

**Confirmed Minutes of the 149th Meeting
of the Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee
on 13 September 2021 at 2:00 p.m.**

Present:

Prof Nora TAM, BBS, JP (Chairperson)
Prof Kenneth LEUNG, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ms Ada FUNG, BBS
Prof Alexis LAU, JP
Ms Julia LAU
Dr Winnie LAW
Dr MA Kwan-ki
Dr Jeanne NG
Dr Raymond YAU
Ms Becky LAM (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Ir Samantha KONG
Ms LAM Chung-yan
Dr SUNG Yik-hei
Mr Simon WONG, BBS, JP
Dr WONG Kwok-yan, MH

In Attendance:

Mr Owin FUNG	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3), Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Mr Terence TSANG	Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment), EPD
Dr Sunny CHEUNG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Metro Assessment), EPD
Ms Jenny TSANG	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Metro Assessment) 2 (Acting), EPD
Mr Simon CHAN	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Miss Sally SHEK	Executive Officer (CBD) 1, EPD
Miss Ingrid SUEN	Executive Officer (CBD) 2, EPD

In Attendance for Item 2:

Project Proponent Team

*Water Supplies Department
(WSD)*

Ms Melody WONG, Chief Engineer/Project Management

Mr Ricky LEE, Senior Engineer / Project Management (2)

Mr Andriy CHU, Engineer/Project Management (1)

Binnies Hong Kong Limited

Mr Tony LAU, Project Manager

Mr William LEUNG, Project Engineer

Ms Esther TONG, Principal Environmental Scientist

Ms Wing CHU, Environmental Scientist

AEC Limited

Ms Grace LEUNG, Associate

*Mott MacDonald Hong Kong
Limited*

Mr Gary CHOW, Technical Director

Action

The Chairperson welcomed Members to the meeting and informed Members that apologies of absence had been received from Ir Samantha Kong, Ms Lam Chung-yan, Dr Sung Yik-hei, Mr Simon Wong and Dr Wong Kwok-yan.

Item 1 : Matters arising

2. The draft minutes of the last meeting held on 19 April 2021 were confirmed by circulation on 7 May 2021 without any proposed amendments.

3. The Chairperson reported that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report on “Drainage Improvement Works Near Four Villages in Yuen Long – Sung Shan New Village, Tai Wo, Lin Fa Tei and Ha Che” which was submitted to the EIA Subcommittee for discussion and approved by the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) with conditions on 19 April 2021 and 3 June 2021 respectively. Members were informed of the above information by email on 7 June 2021.

4. There was no matter arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Item 2 : Discussion on EIA report on “Relocation of Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs to Caverns”

(ACE-EIA Paper 2/2021)

5. The Chairperson advised that the meeting would discuss the EIA report on “Relocation of Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs to Caverns”. During the public inspection period of the said EIA report from 27 July to 25 August 2021, two sets of public comments had been received by EPD and the gist of major issues/concerns were circulated to Members for reference on 8 September 2021. The main concerns raised by the public were on the potential ecological impacts to the Lion Rock Country Park, discharge to watercourses during construction, landscape impact and construction safety arising from the proposed project.

6. A Member declared that he was engaged in a project commissioned by the project proponent on recycled water. Another Member declared that his company was working on a study commissioned by the project proponent regarding fishing in reservoirs and he was also working with the consultant of the project proponent, i.e. Mott MacDonald Hong Kong Limited, in a project commissioned by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD). The Chairperson agreed that both Members could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

7. The Chairperson informed that the discussion would be divided into the Presentation and Question-and-Answer Session which would be opened to the public while the Internal Discussion Session would remain closed.

8. The Chairperson reminded Members to keep confidentiality of the discussion on the EIA report.

(The presentation team joined the meeting at this juncture.)

Presentation Session (Open session)

9. Ms Melody Wong gave an opening remark with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation whereas Mr William Leung and Ms Esther Tong briefed Members on the background, project details and key findings of the project.

Question-and-Answer Session (Open Session)

Project Details

10. In response to a Member's question about the estimated cost of this EIA project, Ms Melody Wong informed that the cost was estimated to be around \$3 billion (in money-of-the-day prices) in 2018. As the detailed design was still being fine-tuned, the estimated cost would be subject to review and updating prior to seeking the necessary funding approval from the Finance Committee next year.

11. In respect of the demolition of the existing Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs (DHSRs) and associated facilities, Ms Melody Wong advised that they would not be covered by the proposed project but to be handled by CEDD separately.

