

JOB NO.: TCS00694/13

AGREEMENT NO. CE 45/2008 (CE) LIANTANG/HEUNG YUEN WAI BOUNDARY CONTROL POINT AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

ECOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT FOR THE WOODLAND COMPENSATION AREA (MARCH TO APRIL 2017)

PREPARED FOR CIVIL ENGINEERING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (CEDD)

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Version	n Date Remarks				
1	12 May 2017	First Submission			
2	19 May 2017	Amended according to the IEC's comments on 17 and 19 May 2017			
3	9 June 2017	Amended according to the IEC's comments on 25 May 2017			



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12 June 2017

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By Email & Post

Attention: Mr Simon LEUNG

Dear Sirs

Agreement No. CE 45/2008 (CE) Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point and Associated Works Independent Environmental Checker – Investigation Bimonthly Ecological Monitoring Report for Woodland Compensation Area (No. 4) – March to April 2017

With reference to the Bimonthly Ecological Monitoring Report for Woodland Compensation Area No. 4 for March 2017 to April (Version 3) certified by the ET Leader, please be noted that we have no adverse comments on the captioned submission. We herewith verify the captioned submission in accordance with Section 8.3.2.2 of the EM&A Manual.

Thank you for your attention and please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned on tel. 3995-8120 or by email to antony.wong@smec.com; or our Mr Man CHEUNG on tel. 3995 8132 or by email to man.cheung@smec.com.

Yours faithfully for and on behalf of SMEC Asia Limited

Antony WONG

Independent Environmental Checker

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL

- 1.1.1 The "Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point and Associated Works Project" (hereinafter referred to as "the Project") comprises a new Boundary Control Point (BCP) proposed at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai (LT/HYW), its connecting road and other associated works; and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report (Register No.:AEIAR-161/2011) of the Project has identified that ~6.2ha of secondary woodlands will be directly lose due to the construction of the portals of tunnels and some sections of the connecting road. Subsequently, creation of a 18.6 ha compensatory woodland at Cheung Shan has been recommended in the EIA report to avoid residual ecological impacts from the Project.
- 1.1.2 Under the Environmental Permit (EP-404/2011/D), an updated Woodland Compensation Plan (WCP) detailed with the planting strategy and the subsequent maintenance and monitoring requirements of the compensatory woodland has been submitted and approved by the Authority in the 4th Quarter of 2015.
- 1.1.3 The woodland compensation include an initial planting phase and enhancement planting phase over a 6 years period on the grassland and shrubland at Cheung Shan, i.e., the "Woodland Compensatory Area" (WCA) as shown in the **Drawing No.** 60212563/SK7037 of the WCP and included here as *Appendix A*; and the planting works fall within the work scope of Contract No. CV/2013/08 Liantang/ Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point Site Formation and Infrastructure Works Contract 6.
- 1.1.4 As part of the EM&A's requirements of the Project, this submission presents the findings of the 4^{th} session of vegetation monitoring according to the latest status of the initial planting phase (refer to the *Appendix B* for details) and cover the Reporting Period from March to April 2017.

2. MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

2.1 MONITORING PROGRAM OF THE INITIAL AND ENHANCEMENT PLANTING PHASES

- 2.1.1 According to the implementation program and Section 6.5 of the WCP, the monitoring frequency for the first year of the initial and the enhancement planting phases would be bi-monthly and subsequently reduced to quarterly from the second year onward.
- 2.1.2 Change of monitoring frequency if needed will be advised by the Project Ecologist of the ET and approved by Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (ACD) before implementation.

