

Environmental Permit No. EP-388/2010

Development of a Bathing Beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po

Independent Environmental Checker Verification


Reference Document/Plan

Document/ Plan to be Certified / Verified:	Ninth Month Seahorse Post-Translocation Monitoring Report
Date of Report:	19 January 2021
Date received by IEC:	22 February 2021

Reference EP Condition / Updated EM&A Manual Requirement

Environmental Permit Condition / Updated EM&A Manual Reference	Section 7.2.3.9
After translocation is completed, the reception site shall be monitored regularly by the qualified Fish Specialist over a period of one year, following the same survey methodology for the pre-translocation monitoring.	
The Post-translocation Monitoring Report shall be submitted monthly which shall present findings of all seahorse surveys undertaken in the reporting month. Each monthly Post-translocation Monitoring Report shall be submitted within two weeks of completion of the last seahorse survey in the reporting month.	

IEC Verification

I hereby verify that the above referenced document/ plan complies with the above referenced condition / section of EP-388/2010 / Updated EM&A Manual	
Mr Terence Fong	Date: 23 February 2021
Independent Environmental Checker	

Our ref: P:\Projects\0206709 IEC for Lung Mei EM&A\07_ET Submission\36_Seahorse post translocation report 9th-12th Month

Our Ref: TCS00874/16/300/L0675

Welcome Construction Co., Ltd.

Flat 01, 19/F, Westley Square,
48 Hoi Yuen Road,
Kwun Tong, Kowloon.

Attn: Mr. William Lam

22 February 2021

By e-mail

Dear Sir,

**Re: CEDD Contract No. CV/2012/05 - Bathing Beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po
Ninth Month Seahorse Post-Translocation Report**

With reference to the revised Ninth Month Seahorse Post-Translocation Report dated 19 January 2021, we have no adverse comment on the revised report. We herewith certify the captioned submission in accordance with Section 7.2.3.9 of the Updated EM&A Manual.

Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact the undersigned at Tel: 2959-6059 or Fax: 2959-6079 or E-mail: twtam@fordbusiness.com.

Yours sincerely,

For and on Behalf of

Action-United Environmental Services & Consulting



T. W. Tam
Environmental Team Leader
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CEDD
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Mr. K F Chan
Mr. Terence Fong

via email
via email

Development of a Bathing Beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po
Environmental Permit No. EP-388/2010

REPORT
NINTH MONTH SEAHORSE POST-
TRANSLOCATION MONITORING



ECO-ENVIRO CONSULTANTS COMPANY
October 2018

Revised on 19 January 2021

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1. Introduction

1.1 The ex-Provisional Regional Council (ex-PRC) considered that one swimming pool complex in Tai Po was insufficient and hence suggested developing a bathing beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po. Therefore, on 12 May 1998, the Culture, Recreation and Sports Committee of ex-PRC approved funding for the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) to study the feasibility of developing an artificial beach at Lung Mei. The Feasibility Study, which commenced in December 1999 and completed in mid-2001, concluded that it was technically viable to construct a bathing beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po.

1.2 There is no beach facility in the east region of the New Territories, except in the Sai Kung District, which is very far from Tai Po District. Moreover, the existing swimming facility in the Tai Po areas could not satisfy the demand for a bathing beach. Therefore, the public has been requesting repeatedly to the LCSD for a beach development in the Tai Po District.

1.3 In light of the above, the Tai Po District Council (TPDC) strongly requested for the development of a bathing beach at Lung Mei and members of the TPDC urged for early implementation of the Project. In a Legislative Council case conference on 20 April 2004, Members requested the Government to accord priority to this Project.

1.4 The Project will involve the construction of a 200m long beach with two groynes, which includes dredging and sandfilling. Translocation of marine animals including seahorse *Hippocampus kuda* within the dredging and sandfilling will be required before the commencement of any construction work.

1.5 According to the updated EM&A manual of “Development of a Bathing Beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po Environmental, Drainage and Traffic Impact Assessments – Investigation – CE 59/2005 (EP)”, Seahorse translocation work required to be conducted and it was performed on 17 to 22 January 2018. Followed by successful seahorse translocation work, post-translocation monitoring was started according the approved method statement (Seahorse Translocation Plan (Version 1, 11 January 2018) refers). The main objective of the monitoring will be focus both on the 2 translocated seahorses as well as the seahorse population in Ting Kok East. This report represents the findings of the ninth month seahorse post-translocation monitoring work conducted at Ting Kok East reception site.

2. Methodology

2.1 Followed by successfully translocated two female seahorses from Lung Mei to Ting Kok East, a 7 days post-translocation monitoring was conducted at Ting Kok East reception site; then twice per week for the second to fourth week of the first month. Weekly monitoring will be conducted for the second to fourth month and monthly monitoring survey afterwards. During the post-translocation monitoring, the following surveys were undertaken to search for the tagged seahorses #051 and #052..