Air Quality Monitoring

12. A Member was concerned about the assessment and mitigation measures for radon gas within the caverns arising from the proposed construction. While the relocated DHSRs would generally be unmanned, Mr Tony Lau explained that a ventilation system would be devised to ensure the safety of the personnel working in the caverns for routine inspection and maintenance. The Chairperson further enquired whether the assessment of radon gas emissions was covered in the EIA report. Ms Esther Tong advised that as set out in Chapter 2.14 of the EIA report, adequate ventilation would be provided to dilute the level of radon gas in line with the Indoor Air Quality Objectives for Office and Public Places and relevant regulations.

13. In response to a Member's question on smoke extraction in the caverns, Mr Tony Lau advised that smoke extraction system would be incorporated in the ventilation system. Another Member was concerned about the potential health hazards caused by gas emissions in the caverns and suggested that relevant guidelines should be devised such as the maximum working hours allowed for workers in the caverns. Mr Lau assured that sufficient ventilation would be ensured during the construction as well as the operation phase to mitigate potential health hazards to workers. Mr William Leung added that an operation and maintenance manual which included evacuation and safety plans would be provided to staff working in the caverns.

14. A Member enquired whether indicators would be deployed in the caverns to monitor the air quality. Mr William Leung advised that devices such as sensors would be installed in the caverns to monitor the concentration of the major gas emissions with a view to ensuring the safety of personnel working in the caverns.

15. Considering that the facility would be unmanned, a Member remarked that it might not be environmentally-friendly for the ventilation system in the caverns to operate at full strength. He suggested deploying sensors or indicators for monitoring the air quality in the caverns for optimising the operation of the ventilation system. Mr Tony Lau advised that the ventilation would be designed to operate at high or low flow rate according to the operational need. He thanked the Member's suggestion and would take them into consideration where appropriate.

16. A Member was concerned about the safety for disinfection of potable water by chlorination within the enclosed caverns and sought for the details of water disinfection process as well as the mitigation measures for removing any hazardous gas in the caverns. Mr Tony Lau advised that disinfection was conducted in facilities outside the caverns such as water treatment works, no water chlorination would be performed in the project facility. It was expected that level of hazardous gas within the caverns would be low. Mr William Leung supplemented that adequate ventilation would be maintained in the caverns to remove any hazardous gas such as chlorine gas.

17. A Member suggested that the project proponent should state clearly in the EIA report that disinfection process would not be performed in the caverns in the operation phase. Mr Tony Lau replied in the affirmative.

Impact on Watercourses

18. Considering the potential ecological impacts on the watercourses, a Member enquired and Ms Esther Tong advised that the construction works would be carried out mainly at the underground.

19. In reply to a Member's enquiry about mitigation measures for potential contamination to watercourses due to surface runoff, Ms Esther Tong said that mitigation measures such as proper drainage system and the use of silt traps would be adopted to receive surface runoff. She added that any discharge effluent would comply with the requirements of the discharge license of EPD.

20. With reference to a public comment, the Chairperson enquired about details of the proposed mitigation measures for potential groundwater drawdown. Mr Tony Lau advised that while groundwater infiltration was unlikely due to the low permeability of the rocks in the project site, grouting measures as well as waterproof lining would be adopted to mitigate any groundwater infiltration.

21. A Member pointed out the discrepancies in records of watercourses between different chapters of the EIA report and sought clarification on whether there were watercourses within the project area and confirmation on whether ecological survey had been conducted for those watercourses.

22. Ms Esther Tong explained that Chapter 5 (Water Quality Impact) of the EIA report accounted for all the identified watercourses for the evaluation of water quality impact whereas Chapter 8 (Ecological Impact Assessment) focused on the assessment of ecological impact on the watercourses with ecological values and importance. Mr Gary Chow supplemented that initial assessment of all identified watercourses had been carried out through the transect survey, which would determine whether in-depth ecological survey would be required for the watercourses concerned based on their ecological values. The watercourses within the project area were considered as having no significant ecological value and adverse impact on the watercourses was not anticipated, thus detailed ecological survey was considered not necessary.

23. The Chairperson suggested that the project proponent should clarify that watercourses with significant ecological values were not found in the project area in Chapter 8 of the EIA report and elaborate on the assessment of ecological values for the watercourses concerned in the project area.