2.2 MONITORING METHODOLOGY

- 2.2.1 An inspection walk monitoring by means of "transect route" and "direct observation" has been undertaken within the WCP as such to provide an overview and observe the general condition of the WCA; After due considerations of the latest planting arrangement within the WCA, the potential trampling damage to the planted seedlings, as well as the limitations in visibility, site access and safety concern when undertaking the monitoring among the steep hillslope, the transect routes has been selected to cover all representative areas where planting has been undertaken within the WCA as far as practicable.
- 2.2.2 The transect routes are illustrated in **Appendix C**, and the following observations have been made during the inspection walk:
 - Weather condition during the time of monitoring
 - The general condition of the WCA, including any signs of anthropogenic or natural disturbance/events (such as landslide, lighting strikes, wildlife damage) that has affected the health condition of the planted seedlings, or regeneration or invasive of grassy or self-seeded weedy plants that would or have affected the establishment of the planted vegetation
 - The general health condition of each planted species graded in "Good", "Fair" or "Poor" with the following criteria:
 - i) Phenology signs of any abnormality in the phenology of the species (such as abnormal flowering/fruiting/ leaf shedding)
 - ii) Foliage colour, size and general appearance, signs and severity of insect and fungal infection
 - iii) Branches presence and extent of die-back, and signs and severity of insect and fungal infection
 - iv) Stem/Trunk signs and severity of cavities or internal/external decay; signs and severity of insect infection and mechanical damage
- 2.2.3 Since the monitoring approach adopted for the transect inspection, i.e., "*direct observations*", would not yield any quantitative information, the survival rate (%) of the planted seedling will be evaluated from the results collected from the quadrat sampling as detailed in next section.

2.3 QUADRAT SAMPLING

2.3.1 A sampling approach has been proposed in the WCP to monitor the survival rate of the planted seedlings by the use of nine 20mx20m quadrats which are to be evenly located within the planted area of the WCA. Based on the latest planting schedule and planting arrangement/pattern provided by the contractor (see **Appendix B**), as well as the local topography of the planted area within the WCA, the practicality in accessing, placing and monitoring nine 20m x 20m fixed quadrats within the planted area of the WCA has been extensively reviewed, 2 of the monitoring quadrats are fixed on the ridgeline of Cheung Shan and 7 of them are located on the north-facing slope of the WCA (see



Appendix C).

- 2.3.2 Information collected within each sampling unit include:
 - General condition of the sampling quadrat especially those factors that would or have found affected the survival rate of the planted vegetation, including biological or environmental factors (such as inter-specific competition as well as signs of stress from water, heat, or pest and disease, etc)
 - The total number of established seedlings for each planted tree and shrub species
 - Health condition of each planted species graded in "Good", "Fair" or "Poor" with the following criteria:
 - i) Phenology signs of any abnormality in the phenology of the species (such as abnormal flowering/fruiting/ leaf shedding)
 - ii) Foliage colour, size and general appearance, signs and severity of insect and fungal infection
 - iii) Branches presence and extent of die-back, and signs and severity of insect and fungal infection
 - iv) Stem/Trunk signs and severity of cavities or internal/external decay; signs and severity of insect infection and mechanical damage
- 2.3.3 Since the quantity of seedlings planted for each species within a particular area (including the sampling units) would be varied and subject to the constraints imposed by the local site condition (e.g., the steepness and presence of rocky outcrops or existing woody vegetation); the survival rate of the planted species will be evaluated against the data collected from the first monitoring session in which 20m x 20m quadrats were applied for the initial planting phase; and if needed the implementation of the measures as detailed in the "Trigger and Action Levels" specified in the **Table 3** of the WCP would be recommended (included here as **Table 1** below).

Parameters	Trigger and	Action Plan
Parameters General Health Condition of planted species (i.e. good/fair/poor; based on parameters e.g. wilting, insect attack, disease, fungal infection, browsing damage)	Action Level Trigger Level: % of individual plant species in poor health condition >20% Action Level: % of individual plant species in poor health condition > 20%	 Action Plan the ET should inform Contractor and IEC immediately; identify the causes(s) of the exceedance; advise Contractor the necessity of replanting the ET should inform Contractor and IEC immediately; identify the cause(s) of the exceedance; advise remedial action and work
	poor health condition >30%	 advise remedial action and work out solution including change of species in re-planting, re-soiling of the target areas; and seek acceptance from AFCD; once the remedial action has been accepted by AFCD, the Contractor should implement the remedial action.