(a) Intertidal Survey

2.2 Intertidal survey for seahorses was undertaken by active search at the reception site at Ting Kok East by diving survey using SCUBA diving. Active searches of seahorses were conducted during both day and night time when the tidal level is generally >1.5 m CD, and thus a total of two active search events were undertaken at the reception site.

2.3 The active search covered the intertidal and shallow subtidal zones (-0.5 m CD to 2 m CD) at Ting Kok East reception site. Direct observations and active search of seahorses were conducted in all major habitat/substrate types and in potential hiding places such as among litter/debris, inside holes/crevices and under cobbles/boulders. Hand-netting was used to collect seahorses for data collection such as Torso length and sign of injury. Head light and hand torch were used during the night time surveys. The effort of searching was standardized to facilitate comparison of occurrence of seahorse using the number per standard unit effort approach (i.e. number of man-hours). Two survey events were conducted (in two days). Each survey event included not less than three man-hours of day survey and three man-hours of night survey. At least a total of 12 man-hours would be spent over the two survey events.. The actual man-hours spent during each survey was recorded.

(b) Subtidal Dive Survey

2.4 Standard Underwater Visual Census (UVC) (AIMS, 1994)¹ surveys were conducted at the reception site at Ting Kok East at a depth range of -0.5 m CD to -1.5 m CD. Four subtidal dive surveys were conducted, two in day time and two in night time. UVC was performed on belt transects of 5 m width covering the whole survey area. UVC surveys were performed at least 10 minutes after deployment of the buoys

and transects. For night time surveys, only underwater qualitative surveys within the survey area were performed. Two survey events were conducted (in two days). Each survey event included not less than four man-hours of day survey and four man-hours of night survey. At least a total of 16 man-hours would be spent over the two survey events. The actual man-hours spent during each survey was recorded. Six SCUBA divers were parallel to each other and dived in a zigzag route (Figure 2) within the survey area to locate the tagged seahorses #051 and #052 during each subtidal dive survey. Since the two tagged seahorses #051 and #052 were not recorded during the 2 days post-translocation monitoring survey at Ting Kok East reception site while three seahorses were recorded during the First 7 days post-translocation monitoring at depth of more than -1.5 m CD, divers extended the original survey area (Figure 1) away from Ting Kok East towards the deeper depth as shown in Figure 2.

(c) Data Collection

2.5 After translocation was completed, the reception site was monitored regularly by the qualified fish expert over a period of one year, following the same survey methodology for the pre-translocation monitoring.

The following information was provided in the post-translocation monitoring report when seahorse #051, #052 or any other seahorse were found:

- Seahorse species recorded;
- Seahorse abundance;
- Size structure;
- Sex ratio;
- Population estimates through mark/ recapture of the tagged seashores;
- Observation of any temporal / seasonal fluctuations;
- Reproductive status;
- Habitat preferences; and
- Presence of putative pairs.

2.6 There would be at least 28 man-hours spent on the survey (12 hours from intertidal and 16 hours from subtidal dive survey). Tagged seahorses #051 and #052 were released to their natural habitat after data collection. Specimens were handled with care to reduce disturbance to seahorses as low as reasonably practicable. At least two photos, comprising both side profile of the seahorse and close-up of the side profile of the head, were taken. Video footage was also taken for each individual countered.

3. Results

3.1 The ninth month seahorse post-translocation monitoring work was done during the period of 15th and 16th October 2018. The weather conditions for the 2 days post-translocation monitoring work were shown in Appendix A.

3.2 Post-translocation surveys were conducted at the Ting Kok East reception site with six divers including fish expert. The GPS coordinates of the four corners at the survey area were shown in Table 1.

Table 1 GPS Coordinates at Ting Kok East Reception Site

Points	Ting Kok East Reception Site	
A	N 22'28"03.74	E 114'13"10.66
B	N 22'28"03.77	E 114'13"17.54
C	N 22'28"56.60	E 114'13"11.26
D	N 22'28"56.50	E 114'13"18.76

3.3 A total of at least 14 man-hours were done each day during the two days of survey (Table 2) with 6 divers including the fish expert. Details of diver survey man-hours were shown in Table 2.

3.4 The two tagged seahorses #051 and #052 were not recorded during the 2 days post-translocation monitoring survey at Ting Kok East reception site.

3.5 Similar to the Eighth Month Monitoring, lots of fishing nets were found along the survey area underwater this month. Fishing boats also appeared inside the survey area occasionally.

Table 2 Total Man-Hours of intertidal and subtidal survey during the 2 days Post-Translocation Monitoring at Ting Kok Reception Site

	15-10-18	16-10-18
Day Survey	Survey Time	
Intertidal survey	3 hours	3 hours
Subtidal Survey	4 hours	4 hours
Total Man-hours for Day Survey	7 Hours	7 Hours
Night Survey	Survey Time/Diver	
Intertidal survey	3 hours	3 hours
Subtidal Survey	4 hours	4 hours
Total Man-hours for Day Survey	7 Hours	7 Hours
Total Man-hours for Two Days Survey	28 Hours	

4. Conclusion

4.1 The ninth month seahorse post-translocation monitoring survey was conducted on 15th and 16th October 2018. A total of 28 man-hours with 6 divers including fish expert were conducted inside the Ting Kok East reception site as well as area outside the proposed boundary. After ninth months of the translocation, the two translocated seahorse might have moved away from the survey boundary and settled somewhere else.