Occupational Safety and Health Hazards

24. A Member suggested devising a comprehensive risk management plan with a view to mitigating any occupational safety and health hazards such as flooding or fire risks in the caverns in order to safeguard the personnel working in the caverns. She added that unmanned operation in the caverns should be adopted as far as practicable. Mr Tony Lau advised that an operation and maintenance manual which set out relevant risk management plan would be provided to the personnel who need to work in the caverns.

25. In case of emergency, a Member was concerned about the means of escape or emergency exits for personnel working in the caverns. Mr Tony Lau confirmed that sufficient means of escape would be provided for emergency.

Landscape Impact

26. A Member suggested reusing and recycling the trees felled in this project for purposes such as landscaping. Ms Esther Tong advised that there might not be enough space for landscaping in the project site but she agreed to explore the possibility to reuse or recycle the wood generated from the felled trees for other purposes as far as practicable.

27. In reply to a Member's question on the tree species for compensatory planting in the project area, Ms Esther Tong advised that the tree preservation and removal proposal was under preparation. Tentatively, mainly *Sapium discolor*, *Mallotus paniculatus* and *Polyspora axillaris* would be used for compensatory planting. The Member suggested using native and canopy tree species for better compatibility of the surrounding tree species. Given that the compensatory planting would be conducted in a sloped surface, Ms Esther Tong advised that the suitability of tree species to be planted would be carefully examined. They would explore and consider the use of more native and canopy tree species as far as practicable.

Potential Habitation of Wildlife

28. A Member enquired about measures to avoid any wildlife from inhabiting the caverns. Mr Tony Lau advised that an entrance gate would be installed at the tunnel portal to prevent trespassers and wildlife of larger size from entering.

Conclusion

29. There being no further questions from Members, the Chairperson thanked the project proponent team for their detailed presentation and clarification on the project.

(The presentation team left the meeting at this juncture.)

Internal Discussion Session (Closed-door session)

30. The Chairperson advised that the EIA Subcommittee should make recommendations to ACE on the EIA report with the following consideration:

- (i) endorse the EIA report without condition; or
- (ii) endorse the EIA report with conditions and/or recommendations; or
- (iii) defer the decision to the full Council for further consideration, where issues or reasons for not reaching a consensus or issues to be further considered by the full Council would need to be highlighted; or
- (iv) reject the EIA report and inform the project proponent of the right to go to the full Council.

31. The Chairperson proposed and Members agreed to endorse the EIA report with conditions and recommendations.

Impact on Watercourses

32. A Member considered that the discrepancies in records of watercourses in different chapters of the EIA report undesirable. Specifically, Chapter 8 of the EIA report stated that no watercourse was found within the project area whereas Chapter 5 showed that there were some watercourses overlapping with the proposed cavern. Another Member enquired whether the discrepancies were due to the different watercourses in project area and study area. Mr Terence Tsang suggested that the project proponent should be required to amend relevant chapters of the EIA report. This would not affect the approval of the EIA report provided that the amendments would not affect the validity of the assessment and the overall results and conclusions of the report.

33. With reference to Figure 5.1 of the EIA report, a Member pointed out that watercourses located on top of the proposed cavern, i.e. WSR2a and WSR2c, could be subject to groundwater drawdown impact and thus the ecology of the watercourses could be affected. In this connection, the Chairperson suggested, with the support of two Members that should watercourses be found in the project area, the project proponent should conduct ecological survey for the watercourses concerned as well as devise mitigation measures to minimise the groundwater infiltration.

34. Mr Simon Chan explained that in some cases, watercourses might be seasonal or even be dried out and thus conducting ecological survey might not be

necessary. Mr Chan supplemented and echoed by Mr Terence Tsang that the need for conducting ecological survey would be subject to various factors such as the presence of species of conservation importance and the size or significance of the habitats. According to the information provided by the project proponent during the meeting, he considered that the project proponent should have assessed the need for conducting ecological survey for the watercourses in accordance with the Technical Memorandum as well as the study brief. Thus, he suggested asking the project proponent to supplement the considerations for not conducting ecological survey for the watercourses in the project area.

35. Having considered the views of Mr Terence Tsang and Mr Simon Chan, the Chairperson proposed and Members supported to impose a condition to require the project proponent to clarify and elaborate on the discrepancies in records of watercourses within the project area between different chapters of the EIA Report. The detailed assessment and justifications for not conducting ecological surveys at some of the watercourses concerned should be submitted to the satisfaction of the DEP and the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation before approval of the EIA report by DEP.

