Confirmed Minutes of the 146th Meeting of the Advisory Council on the Environment held on 12 November 2007 at 2:30 pm

Present:

Prof LAM Kin-che, SBS, JP (Chairman)

Prof WONG Yuk-shan, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)

Mr James GRAHAM

Ms Betty HO

Prof Paul LAM

Mr Edwin LAU

Ms Goretti LAU

Dr MAN Chi-sum, JP

Dr NG Cho-nam, BBS

Prof POON Chi-sun

Mr Markus SHAW

Mr TSANG Kam-lam

Mr Eddie WONG

Prof WONG Tze-wai

Ms Josephine CHEUNG (Acting Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Dr Dorothy CHAN, BBS **Prof Howard HUANG** Mr Simon WONG Dr YAU Wing-kwong

In Attendance:

Permanent Secretary for the Environment Ms Anissa WONG, JP

Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries Mr C C LAY

and Conservation Department

Mr P Y TAM Director/Technical Assistant Services, Planning

Department

Principal Information Officer, Environmental Protection Ms Monica KO

Department (EPD)

Mr KWAN Chung-kit Office Manager (CBD), EPD

Miss Sarah NG Executive Officer (CBD), EPD

In Attendance for Agenda Item 3:

Mr Alfred LAU Chief Town Planner (Strategic Planning), Planning

Department (PlanD)

Ms Amy CHEUNG Senior Town Planner (Strategic Planning), PlanD

Dr Anne KERR Director, Railways & Infrastructure Division, Mott

Connell Ltd.

Dr Gui-yi LI Technical Director, Hyder Consulting Ltd.

In Attendance for Agenda Item 4:

Dr Ellen CHAN Assistant Director (Environmental Infrastructure), EPD

Action

Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of the Draft Minutes of the 145th Meeting held on 15 October 2007

The draft minutes were confirmed without amendments.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 145th Meeting held on 15 October 2007

<u>Para. 38 - Informal Meeting with the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs</u>

2. <u>The Chairman</u> said that at the last meeting, the Council agreed to organize an informal meeting with the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs. Due to the heavy commitments of Chairmen of both sides before the close of the year, the informal meeting had to be convened in January 2008. Members will be informed of the details once confirmed.

<u>Agenda Item 3: Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy - Final</u> <u>Report</u>

(ACE Paper 21/2007)

3. Mr Alfred Lau briefed Members on the background and objectives of the Study on Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy (HK2030 Study). He highlighted that in parallel with the undertaking of the HK2030 Study, consultants had been engaged to carry out a strategic environmental assessment (SEA), which provided strategic environmental information and suggestions to facilitate the formulation, development and identification of scenarios and development options. In view of the uncertainty of the long time frame, the Study did not aim to provide a blueprint for future development but recommended

broad planning directions to serve as a basis for future strategic development. <u>Dr</u> Anne Kerr briefed Members on the major findings and recommendations of the HK2030 SEA.

- 4. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry about the way forward, Mr Alfred Lau said that an Action Agenda (Annex D of the paper) had been drawn up by the Development Bureau for outlining ongoing and new initiatives to be taken under the Bureau in line with the Study's directions. They would work with relevant bureaux and departments to further develop recommendations of the Study in a well-coordinated manner.
- 5. <u>A Member</u> asked about new findings of the Study. <u>Mr Alfred Lau</u> said that one of the key issues revealed in the study process was the projected slower population growth. Rather than focusing on the provision of housing land as in previous territorial development plans, there was a paradigm shift in major planning strategies to the emphasis on sustainable development, a quality living environment and area-based strategies with a "do more with less" approach.
- 6. <u>Dr Anne Kerr</u> said that a new area examined was the location of the proposed container terminal (CT) with associated infrastructures in the context of the SEA. Based on the study findings, the development of the proposed CT with associated infrastructures would be sustainable with suitable mitigation and enhancement measures in place. <u>Dr Gui-yi Li</u> added that a relatively new approach was adopted for the Study by conducting SEA to assess the environmental issues and to identify environmental improvement opportunities during the planning stage rather than considering the environmental impacts for the purpose of tackling problems on a project level. The findings of the SEA were interactively fed into the process of formulating the strategic development plans.
- 7. The Chairman enquired about the environmental acceptability of the Northwest (NW) Lantau CT option in the context of cumulative impacts. Dr Anne Kerr said that on the basis of components included in the assessment, the cumulative impacts of the option were found manageable. She confirmed that the development of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge was included in the assessment. In respect of the possible third airport runway project, the general implications were taken into account in an overall interpretative fashion, including the forecast on number of passengers and cargo volume. But no modelling was undertaken to assess the impacts on noise and air quality within this study. Mr

Alfred Lau explained that no detailed information was available from the Airport Authority for conducting detailed analysis. The Chairman considered that it was necessary to highlight the need for a detailed environmental assessment in the context of cumulative impacts if the third runway project was to proceed.