 Table 1
 Trigger and Action Levels for Monitoring and Action Plan



Survival of Planted Species (i.e. dead)	Trigger Level: Survival rate of individual plant species <80%	 the ET should inform Contractor and IEC immediately; identify the causes(s) of the exceedance; advise Contractor the necessity of replanting.
	Action Level: Survival rate of individual plant species <70%	 the ET should inform Contractor and IEC immediately; identify the cause(s) of the exceedance; advise remedial action and work out solution including change of species in re-planting, re-soiling of the target areas; and seek acceptance from AFCD; once the remedial action has been accepted by AFCD, the Contractor should implement the remedial action.

- 2.3.4 Since most of the planted native species are also naturally grown within the WCA and it would be infeasible and impracticable to differentiate whether the individual plant encountered along the transect or within the quadrat is planted, natural recruited, or regenerated after the pre-planting clearance of the site; and hence all established individuals of the planted species found within the sampling unit has been counted during the monitoring.
- 2.3.5 The WCA monitoring was undertaken by the Environmental Team (ET) and under the supervision of the Qualified Ecologist of the ET, and the Qualified Ecologist has also undertaken a joint transect inspection with representative of the IEC in the reporting.

2.4 **REPORTING**

Bi-monthly Woodland Compensation Monitoring Reports

2.4.1 During the first year of the initial planting phase and the first year of the enhancement planting phase, the results and findings of the bi-monthly (i.e., once every two months) monitoring will be recorded in a bi-monthly woodland compensation monitoring reports prepared and submitted by the ET Leader within 10 working days from the end of each reporting month. The details to be included in the report will follow the Section 7.3 of the WCP.

Quarterly Woodland Compensation Monitoring Reports

2.4.2 From the second year of the initial planting phase and the enhancement planting phase, the results and findings of the quarterly monitoring will be recorded in the quarterly woodland compensation monitoring reports prepared and submitted by the ET Leader within 10 working days from the end of each reporting month. The details to be included in the report will follow the Section 7.3 of the WCP.

3. **RESULTS**

3.1 TRANSECT INSPECTION

- 3.1.1 The transect inspection was carried out on 5th April 2017 with the ecological specialist of the IEC, an overview of the site condition is presented in *Figure 1* of the Appendix D and the following presents the observations made during the transect inspection:
 - The weather on the day of monitoring was generally cloudy and fairly windy within the WCA.
 - Most of the seedlings noted were in fair condition, and re-sprouting was prominent in some of the planted species, in particularly the trees *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Litsea glutinosa*, *Sapium discolor*, *Schima superba* and *Mallotus paniculatus*, as well as the shrub *Melastoma sanguineum*. Moreover, some of the *Acacia mangium* planted on the western ridgeline was found infected by powdery mildew (e.g., *Appendix D Figure 2*).
 - No sign of additional anthropogenic disturbance besides those reported previously was noted within the planted area of the WCA; moreover, as reported previously, signs of disturbance from wild boar, i.e., vegetation trampling, earth ploughing, as well as uprooted seedlings (from planted/self-seeded vegetation) were noticeable all over the WCA, in particularly on the north-facing slope of Cheung Shan where the site was densely planted with tree/shrub seedlings.
 - Vigorous regrowth of herbaceous vegetation cleared/cut during the pre-planting stage was noted in the whole WCA, especially on the northern slope of Cheung Shan.
 - Colonization, re-sprouting and/or regrowth of the woody vegetation, such as the trees *Melicope pteleifolia* and *Cratoxylum cochinchinense*, the shrub *Baeckea frutescens, Rhodomyrtus tomentosa* and *Breynia fruticosa*, were found to be generally vigorous; and some of the self-seeded or established plants have out-grown and shadowed the seedlings planted in their vicinity, and may have a negative impact on the establishment of the planted material because of the inter/intra-specific competition
 - In addition, despite the re-growth of the natural vegetation as described above has impeded the range of observation that could made along the transect; the density of the planted seedlings, including both of the tree and shrub species, were found to be poorer and sparser along the ridgeline at the eastern part of the WCA.
- 3.1.2 The general health condition of the planted species, based on the observations made along the transect, is tabulated in the following table.

