footprint as detailed in Appendix I : National Use of the Ecological Footprint in the Report (p. 19-29).

#### Morocco

Morocco is going to work with relevant NGO to review their national 15-year strategy for sustainable development in agriculture, named Plan Maroc Vert, by applying the concept of Ecological Footprint. Morocco is interested to comprehensively assess to what extent the plan contributes to the sustainability of the agriculture sector as well as a society-wide transition towards sustainability<sup>8</sup>.

#### United Arab Emirates

To help UAE Ecological Footprint Initiative to achieve its mission and reduce its national Ecological Footprint, as a first step UAE announced its Lighting Standard, which prevents low-quality indoor light bulbs from entering the market, and instead ensures that light bulbs available are energy-efficient, high quality, safe, have limited hazardous chemicals and can be safely disposed of. High-efficiency light bulbs that will be available in the country include CFLs, LEDs and Halogens. All lighting products entering the UAE and manufactured locally must include 3<sup>rd</sup> party product certifications. Any bulbs that do not meet the minimum requirements will be excluded<sup>9</sup>.

Based on the analysis, it is strongly recommended that the Hong Kong Government takes lead in measuring our Ecological Footprint and start to make the community become aware of the impacts of our “over-consumption” lifestyle, and the consequences of Ecological Footprint overshoot. Forging ahead, the Government should make use of this holistic measure as one of the guiding principles when establishing the city’s strategic and sustainable development plan, and formulate a time-frame and roadmap to help Hong Kong reduce its Ecological Footprint.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bjindicators.net/globalindicators>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/ind/ahteg-sp-ind-01/official/ahteg-sp-ind-01-02-en.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/sp/indicators/factsheets/?id=17>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/newsletter/w\\_det/ecological\\_footprint\\_in\\_action](http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/newsletter/w_det/ecological_footprint_in_action)

<sup>9</sup>

[http://uae.panda.org/what\\_we\\_do/reducing\\_footprint/ecological\\_footprint\\_initiative/uae\\_lighting\\_standard/?desktop=1](http://uae.panda.org/what_we_do/reducing_footprint/ecological_footprint_initiative/uae_lighting_standard/?desktop=1)

With reference to Section II – Sustainable Use of Biodiversity

Relevant experts were involved in the discussion to further prioritize those commodities stated under Part B1-5. When undertaking the re-prioritization, three principals were taken into account to determine which of the commodities should warrant immediate attention and focus.

- 1) Importance in the role of Hong Kong relative to the global consumption
- 2) The conservation status of species involved, for example with reference to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
- 3) Urgency, for example, the likely extent to which the situation would worsen if proposed recommendations are not in place in next 5 years

Those prioritized commodities as listed in the Report are further prioritized into 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tier groups, for which the former is determined to warrant immediate focus and attention:

*1<sup>st</sup> tier group*

- Seafood Wild (Wild Caught) (Excluding Shark / LRFF)
- Live Reef Food Fish (LRFF)
- Sharks
- Paper
- Traditional Chinese Medicine (Wild)

*2<sup>nd</sup> tier group*

- Seafood (Full-Cycle Farmed) (Excluding Shark / LRFF)
- Manta and Devil Ray Gill Raker / Gill Plate / Ray Fins
- Beef
- Timber

*Note: although Manta and Devil Ray Gill Raker / Gill Plate / Ray Fins is now put into the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier group, given the lack of research regarding the trade in this commodity in Hong Kong, it is recommended that research relevant to its trade should still be regarded as a priority as an action (details on this research is included in the Strategy and Actions 1, p. 52 of this commodity in the Report).*

Having rearranged the commodities, however, it should be emphasized that it does not mean that those commodities re-listed into the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier group are not important. Rather, as envisioned by the Focus Group, it implies the huge resources and focus needed by the Hong Kong Government to address these issues and such fine-tuned prioritization would help the Government to more effectively and comprehensively implement the recommendations proposed for those 1<sup>st</sup> tier group commodities first. Once implemented, the Government should then move toward those commodities in the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier group to address the issue.

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