- 8. <u>A Member</u> said that she was glad to learn that the cumulative environmental impacts were found to be acceptable in general. Nonetheless, she noted that there would be deterioration of air quality in some areas mainly due to marine traffic. She enquired about possible mitigation measures to improve the anticipated problems. <u>Dr Anne Kerr</u> said that they noted the public concern about the air quality issue, including marine traffic, and had tried to address the issue in the SEA. Measures recommended included technologies to reduce emissions from marine and vehicular traffic. For the port development, emissions were not only from marine vessels, but also from supporting road networks. With the implementation of ongoing and planned emission control strategies, long-term improvement in vehicular emissions was anticipated.
- 9. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry, <u>Dr Anne Kerr</u> said that it was anticipated that the contribution of marine traffic to the overall air pollution emissions would be less than 10% but increasingly significant as the contribution from vehicular traffic would relatively decrease. <u>The Chairman</u> expressed concern and hoped that the Administration would take note of this phenomenon and take appropriate actions.
- 10. <u>Ms Anissa Wong</u> said that the Administration noted the increasing contributions from aviation and navigation sectors to the overall emissions. The Environmental Protection Department was liaising with relevant bureaux and departments with a view to setting up a joint working group to look into emissions from the navigation sector. Joint departmental efforts were being made to encourage local ferries to shift to cleaner fuels. The Economic Development and Labour Bureau and the Marine Department had introduced legislative proposals for vessel emissions to comply with the principles and requirements under the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex VI "Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships". The Council would be kept informed of the development.
- 11. <u>A Member</u> queried the basis of the population projection adopted in the Study. Despite the anticipated low birth rate of about 0.9%, the population size was projected to increase by 25% to 8.4 million in 2030 and the proportion of

urbanized area would increase from one-fifth to a quarter of the total land area. He considered that the population forecast was a crucial basis for the Study but he could not find information in the report explaining the basis of the population forecast.

- Mr Alfred Lau explained that the population projection was mainly based on information provided by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD). He understood that assumptions had been made on the increase in newborn babies with one or both of the parents being Mainland residents. Surveys had been conducted on the inclination of whether these babies would stay or return to Hong Kong after a certain period of time. Another assumption made was the need for import of workforce to sustain the competitiveness of the economy in view of the aging population. In respect of the urbanized area, he clarified that the proposed increase was about 2% (from about 20% to 22%) of the total land area. Working papers relating to assumptions and basis of population forecast were available on the website of the HK2030 Study.
- 13. <u>A Member</u> agreed that a realistic population forecast was important for planning as shown in the education reform conducted in 2000. It was once projected that a large number of schools had to be built to cope with the anticipated increase in demand but it was later found that a number of schools had to be shut down. Moreover, the assumptions on population increase had to be considered against the immigration policy.
- Mr Alfred Lau said that in view of the complexity and uncertainty of factors affecting the population forecast, the "what-if" approach was adopted in the study process. There were response mechanisms to cope with the scenarios of both higher and lower population growth against the forecast.
- 15. <u>A Member</u> said that he was not satisfied with the response. He considered that the community should be given the opportunity to express views on the population forecast. For example, the community might consider that the competitiveness of Hong Kong could be maintained with a low population size and low immigration rate. He also queried the need for immediate development of the New Development Areas (NDAs). <u>Mr Alfred Lau</u> clarified that the proposal was to initiate the planning and engineering studies of two NDA schemes.
- 16. In response to the Chairman's enquiry, Mr Alfred Lau confirmed

that a monitoring and review mechanism would be put in place to monitor the development trend against the forecast every two to three years in order to formulate response plans on the development options and strategies. For example, if the population growth was not as high as projected, the development of the NDAs would be slowed down.