Emocios	Health Condition						
Species	Good	Fair	Poor				
Trees							
Acacia confusa							
Acacia mangium		\checkmark					
Castanopsis fissa							
Litsea glutinosa	$\sqrt{(1),(2)}$						
Mallotus paniculatus	$\sqrt{(1)(2)}$						
Phyllanthus emblica		$\sqrt{(1)(2)}$					
Sapium discolor		$\sqrt{(1)(2)}$					
Schima superba	$\sqrt{(2)}$						
Shrubs							
Gordonia axillaris							

Table 2Health condition of the established seedlings noted during the
transect inspection



Melastoma candidum	$\sqrt{(2)}$		
Melastoma sanguineum	$\sqrt{(1),(2)}$		
Rhaphiolepis indica		$\sqrt{(1),(2)}$	
Rhodomytus tomentosa	$\sqrt{(2)}$		

Note:

(1) - re-sprouting of planted seedlings was noted and most of the foliage of this species were found to be smaller in size

(2) - chlorosis (leave yellowing) was commonly noted on the tree seedlings

(3) – self-seeded seedlings or wild population of this species was presence within the planting area of the WCA, and since it is impracticable and sometimes unfeasible to differentiate them from the planted seedlings, the health condition was evaluated as a whole for this species encountered during the transect walk.

3.2 QUADRAT SAMPLING

- 3.2.1 The nine 20m x 20m sampling quadrats have been placed within the planted area of the WCA, and at area where the majority of the seedlings were planted and considered suitable for long term monitoring; in which 2 of them were located on the ridgeline and the rest are located on the north-facing slope of Cheung Shan (see **Appendix C**). The quadrat monitoring was conducted on 30th March 2017 and 5th April 2017.
- 3.2.2 According to the information provided by the main contractor and the landscaping subcontractor, the distribution of plant seedlings of different species within the WCA are more or less random and usually in small cluster with spacing in accordance with the latest planting arrangement, i.e. group of 3 to 5 with 1.5m spacing for tree and group of 5 to 8 with 0.75m spacing for shrubs, and the planting density of a particular area would also be varied and subject to the site constraints such as local topography and the abundance/coverage of the retained woody vegetation.
- 3.2.3 The *Table 3* below presents the findings of the quadrat monitoring; and a comparison of the no. of seedling recorded for each planted species between the current and reference data collected in November 2016, as well as the computed survival rate, are presented in *Table 4*.

	Quantity* and General Health^ Condition of the Established Seedling Recorded in Each Sampling							Total		
	R1	Quadrat R1 R2 S3 S4 S5 S6 S7 S8 S9								
Trees			50	5.	50	50	5.	50	0,	
Acacia confusa	5	19	16	9	14	0	1	6	14	84
Acacia mangium	6	29	33	22	26	0	12	22	32	182
Castanopsis fissa	0	1	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	21
Litsea glutinosa	7	4	18	9	6	1	1	4	6	56
Mallotus paniculatus	12	13	12	8	20	21	6	9	13	114
Phyllanthus emblica	1	11	7	4	15	0	0	4	6	48
Sapium discolor	1	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	1	10
Schima superba	3	4	0	2	0	82	0	0	0	91
Sub-Total	35	83	88	56	82	125	20	45	72	606
Shrubs			1	1	1	1		1	1	1

Table 3The number of seedling recorded for each species within the sampling
quadrats

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Gordonia axillaris	5	17	47	24	49	0	13	11	19	185
Melastoma candidum	6	30	55	22	60	14	18	27	36	268
Melastoma sanguineum	7	58	57	36	108	2	10	13	37	328
Rhaphiolepis indica	55	36	46	63	93	12	13	11	58	387
Rhodomyrtus tomentosa	85	94	186	94	100	37	45	29	98	768
Sub-Total	158	235	391	239	410	65	99	91	248	1936

Notes: ^ General Health Condition:

- Good No. in normal font type (e.g., "99")
- Fair No. in Italic font (e.g., "99")
- Poor No. in italic & underlined (e.g., "99")
- the quantity include all established individuals of the planted species within the quadrat regardless whether they are self-seeded or planted (see Section 2.3.6)

Table 4	Survival	Rate of	of the	planted	species	(compared	with	the	reference	data
	colle	ected ir	n Nove	mber – l	Decembe	er 2016)				

