

13 Public Participation

This chapter is compiled based on the requirements of national environment impact assessment. According to the *Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance* in Hong Kong, the public consultation on the Hong Kong side should be conducted after the EIA report has been confirmed to meet requirements of the relevant ordinance by the authorities concerned. Therefore, the content of this chapter only involves Shenzhen side.

Implementation of the Project will have different impacts on various environmental aspects. Normal work and daily activities of the residents along the River will be disturbed. In order to obtain public opinion on environmental issues of the Project and their suggestions on construction, public consultation has been carried out in Shenzhen during environmental impact assessment process.

13.1 Content and Methodology of the Consultation

(1) Content of consultation

The basic information of the person consulted, including name, sex, age, profession and education background, etc. , will be recorded. In addition, opinions, suggestions and requirements for the Project, including the necessity for implementing Stage III of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project; roles that the Project might play in regional economic development and improvement of living condition; environmental benefit and impact of the Project; the most concerned environmental issues of the public, and suggestions and requirements for environmental protection of the Project, etc. , are also consulted.

(2) Methodology of consultation

The consultation was conducted through questionnaire (the questionnaire for public participation see Annex 13). The area of consultation is at Lo Wu District of Shenzhen City, from Lo Wu Railway Bridge to the Ping Yuen River (River Ganges) (within Lo Wu District).

Considering regional sensitivity of the Project, those who live near the Shenzhen River are the main subjects of connection. Besides, to comprehensively reflect public's

opinions and suggestions on the Project, those who live in other areas are also selected randomly. The questionnaires are distributed to and collected from the residents living near the River through the property service companies or the building's owner. For the public living in other areas, surplus are randomly selected.

13.2 Degree of the Public Participation

600 questionnaires were distributed and 200 more for random sampling, of which 594 questionnaires were received, accounting for 74% of the total distributed. It has shown that the public awareness of environment has significantly enhanced and the Shenzhen River Regulation Project is widely concerned by the public.

Table 13.1 shows the composition and attributer of public participation.

Table 13.1 Statistics about Public Participation

Items	Particulars	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	50.6
	Female	49.4
Age	< 35	46.7
	35~60	42.8
	> 60	10.5
Education	Above technical school	27.3
	Senior high school or technical. school	24.7
	Below junior high school	48.0
Profession	Administrative manager	2.6
	Engaged person in science, technology, culture or education	9.1
	Medical personnel	2.6
	Financial personnel	3.9
	Worker	23.4
	Farmer	36.4
	Businessman	10.4
	Student	9.1
Retiree	2.6	

As indicated in the table, the gender composition for the questionnaire is male accounted for 50.6% and female for 49.4%. For age structures, participants under 35 accounted for 46.7%, while 42.8% for the age between 35 and 60 and 10.5% for the age over 60. Among them, the youngest one is 12 year-old and the oldest one is 70 year-old. For education level, participants with education background of junior col-

lege or above accounted for 27.3%, 24.7% with senior high school or technical secondary school, and 48% with junior high school or lower level. In terms of profession structure, managers, medical personnel and pensioners account for 2.6%, participants engaging in science, technology, culture or education, and students for 9.1% respectively, participants engaging in finance for 3.9%, workers for 23.4%, farmers for 36.4%, and businessman for 10.4%.

As for the gender structure of participants, the number of male and female is comparable. For the age distribution, it has a wide range, from 12 year-old to 70 year-old, but the distribution is mainly concentrated in young and middle age. For education background of the participants, more than half have high school qualification or above. For profession, most are workers and farmers. Therefore, the mix of the samples is representation and can well reflect the views and thoughts of the public.

13.3 Public Views and Environmental Issues Concerned by the Public

Stage I of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project has been finished and been in effect, Stage II is now in process and preparation of Stage III is underway. The general public is satisfied with the effort of the local government and is looking forward to completion of the Project. By then benefits of the Project will be fully enjoyed. Meanwhile, the public has high expectation on the Project and look forward to improvement in river water quality, regional ecology and environment. Besides, they express great concern on the environmental conditions in particular during construction of the Project.

Six questions were set in the questionnaires. They are:

(1) Do you think it is necessary to implement Stage III of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project?

a) Necessary b) Unnecessary c) No comment

(2) Stage III of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project is a flood control project. Upon completion of the Project, capacity of Shenzhen River will be enhanced to contain floods of 50-year return period (the existing flood control capacity can only contain floods of 2~5-year return period). In your opinion what kind of impact will be caused by the Project to economic development and people's life in this

area?

- a) It will benefit the economic development and stability of people's life in this area.
 - b) It will benefit economic development but has a little benefit to the stability of people's life in this area.
 - c) It will benefit the stability of people's life but has little benefit to economical development in this area.
 - d) It has little benefit to the stability of people's life and economical development of local area.
- (3) As for environment protection, what do you think are the positive and negative impacts of Stage III of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project. Whether the advantages of the Project outweigh the disadvantages or vice versa.