- 17. <u>A Member</u> said that he was surprised to find that most of the implementation initiatives for environmental enhancements summarized in the Executive Summary of the SEA had been implemented by relevant bureaux/departments, such as active promotion of the EcoPark and local recycling industry for waste management as well as implementation of the New Nature Conservation Policy. He suggested that a mechanism be put in place or an inter-departmental committee be set up to implement the medium to long-term recommendations
- Another Member shared the Member's observation. He considered that there were not much new ideas in the recommendations. With the expansion of urbanized area from one-fifth to a quarter of the total land area, the report had not mentioned about measures to solve the problem of additional construction and demolition (C&D) waste. He had reservation for the development-oriented planning strategy not supported with a sustainable strategy on management of C&D waste.
- 19. <u>Dr Anne Kerr</u> explained that the intention of the summary table was to put the initiatives in a consolidated and holistic manner. Thus, key initiatives being implemented together with new recommendations were incorporated, including the short-term, medium-term and long-term measures. In the Strategic Environmental Monitoring and Audit programme, monitoring and review would be conducted in the course of the implementation process.
- 20. <u>Dr Gui-yi Li</u> said that one of the recommendations to tackle C&D waste was that urban renewal should give priority to building reuse/recycling rather than demolition and redevelopment. <u>Dr Anne Kerr</u> said that the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) was conducting an overall study on the C&D materials handling facilities and the initial study findings should be available in about six months' time. Moreover, the management of C&D waste should be considered on a project basis, such as by the use of technologies and green construction measures.

21. <u>The Chairman</u> suggested and Members agreed that CEDD be invited to brief Members about the findings of the study on C&D materials handling facilities once the study was concluded.

(<u>Post-meeting note</u>: CEDD confirmed that it was their plan to brief the Council about the study findings and seek Members' views when the initial findings of the study on C&D materials handling facilities were available.)

- A Member noted that one of the recommendations on waste management was the provision of adequate waste separation facilities in new public housing estates. He wondered why the private and existing public housing estates were not included. Dr Anne Kerr explained that it would depend very much on the development of the mandatory requirement. While private and existing public housing estates were encouraged to provide waste separation facilities, there were difficulties in implementation due to limited space available in many cases.
- 23. <u>A Member</u> said that he recalled that the Council had expressed grave reservation at a previous meeting about the proposal of port development near Tai O due to the ecological impacts. He suggested the Council to register reservation about the NW Lantau CT option. <u>Mr Alfred Lau</u> explained that two port options at NW Lantau and Southwest Tsing Yi were included in the Study and decision had not been made on the location of the port facilities.
- A Member noted that there was a proposed port option near the Black Point area shown on page 48 of the Executive Summary of HK2030 Study. He considered that if the Black Point area was considered a viable option for the CT, there was no reason to rule out the development of the Liquefied Natural Gas terminal project. Mr Alfred Lau explained that the consolidation option shown on page 48 as well as the decentralization option shown on page 49 of the Executive Summary were different options considered under Stage 3 of the Study. The Black Point option was finally dropped as a possible port location in the final stage.
- A Member said that while the Study aimed to formulate a planning vision in the running up to 2030, there appeared a lack of long-term vision and innovative ideas in enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness in economic and environmental terms. Dr Anne Kerr said that the innovative ideas were mainly embedded in Stage 2 of the Study when the key environmental issues were

identified and SEA evaluation methodologies were developed. Nonetheless, quite a number of the elements were eroded in the relatively long study process in formulating the preferred development option. Looking ahead to 2030 was full of uncertainties and there were benefits of being modest. Recommendations on environmental enhancements were thus considered on a short-term, medium term and long-term basis to cater for needs in different time frame.