Species	No	. of Individ	ual	Survival Rate
				(%)
	Nov 16	Jan 17	Apr 17	
Acacia confusa	113	80	84	74.34
Acacia mangium	179	162	182	100.00 (1)
Castanopsis fissa	39	29	21	53.85
Litsea glutinosa	77	58	56	72.73
Mallotus paniculatus	80	98	114	100.00 (1)
Phyllanthus emblica	48	23	48	100.00
Sapium discolor	18	8	10	55.56
Schima superba	82	66	91	100.00 (1)
Gordonia axillaris	148	144	185	100.00 (1)
Melastoma candidum	352	258	268	76.14
Melastoma sanguineum	313	223	328	100.00 (1)
Rhaphiolepis indica	438	355	387	88.36
Rhodomyrtus tomentosa	824	816	768	93.20

(1) As a result of re-sprouting during the onset of the growing season, the total number of individual recorded is higher than the reference data collected in Nov 2016

3.2.4 Based on the recorded data and observations made within the sampled quadrat and the data presented in *Table 3* and *Table 4*, the following summaries provide a brief account of the findings from the quadrat monitoring:

- Health condition: most of the recorded seedlings were found in fair to good condition.
- Survival Rate: When compared with the reference data collected in November 2016, the overall survival rate for the species planted is \sim 92%. The total

7



quantities recorded for 5 of the planted species are higher than the reference data, i.e., *Acacia mangium, Mallotus paniculatus, Gordonia axillaris and Melastoma sanguineum*, that could be attributed to the onset of the growing season and re-sprouting of the planted seedlings

- Moreover, survival rate of 5 of the planted species has recorded with less than 80% during the reporting period, including the shrub *Melastoma candidum* and the tree *Acacia confusa*, *Litsea glutinosa*, *Castanopsis fissa* and *Sapium discolor*, and the latter two only has a survival rate less than 70%.
- It should be noted that when compared to the monitoring data collected in January 2017, there was an improvement in the survival rate of the *Melastoma candidum* (from ~73% to ~76%), *Sapium discolor* (from ~44% to ~55%) and *Acacia confusa* (from ~71% to ~74%).
- 3.2.5 The possible cause of the poor survival rate of the 5 planted species has already been postulated in previous report, including:
 - poor vigor of the planted seedling
 - animal disturbance (such as trampling), in which signs of wild boar activities such as vegetation trampling and ground ploughing were noted all over the planted area within the WCA, in particularly within and in the proximity of Quadrat R1, S6, S7 and S8
 - insufficient horticultural maintenance (such as watering/weeding)
 - the seedlings of those species are out-competed (for light and space) by the adjacent planted, self-seeded or retained vegetation.
- 3.2.6 Since re-sprouting of the planted seedlings was commonly noted during the monitoring and the survival rate of the *Melastoma candidum*, *Acacia confusa* and *Sapium discolor* were found to be improved during the onset of the growing season, the necessity for replanting of this 3 species, as well as the *Litsea glutinosa* which shown a slight decrease in the survival rate (from 75% to 72%), should be further reviewed from the findings of next monitoring.
- 3.2.7 Moreover, since the monitoring data has shown that the survival rate of the *Castanopsis* fissa's seedling has been further decreased from \sim 74% to \sim 54% and re-sprouting of this species was not observed during the onset of the growing season during the monitoring period, remedial actions including replanting has been agreed with AFCD in accordance to the action plan as stated in the **Table 1**.
- 3.2.8 The quantity of *Castanopsis fissa's* seedling to be replanted should be 46.15% to those originally planted, i.e., 1523, and the replanting work should be undertaken within the planting season and in suitable locations within the WCA which is free of or only with limited signs of wild boar activities, and kept clear of *Dicranopteris pedata* or other species to avoid competition for light and other resources (see Section 4.7 of the WCP). In addition, as advised by AFCD, the replanting should also restore the original quantity recorded in the sampling quadrats, i.e., 1 in R1 and 38 in S6 to allow continual monitoring of the survival rate of this species with the fixed quadrat sampling approach.
- 3.2.9 The replanting works should make reference and conform to the Section 5 "Planting Management" of the approved Woodland Compensation Plan (WCP), in particularly those related to pre-planting site preparation as such to expedite the planting work once the seedlings on-site and facilitate their recovery from the planting shocks and establishment.
- 3.2.10 As stated in the *Table 1*, the Contractor is responsible for the implementation of the



replanting and the remedial measures agreed with AFCD and indicated in *Table 5* below, and a detailed replanting plan including the replanting and maintenance programme should be prepared and submitted to the Engineer for prior approval.