Air Quality Monitoring

36. A Member suggested and another Member concurred that an online monitoring system with remote sensors should be installed in the caverns in order to optimise the operation of the ventilation system to ensure the safety of the personnel working in the caverns. The Chairperson suggested and Members agreed to recommend the project proponent to adopt the most efficient design and equipment for real-time tracking and monitoring of the air quality within the proposed caverns, including but not limited to the level of radon gas, with a view to optimising the efficiency of the ventilation/filtration in the project site and safeguarding the personnel working in the caverns.

37. In view of the safety concern for emissions generated from potable water disinfection by chlorination, a Member considered that the project proponent should state clearly in the EIA report that disinfection by chlorination would be performed outside the caverns. With reference to the information provided by the project proponent during the meeting, Mr Terence Tsang explained that water treatment such as chlorination or disinfection should be completed in water treatment facilities instead of the service reservoirs of this project. While Mr Tsang considered that it might not be necessary to impose a condition or recommendation for banning water

chlorination in the caverns, he said that EPD would address this concern by including this requirement in the Environmental Permit (EP) instead. The meeting agreed that a condition or recommendation on water chlorination would not be necessary.

Occupational Safety and Health Hazards

38. In addition to the air quality control, the Chairperson suggested recommending the project proponent to mitigate occupational safety and health hazards such as flooding and fire risks. A Member enquired if a recommendation on occupational safety and health hazards could be covered under the scope of EIA Ordinance (EIAO). Mr Terence Tsang considered that it would be acceptable to incorporate a recommendation for the project proponent to address occupational safety and health issues although they were not covered in the scope of EIAO. In this connection, the Chairperson suggested and the meeting agreed to recommend the project proponent to devise a comprehensive risk management plan with a view to mitigating occupational safety and health hazards such as flooding or fire risks in the caverns during the construction and operation phases.

Potential Habitation of Wildlife

39. A Member was concerned about the potential habitation of the caverns by wildlife such as bats and suggested that the project proponent should take precautionary measures such as installation of curtains at the tunnel portal. The Chairperson proposed and Members agreed that the project proponent should adopt necessary precautionary measures to prevent any wildlife from inhabiting the caverns and take appropriate remedial actions should any wildlife be found in the caverns during the construction and operation phases.

Landscape Impact

40. A Member remarked that the use of felled trees for purposes such as landscaping in the project site would help educate the public on environmental protection and conservation. He suggested imposing a condition for the project proponent to reuse and recycle the wood generated from the project. The Chairperson reminded that the project proponent expressed difficulty in reusing and recycling the felled trees due to the physical constraint of the project site. As such, the Chairperson suggested with the support of the meeting to recommend the project proponent to explore ways to facilitate the reuse and recycle of the wood generated from the felled trees in the project area as far as practicable.

41. In order to conserve native tree species and enhance the diversity, a Member suggested and Members supported to recommend the project proponent to explore and consider the use of appropriate and additional tree species, in particular native and canopy species, for compensatory planting in the project area.

Surface Runoff

42. In view that mitigation measures such as proper drainage system and use of silt traps had been set out in the EIA report, the meeting agreed that no condition or recommendation was necessary in respect of surface runoff.

43. There being no other comments from Members, the meeting agreed that the EIA report could be endorsed with one condition and five recommendations. The project proponent team would not be required to attend the full Council meeting scheduled for 11 October 2021.

(Post-meeting notes: The list of proposed condition and recommendations was circulated to Members for comments on 20 September 2021.)

Item 3 : Any other business

(i) Report on Members' comments on project profiles

44. The Chairperson informed that the following EIA Study Briefs were circulated to ACE since the last EIASC meeting held on 19 April 2021:

	Project Profiles	Public inspection period	No. of comments from ACE
(i)	Traffic Improvement Scheme in Tuen Mun - Widening and Addition of slip roads at Lung Fu Road / Tuen Mun Road / Wong Chu Road / Hoi Wing Road	4 to 17 May 2021	NIL
(ii)	San Tin / Lok Ma Chau Development Node	21 May to 3 June 2021	NIL
(iii)	Remaining Phase Development of the New Territories North	28 May to 10 June 2021	1

	(NTN) - NTN New Town and Man Kam To		
(iv)	Airport Tung Chung Link Project	16 to 29 June 2021	2
(v)	Widening of Tsuen Wan Road and the associated junction improvement works	18 June to 1 July 2021	NIL
(vi)	Proposed Residential Development at Lot No. 2 in D.D. 228 near Pak Fa Lam Road, Sai Kung	24 June to 7 July 2021	1
(vii)	Hudson Environmental Waste Disposal Center (Waste Mineral Oil)	25 June to 8 July 2021	NIL
(viii)	Northern Link	1 to 14 July 2021	NIL

45. In response to a Member's question on whether DEP could refuse to issue an EIA study brief to the project proponent, Mr Terence Tsang advised that DEP was required to issue an EIA study brief to the project proponent under the EIAO.