- A Member agreed that the most innovative part of the Study was the process, such as the way in engaging the public throughout different stages. However, she was quite disappointed with the results which were very conservative. For example, the integrated waste management facilities were not mentioned in the recommendations for waste management.
- 27. A Member considered that the report was very comprehensive. understood that there was a set of parameters predetermined before the Study, including the population forecast and different growth patterns. For example, the growth of container terminal business in Yantian and Shanghai was already ahead of Hong Kong. Nonetheless, he considered that it was difficult to comprehend the visionary nature of the information by extrapolating the current database into the future. To have a long-term vision, the report should come up with a series of options. For example, the options of sustaining the competitiveness of the economy by a similar or even a smaller population size or options of using industrial sites when more industries were relocated to the Mainland. Moreover. the Study should also take into account the issue of development intensity as there would be expectations for a lower household density when the income level increased. While the "what-if" approach was adopted, the scenarios developed were limited. Another Member agreed that the community in general would not tolerate the high household density when the income level increased.
- 28. <u>The Chairman</u> enquired about the potential of developing brownfield sites when more industries were relocated to the Mainland. <u>Dr Anne Kerr</u> confirmed that the overall Study had looked into the potential of maximizing the use of metropolitan areas as well as brownfield sites vacated by industrial development rather than developing the greenfield sites.
- 29. In reply to a Member's enquiry about the use of vacated industrial sites, <u>Mr Alfred Lau</u> said that the issue had been examined and the details could be found in one of the working papers related to the Study. The Planning Department had conducted reviews on outline zoning plans related to industrial

use, including the possibility of rezoning the industrial sites to business and residential uses. A recent survey carried out by the Planning Department revealed that the vacancy rate of industrial sites was not high. Another Member considered that this was mainly because the sites were used for business or other uses rather than the original purpose of industrial development.

- 30. <u>A Member</u> asked whether the issues of water and energy supply had been taken into account in the Study. <u>Dr Gui-yi Li</u> said that the issue of water resources in Hong Kong and Guangdong had been examined in the Study based on the assumptions. The local demand for water in Guangdong had also been taken into account. The result showed that the existing sources of water supply could cope with the additional demand with appropriate measures in place. <u>Dr Anne Kerr</u> said that energy consumption would continue to increase unless there was a paradigm shift in the use of energy. The recommendations in the SEA included classification or reclassification of waste materials for generation of renewable energy and energy conservation measures.
- 31. The Chairman asked whether the findings showed that it was optimistic for Hong Kong to fulfill the obligation in greenhouse gas emissions. Dr Gui-yi Li said that there was no limit on greenhouse gas emissions imposed on China under the Kyoto Protocol. However, China had to report regularly about the position and measures to control greenhouse gas emissions. Hong Kong, as part of China, would have to report on its efforts to control greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ms Anissa Wong said that in respect of Hong Kong's pledge to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) on the reduction of energy intensity by 25% in 2030 by using 2005 as the base year, the reduction had to be achieved by more efficient use of energy despite the continuous economic growth. Efforts would be focused on energy conservation measures, such as mandating the use of Building Energy Codes, extension of the Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme as well as public education. The Administration was confident that the target could be achieved and would closely monitor the development.
- 33. <u>A Member</u> said that he appreciated the complexities in conducting the large-scale study for a long time frame. Nonetheless, he considered that it was important to take into account information based on the prevailing development. He noted that the information on demand for cross-boundary road traffic in the Annex to the Executive Summary of the SEA showed that the

number of goods vehicles and container trucks was projected to double and triple respectively from 2010 to 2030. He noted that there was a new industrial policy in Guangdong requiring the relocation of heavy energy consuming industries and the shift from export-oriented to local-driven markets. This new policy would significantly reduce the number of cross-boundary container trucks.

- Mr Alfred Lau explained that the information on cross-boundary traffic was based on the Hong Kong Port Study 2020. In conducting the SEA, a set of valid data had to be employed and the assessment adopted a worst-case approach. A separate study on port cargo forecast was being conducted and the information would be updated. The Administration realized the change in the industrial policy and noted a slight drop in the number of cross-boundary container trucks recently. On the other hand, there was a substantial increase in the number of cross-boundary private cars. Dr Anne Kerr added that the new policy would have positive impacts on the air quality of Hong Kong in the long term
- 35. A Member said that he was involved in one of the specialist panels for the Study in the past six years. The Council Members' diverse views reflected the difficulties in conducting the Study in view of the dynamic nature of Hong Kong's development. He was pleased about the public engagement process throughout the Study. He considered that one of the most important achievements was to formulate the key planning concepts for future planning of Hong Kong. The recognition of the compact city development was an important one. It allowed highly efficient land use in terms of energy consumption and protection of the natural environment. Only a slight increase of 2% of the total land area was recommended for development to cope with the economic and population growth. This was quite unique for a city development in the world. The concept of "no-go area" was also important to balance environmental protection and development. While other parameters would continue to change as time went by, it was essential that these planning concepts would be maintained. In view of the dynamic and uncertain nature of the forecast, population projection being a typical example, the review mechanism was important to update the position and prepare Hong Kong better for the future. He informed Members that there were a large number of working papers containing details of the assumptions and basis of projections. The Chairman informed Members that there were a total of 48 working papers, 22 information notes and 15 consultants' technical papers (including the full report of the SEA) related to the Study which were all available on the website of HK2030 Study.