Positive impacts:

Negative impacts:

Relation between advantage and disadvantage:

- a) advantages outweigh disadvantages
- b) Disadvantages outweigh advantages
- c) advantages and disadvantages are comparable.

- (4) What is your main environmental concern for Stage III of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project?
- (5) Besides those listed in the questionnaire, what other environment issues might you envisage in Stage III of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project?
- (6) What kind of requirements and suggestions on environment protection do you have for Stage III of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project?

The results of the questionnaire are listed in Table 13.2.

Table 13.2 Statistics of Opinions in Questionnaire

Question 1(%)			Question 2(%)				Question 3					
a)	b)	c)	a)	b)	c)	d)	Positive impact	Negative impact	Relation between advantages and disadvantages(%)			
									a)	b)	c)	
91.6	5.3	3.1	90.4	6.9	2.3	0.4	Flood control, beautifying environment, reducing odour, improving water quality	Loss and damage part of habitat, disturbing people by construction noise	89.6	6.1	4.3	
Question 4		Dad smell (78.9%), water quality (59.3%), noise, and waste solid disposal, etc.										
Question 5		Pollution of water quality again, accumulation of silt, floating objects on water surface, water and soil erosion, etc.										
Question 6		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulation and afforestation considered simultaneously with a long term perspective. 2. Clearing silt in river course regularly. 3. Improving water quality, eliminating peculiar smell, protecting ecological environment, controlling waste discharge 4. Reducing construction noise, and cleaning garbage in the river timely 										

Table 13.2 indicates:

- 1) Among the samples, more than 90% think that the Shenzhen River regulation Project is necessary and implementation of the Project will greatly enhance the flood control capability of Shenzhen and Hong Kong. It will not only improve the navigation condition and water quality of the River, but also beautify the regional environment and landscape. It has significant social, economic and environmental benefits. The completion of the Project will certainly benefit the local economic development and people's living standards. However, the Project may cause air and noise pollution during construction and affect water quality, ecology and landscape to certain extents, which, however, are acceptable and tolerable if effective environmental protection measures are adopted.

Some participants express different opinions. Some of them think the Project is beneficial to local economic development, but has little benefit to people's life. Some think that though it has not significant role in local economy, it is beneficial to people's life. Some do not express their opinions as they know little about the Project. Some people think the peculiar smell and noise arised during construction are not acceptable.

Generally, most of the public thinks that the benefit of the Project is predominant, and mitigation measures can minimize the negative impact. The positive benefits of the Project outweigh the negative one.

- 2) Almost 80% of participants express their concerns on the peculiar smell emitted from the Shenzhen River chronically, which pollutes air, harms human health, affects people's work and life, and damages the image of Shenzhen City. They hope to take the chance of regulating the Shenzhen River, to completely eliminate the odour and improve air quality of Shenzhen City. A few participants suggest that measures should be considered, such as diverting seawater into the Shenzhen River, to increase flow rate of the River so as to improve water quality and eliminate the peculiar smell.

In addition, some participants point out that dumping rubbish and waste disorderly have resulted in floating debris on the river, which seriously affects the water quality and landscape of the River. They expect that the Project would rectify the situation and keep a clean river by regular clearance.

- 3) Near 60% of participants says that water quality of the Shenzhen River is always poor and the government should take measures to rectify it completely. They hope for strict control of wastewater drained into the Shenzhen River, strengthened regulations, and emission of wastewater to meet the relevant standards, and improvement in water quality radically.
- 4) The public living along the bank of the Shenzhen River are widely concerned about the construction activities of the Project, such as river excavation, spoil disposal and material transportation etc. , which will inevitably produce great amount of peculiar smell, noise and dust. It will result in uncomfortable visual impact and disturbing of normal working and life patterns, which will cause significant adverse impact on the physiology and mind of the affected residents. They hope that effective measures should be implemented to eliminate peculiar smell, reduce noise, and decrease dust to improve visual effect and lessen the disturbance to residents along the River.
- 5) Some people point out that during ebb tide deposited silts have appeared in some regulated sections of the Shenzhen River which are even thicker than that before

regulation. Management and maintenance need to be strengthened. Silt should be cleared regularly and water and soil conservation in upper reaches should be conducted to reduce silt entering the river. They also suggest that the cleared silt can be for agricultural use.

- 6) Some people think that except the likely adverse impact on ecology, water quality, noise, and air quality, implementation of the Project may result in other potential environmental problems such as secondary pollution etc. caused by construction or other human activities, which should be avoided.
- 7) The main purpose of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project is flood control, but the aspiration of the public is not limited to this. They hope to combine the regulation project with pollution control and environment beautification. They hope that the Project construction should consider both the present, and future situations. They think that protection and management of the environment and ecology should be strengthened not only in the Project, but also after the completion of the Project.