Jissa	
Possible Cause	Remedial Action
Animal disturbance	The necessity for taking any remedial actions to avoid or
	minimize the impact of wild boar to the Castanopsis fissa
	seedlings, to be further reviewed from the monitoring data
	of the survival rate of this species after replanting.
Poor vigor of the	The Contractor should ensure the size of the seedlings
planted seedlings	fulfills the requirements of the pertinent specification
Vegetation maintenance	Review and if necessary strengthen the vegetation
	maintenance program within the WCA
Inter-specific	Undertake weeding of herbaceous plants in particularly the
competition	fern Dicranopteris pedata around the planted Castanopsis
	fissa within the WCA; and any replacement planting should
	be planted strategically to minimize the shading effect from
	other vegetation

Table 5 Recommended Remedial Action for the Poor Survival Rate of Castanopsis fissa

3.2.11 **Table 6** below summarize the possible cause of the poor survival rate of the 5 species and recommended actions.

Table 6Summary of the Recommended Remedial Actions

Species	Survival	Possible	Recommended	Replanting
	Rate (%)	Cause	Remedial Action	
Acacia confusa	74.34	I, III	n/a	To be confirmed
Castanopsis		I, II, III, IV	Refer to the	Yes
fissa	53.85		bullets in Section	
			3.2.5	
Litsea glutinosa	72.32	I, II, III, IV	n/a	To be confirmed
Sapium discolor	55.56	I, II, III, IV	n/a	To be confirmed
Melastoma candidum	76.14	I, II, IV	n/a	To be confirmed

I : Poor vigor of the planted seedling

II : Animal Disturbance/Trampling

III : Insufficient Maintenance

IV : Out-competed by adjacent plant



Appendix A

Drawing No. 60212563/SK7037 of the Woodland Compensation Plan





Appendix B

Latest Planting Arrangement



ies	Density (no./m ²)	Total
	0.56	4800
	0.56	4800
	0.56	3300
ta 10	0.56	2350
tus	0.56	2350
ca	0.56	2350
	0.56	2350
	0.56 Sub-total	3250 25550
	1.78	13550
um	1.78	13550
neum	1.78	13450
a	1.78	13450
ntosa	1.78	13450
	Sub-total	67450
- SITE P	BOUNDARY RECOUND SITE BOUNDARY	
- SITE T	BOUNDARY REGROUND SITE BOUNDARY	
- SITE F UNDER EXTEMPLANT REFER Pla Pla	ACCUNDARY ACCOUND SITE BOUNDARY T OF WOODLAND COMPENSATION INC POINT SITE BOUNDARY ENCE POINT SITE BOUNDARY INTING AREA I	
- SITE T - UNDER EXTEN PLAN * * * * * * *	BOUNDARY AGROUND SITE BOUNDARY T OF WOODLAND COMPENSATION INC AREA ENCE POINT SITE BOUNDARY INTING AREA I INTING AREA II INTING AREA II	er 2016



Appendix C

Transect Routes and Sampling Quadrats of Woodland Compensation Monitoring





Appendix D

Photographic Records

Contract No. CV/2013/08, Woodland Compensation Area - Vegetation Monitoring



Fig-1a_North Facing Slope



Fig-1b_Eastern Ridgeline



Fig-1c_Western Ridgeline



Fig-2_Powdery Mildew



Fig-3_Animal Disturbance



Fig-4a_R1



Fig-4b_R2



Photographic Record (April 2017)

Fig-4c_S3

Contract No. CV/2013/08, Woodland Compensation Area - Vegetation Monitoring



Fig-4d_S4



Fig-4e_S5



Fig-4f_s6



Fig-4g_S7



Fig-4h_S8



Fig-4i_S9