(ii) *Discussion on EIA Report on "Development of a Bathing Beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po"*

46. The Chairperson informed that three Members proposed to discuss the recent incidents of disturbances to the marine organisms at the Lung Mei Beach in Tai Po. The EIA report on "Development of a Bathing Beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po" was endorsed at the 148th ACE meeting with a number of conditions. The EIA report was approved by the DEP with conditions and the EP was issued in November 2008 and April 2010 respectively.

47. A Member declared that he was working on a biodiversity study for the Lung Mei Beach commissioned by CEDD. The Chairperson agreed that the Member could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

48. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Terence Tsang briefed Members on the background of the EIA Report concerned and addressed the issues and concerns regarding the Bathing Beach at Lung Mei.

Handling of the Marine Organisms in the Beach

49. In comparison with the planned and executed Marine Fauna Translocation during the construction phase, a Member considered that the current practice of having beach staff to remove marine organisms such as sea urchins and starfishes from the beach at Lung Mei was not prudent.

50. A Member shared with the meeting that sea urchins and starfishes were hardy marine organisms which could survive a translocation from the beach to nearby waters. Mr Terence Tsang and Mr Simon Chan agreed with the Member that the collection and translocation of sea urchins and starfishes at the adjacent waters would unlikely cause adverse impact on the marine organisms given their tough exoskeleton. This arrangement was considered appropriate and effective in reducing the injury cases of swimmers as well. Mr Chan supplemented that the translocation of marine organisms before the construction phase such as seahorses and fishes required special treatment by specialist considering special requirements of the target species and the complexity of the process.

51. The Chairperson enquired whether it was common to find sea urchins and starfishes in Ting Kok East during low tides. A Member shared that it was a natural phenomenon to find sea urchins and starfishes in Ting Kok East as well as in Lung Mei. He said that it was peak season to observe sea urchins and starfishes from June to July as it would be the time with the lowest tide during the year.

52. A Member sought statistics and detailed information on the removal of marine organisms since the opening of the beach. She went on to ask whether relevant departments such as EPD and AFCD had been consulted in the current arrangement. Mr Terence Tsang explained that statistics and detailed information on the translocation of marine organisms was not available. While Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) was responsible for the daily operation of the beach, Mr Tsang and Mr Simon Chan considered that the current translocation arrangement of sea urchins and starfishes was appropriate.

53. A Member said that statistics and detailed information on the removed marine organisms from the beach would help to assess the ecological impact. The Chairperson pointed out that it was not required under the EP for the project proponent or the operator to compile statistics of the marine organisms within the beach. As sea urchins and starfishes were very common and had relatively low ecological value, Mr Terence Tsang considered that it might not be necessary to

conduct regular survey to keep track of the statistics. Having said that, Mr Tsang shared that a recent study commissioned by the project proponent indicated that the marine ecology of the adjacent waters had not be adversely affected.

54. A Member followed to share that the biodiversity study found rich biodiversity in the waters adjacent to the Lung Mei Beach. He said that species that were previously translocated from the Lung Mei Beach during the construction phase such as Gobiidae and seahorses were observed in the adjacent waters. He remarked that no adverse impact on the marine ecology in the vicinity of the beach was observed due to the development of the Lung Mei Beach.

55. A Member pointed out that there had been many visitors to the Lung Mei Beach since the opening, which demonstrated that there was a social need for the beach. He highlighted the importance of balancing social, economic and environmental needs to achieve sustainable development. The Member opined and the Chairperson concurred that emphasis should be placed on educating the public on the proper way to coexist with the nature. The Chairperson suggested that EPD should closely monitor the overall water quality and marine ecology at Lung Mei.

Sand Conditions

56. In response to a Member's question on the sand conditions of the beach, Mr Terence Tsang said there was no significant sand loss given two groynes were built on the sides of the beach to prevent sand loss. Another Member explained that the sand in the bottom layer of the beach would usually have a darker colour, which might be stirred up due to heavy rain or by children digging on the beach. He said that the dark sand would become lighter after oxidation. Mr Tsang supplemented that the sand with deep colour would not have adverse impact on the safety or health of beach users. He remarked that LCSD would keep in view of the sand condition and follow up where appropriate.