36. <u>The Chairman</u> concluded that the Council would like to make some observations, express some concerns and make some suggestions about the Study –

(a) Observations –

- (i) the Council considered that the HK2030 Study and the SEA were very comprehensive providing useful information for the understanding of the planning options and strategies;
- (ii) the Council appreciated the complexity of the multi-stage study process which emphasized public engagement at various stages;
- (iii) the Council endorsed the emphasis on sustainable development, a quality living environment, consolidation of urban development and rail-based transport network which were key principles underpinning the development of Hong Kong in the future;

(b) Concerns –

- (i) the Council had concerns at the NW Lantau option of the port facilities in view of the potential ecological impacts as well as the development of a third airport runway in view of the environmental impacts. Further detailed environmental studies would be necessary to assess the environmental acceptability of the projects and their cumulative impacts;
- (ii) the Council was concerned about the waste management issue, including C&D waste and municipal solid waste, under the development-oriented planning strategy for economic and population growth;
- (iii) the Council was concerned about the projected increase of population exposed to excessive road traffic noise level. Measures had to be taken to address the potential problem;

(c) Suggestions –

- (i) the Council considered that it would be useful for the Study to give a more specific vision with more innovative ideas on the long-term planning of Hong Kong;
- (ii) the Council considered that population forecast was an important basis for driving development and it would be useful for the Study to provide more specific information on the rationale behind the assumptions of the population forecast in order to put the development options on a solid path;
- (iii) the Council recognized the need for certain development components to maintain the competitiveness of Hong Kong, such as the development of CT in view of the rapid development of neighbouring cities; and
- (iv) the Council agreed the need for an efficient and frequent review mechanism by taking into account the latest development for formulating response plans.

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

- A Member said that while he understood that the process of the Study was difficult and agreed that the objective was admirable, he considered that the approach was too conservative and the recommendations were predictable. One of the major difficulties was that modellings were undertaken based on extrapolations on current database. In view of the dynamism of Hong Kong, it was difficult to catch up with the changes. He considered that a target-driven approach could be adopted. For example, a target population size for 2030 could be worked out based on the carrying capacity of the territory.
- 38. <u>A Member</u> shared the Member's views. He considered that it was increasingly difficult to conduct planning for Hong Kong due to the integration of Hong Kong with the Pearl River Delta region and the Mainland as a whole. The mindset of conducting planning might have to be changed.
- 39. <u>A Member</u> shared the Member's views. He said that one of the illustrations was the figures on cross-boundary road traffic which assumed a

three-fold increase of container trucks and twelve times of car traffic. Based on these projections, new road networks had to be built to cope with the demand. If a target-driven approach was adopted, the increase in car traffic could be controlled and passengers should be required to travel by rail-based networks.

- 40. <u>A Member shared the Member's views.</u> She considered that a vision would be necessary to drive Hong Kong's development by means of appropriate policies and legislations in order to make Hong Kong a better place to live
- 41. <u>A Member</u> considered that it was an issue for the Government as a whole to set out the vision for Hong Kong in 2030 after considering the findings and assessments of the Study. There should be some parties at a certain level in the Government to own the whole plan and set targets to achieve the vision.
- 42. <u>A Member</u> said that he appreciated the difficulties in carrying the Study which was quite an impossible task. He had reservation in adopting the target-based approach. The Mainland Government had spent the past 50 years in trying out the target-based planning and proved it not workable. The fact that the five-year plan was changed to five-year programme was indicative of the Central Government's recognition that the target-based approach was not workable.
- 43. <u>A Member</u> appreciated that population projection was a very difficult task. Whatever assumptions made would be subject to challenges. Nonetheless, she considered that different scenarios should be worked out, such as scenarios on carrying capacity approach and on projections provided by C&SD. On the planning, she agreed that there was a lack of clear vision and innovative ideas. The recommendations tended to be compromising.
- 44. <u>A Member</u> said that most of the Members' concerns had been raised by the study team before the issue of the report, including the high community expectations of the recommendations and the target-driven approach. The major limitation was that the Study was carried out by the Planning Department and it was difficult for the department to dictate the policies of other bureaux. The Study was more a fit-on-demand type of study on the spatial planning. A target-driven approach could only be conducted when the Study was conducted at the top of the hierarchy.
- 45. <u>The Chairman</u> noted Members' sentiment on the insufficient

envisioning of the Study. To plan Hong Kong's vision for 2030, the Study should be brought up at a higher level of the Administration's hierarchy.