4.2 Monthly post-translocation monitoring will be continued to search for the tagged seahorse in the coming month. Also coming post-translocation monitoring will again focus in the subtidal region that deeper than -1.5 m CD and the searching area will be extended outside the reception site as well.

4.3 Since lots of underwater fish nets as well as fishing boats were recorded in the ninth month seahorse post-translocation monitoring, special attention must be paid to the dive safety of all divers.

5. References

1. Australian Institute of Marine Science. 1994. Survey Manual for Tropical Marine Resources 2nd Edition: Coral Reef Fish Visual Census, p86-92



Figure 1. Original Post-Translocation Monitoring Survey Route at Ting Lok East

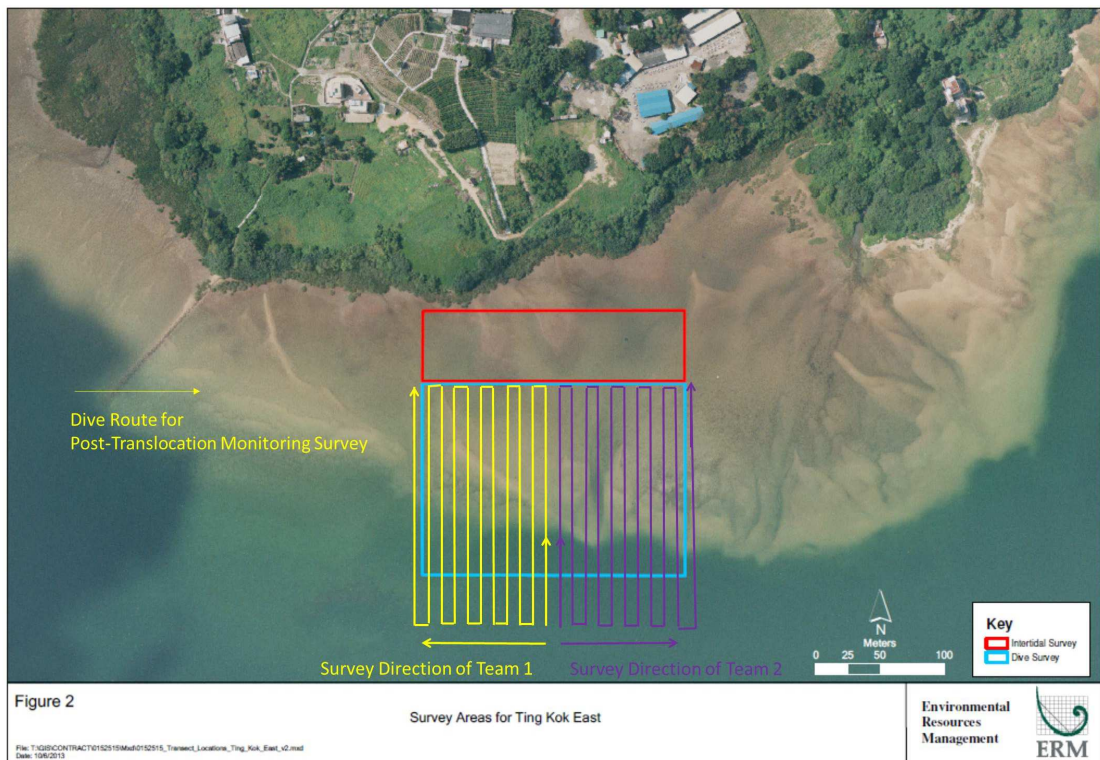


Figure 2. Ninth Month Post-Translocation Survey Route at Ting Kok East

Appendix A Weather Condition at Ting Kok East during Ninth Month Post-Translocation Monitoring Survey

Date	Weather Condition	Water Temperature (°C)	Underwater Visibility (m)
15 October 2018	Cloudy with showers, Southwest Force 3 to 4	23	Less than 0.5
16 October 2018	Cloudy with showers, Southwest Force 4	24	Less than 0.5

Appendix B-1 Local Seahorses Recorded at Ting Kok East during Ninth Month Post-Translocation Monitoring Surveys

Seahorse #	Species	Sex	Reproductive Status	Torso Length (cm)	Total Length (cm) (Body + Head)	Sighting Location	Depth (m CD)	Holdfast	Proximity to the nearest seahorse	Sign of stress or injury

Appendix B-2 Seahorses Information at Ting Kok East during Ninth Month Post-Translocation Monitoring Surveys

Sex ratio	Population estimates through mark/recapture of the tagged seashores;	Observation of any temporal / seasonal fluctuations;	Habitat preferences	Presence of putative pairs

THE END