Post-translocation Monitoring

57. A Member enquired about the reasons why the two translocated seahorses could not be found during the post-translocation monitoring. Ms Simon Chan replied that due to the small size of the seahorses, it would be difficult to search for the presence of the seahorses with a small tag in the open sea. He added that it was possible that the seahorses might have moved away from the area and settled in a new place after the translocation. The Member suggested that the Government

should support the development of advanced technology to track small marine organisms.

Coverage of EP and Environmental Monitoring and Audit Manual

58. A Member was of the view that one of the objectives in the Environmental Monitoring and Audit Manual (EM&A Manual) to “take remedial action if unexpected results or unacceptable impacts arise” was not met, since there had been no remedial actions taken to conserve the marine organisms within the beach in the recent incidents. Mr Terence Tsang said that it was set out in the EIA report that the development of the Lung Mei Beach would result in a permanent loss of benthic habitats within the beach area and thus considered that the recolonization by sea urchins and starfishes did not contribute to a worse ecological impact than the EIA prediction. The collection and translocation of marine organisms from the beach to adjacent waters was not in contravention of the EP conditions and he considered the arrangement was an appropriate remedial action without causing harm to the marine ecology.

59. A Member observed that although the EIA report stated that marine organisms might return to the beach after the completion of construction works, it was not required under the EM&A Manual of this project to monitor and conserve marine organisms within the beach in the operation phase. Another Member supplemented that the EM&A Manual of this project only focused on the conservation of marine organisms outside the beach and at the reception site of Ting Kok East, but not those within the beach. Both Members were of the view that the EM&A Manual was inadequate and considerations should be given in future EIA projects to conserve marine organisms that might return to the project site during the operation phase.

60. The Chairperson and two Members were concerned whether any unforeseen ecological problems arising from the operation of the beach could be handled by the EP. Mr Terence Tsang replied that while the operation of a beach itself was not regulated under EIAO, EPD would monitor and handle any environmental issues in accordance with the relevant environmental ordinances. For Lung Mei Beach, EPD considered that there was no significant adverse impact on the marine ecology as well as water quality. As operation of the project was not more prejudicial to the environment than expected at the time of issuing the EP, he considered that the mitigation measures taken by the operator was appropriate.

General EIAO Procedures

61. Two Members enquired about the general mechanism for handling unexpected ecological problems in the operation phase which was not covered by the EP or EM&A Manual. Mr Terence Tsang informed that the EIAO stipulated that an EP might be suspended, varied or cancelled if it was considered that the continuation of the project was likely to be more prejudicial to the environment than expected at the time of issuing the EP. He highlighted that the threshold for the “more prejudicial to the environment” should be very high. As for environmental issues that was not covered in the EP or the EM&A Manual, EPD would also monitor and take measures in accordance with the relevant environmental ordinances.

62. A Member pointed out that the recent incidents with sea urchins and starfishes were not reported in the monthly EM&A reports. He opined that the EM&A reports often adhered to the requirements set out in the EP rigidly, which might lack flexibility in coping with unexpected problems that was not covered in the EP. In this connection, the Member suggested, with the support of the Chairperson and another Member that the quality of EM&A report should be improved and flexibility should be provided to report unforeseen problems in the EM&A reports. Another Member added that the Government should deploy smart technologies to enhance the effectiveness and accuracy of EM&A in the long-run. Mr Terence Tsang thanked Members for their suggestions and assured that EPD would explore the possibility to include general remarks on any abnormality in the EM&A Manual.

(iii) Withdrawal of application -- EIA report on "Improvement of Lion Rock Tunnel"

63. The Chairperson reported that the EIA report on "Improvement of Lion Rock Tunnel", which was selected by EIASC Members for discussion at an EIASC meeting, had been withdrawn by the project proponent. The project proponent advised that they would re-submit the EIA report as soon as possible. Pending the re-submission, the secretariat would provide Members with the updated/revised Executive Summary of the EIA report and Members would be invited to consider the selection status of the EIA report again.

64. There was no other business for discussion at the meeting.

Item 4 : Date of next meeting

65. The Chairperson advised Members that the EIASC meeting scheduled for 18 October 2021 would be cancelled. Members would be advised on the date of the next meeting and the agenda in due course.

EIA Subcommittee Secretariat
October 2021