Agenda Item 4: The New Eco Awards Scheme (ACE Paper 22/2007)

- Dr Ellen Chan briefed Members on the paper on behalf of the Environmental Campaign Committee Secretariat. She explained that the new scheme sought to merge the three existing government-initiated award schemes (the Hong Kong Eco-Business Awards, the Wastewi\$e Scheme and the Hong Kong Energy Efficiency Awards) as well as other environmentally-related awards and certification schemes to form a more prestigious award scheme to encourage businesses and organizations to adopt green management and present them with a unique opportunity to benchmark their commitment towards environmental protection.
- A Member asked whether the relevant organizers currently running the award or certification schemes had been consulted as he understood that the Business Environment Council was considering to expand the "Hong Kong Eco-Products Awards" to other service industries. Dr Ellen Chan confirmed that the relevant organizers had been consulted and generally welcomed the proposal of merging the schemes to enhance recognition and maximize efficient use of resources for similar client groups. Ms Anissa Wong explained that as the "Hong Kong Awards for Industries" organized by the Trade and Industry Department (TID) was a well-established scheme and "environmental performance" was one of the many categories under the scheme, it was understandable that TID would prefer a status quo position. However, the Administration would liaise with TID further in due course
- The Chairman noted that the proposal included the "recognition labels" and "annual awards" and there would be four types of labels, including Wastewi\$e, Energywi\$e, Indoor Air Quality and Eco-Products. He asked whether there would be a system to ascertain whether the products submitted for the Eco-Products labels were genuinely eco-friendly. Dr Ellen Chan said that there would be a system to evaluate the products for assessing whether they were genuine eco-friendly products. The labelling scheme would be a continuous process and applications could be submitted at any time of the year with no application fees required.

- 49. The Chairman suggested that "green housing development" be considered as a new category under the labelling scheme. He considered that such a label would give incentives to the developers in considering a green building scheme with eco-friendly facilities, such as waste separation facilities, energy conservation devices, green roof and landscaping as well as minimum number of apartments exposed to excessive road traffic noise. A Member agreed that this would be a good idea for planned development.
- 50. <u>A Member</u> suggested the Administration to liaise with the HK-BEAM Society which was the founder of the Building Environmental Assessment Method (BEAM) in assessing the environmental performance of buildings.
- Dr Ellen Chan said that consideration had been made on this aspect and they had liaised with relevant parties. The BEAM involved a relatively intensive and detailed process in assessing the environmental performance and sustainability of buildings. The nature was quite different from that of the labelling scheme. Merging it under the "recognition labels" might cause confusion to participants. Nonetheless, there was scope in considering the possibility of tying in the two schemes.
- A Member supported the proposal. Another Member considered the new scheme a good one but there was no need for the scheme to be all embracing. While there were merits in coordinated efforts, having different organizations rolling out their own schemes in their own arenas might also have the benefits of diversity.
- 53. <u>A Member</u> welcomed the rationalization and merging of government-initiated schemes. He shared the Member's views that diversity should also be encouraged in the private sector if they wanted to do so. He considered the "recognition labels" a good scheme which would promote image building by benchmarking an organization's commitment towards environmental protection, especially for small and medium-sized companies. The "annual awards" which involved keen competition usually favoured large-scale companies. Nonetheless, an effective auditing system had to be put in place for the labelling scheme in order to ensure credibility of the labels.
- 54. <u>The Chairman</u> concluded that the Council was supportive of the proposed new Eco Awards Scheme which would encourage businesses and

Action

organizations to adopt green management and set good examples in the community. He hoped the Administration would consider the suggestions made by Members.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

Proposed meeting schedule for 2008

55. The proposed meeting schedule of the Council for 2008, which had been circulated to Members, was endorsed.

Tentative items for discussion at the next meeting

56. The agenda was being compiled. Members would be informed in due course.

Agenda Item 6: Date of Next Meeting

57. The next meeting was scheduled for 10 December 2007.

ACE Secretariat November 2007