

**Confirmed Minutes of the 154<sup>th</sup> Meeting of  
the Advisory Council on the Environment  
held on 14 July 2008 at 2:30 pm**

**Present:**

Prof LAM Kin-che, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Prof WONG Yuk-shan, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Prof Paul LAM, JP  
Mr Edwin LAU  
Dr NG Cho-nam, BBS  
Prof POON Chi-sun  
Mr Markus SHAW  
Mr Simon WONG, JP  
Mr Carlson K S CHAN (Secretary)

**Absent with Apologies:**

Dr Dorothy CHAN, BBS  
Mr James GRAHAM  
Ms Betty HO  
Prof Howard HUANG  
Ms Goretti LAU  
Dr MAN Chi-sum, JP  
Mr TSANG Kam-lam  
Mr Eddie WONG  
Prof WONG Tze-wai  
Dr YAU Wing-kwong

**In Attendance:**

Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Mr P Y TAM	Assistant Director/Technical Services, Planning Department
Mr CHAN Jee-keung	Senior Wetland and Fauna Conservation Officer, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Ms Monica KO	Principal Information Officer, Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Ms Josephine CHEUNG	Chief Executive Officer (CBD), EPD
Mr KWAN Chung-kit	Office Manager (CBD), EPD
Ms Loletta LAU	Executive Officer (CBD), EPD

### **In Attendance for Agenda Item 3**

Mrs Mary LEUNG	Assistant Director (3) (Public Relations Outside Hong Kong), Information Services Department (ISD)
Mrs Tammy CHAN	Chief Brand Officer, ISD
Ms Evani AU YEUNG	Senior Brand Officer, ISD
Ms Rachel CHAN	Chief Catalyst, InnoFoco

### **In Attendance for Agenda Item 4:**

Mr Elvis AU, JP	Assistant Director (Water Policy), EPD
Dr H Y YEUNG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Sewerage Infrastructure), EPD
Mr Peter BALDWIN	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Sewerage Infrastructure)2, EPD

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### Action

#### **Agenda Item 1 : Confirmation of the draft minutes of the 153<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on 18 June 2008**

The draft minutes were confirmed without amendment.

#### **Agenda Item 2 : Matters arising from the minutes of the 153<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on 18 June 2008**

2. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 3 : Brand Hong Kong Review** ***(ACE Paper 20/2008)***

3. Mrs Mary Leung briefed Members on the background of the Brand Hong Kong (BrandHK) programme and the Government's initiative to review and revitalize the Brand, which was launched in 2001 to promote the development of Hong Kong as "Asia's world city". She said that the BrandHK review aimed to create and foster a shared vision for Hong Kong, to be formulated based on consolidated views and aspirations of the local community. Ms Rachel Chan briefed members about the global trends of city branding and the details of the BrandHK review programme in envisioning Hong Kong 2020.

4. The Chairman noted with concern the conclusion of a study conducted by location branding expert Simon Anholt that while Hong Kong was seen as having a strong footprint on the world with great potential for business, it was not perceived to be an attractive place to live, work or study as stated in the footnote on page 3 of the paper. He recalled that the theme of the 1999 Policy Address was to “Build a Quality Home for Quality People”. He considered that this theme reflected his vision for Hong Kong. Quality life in an attractive living and business environment was one of the important conditions in the quest for sustainable development of a city.

5. A Member enquired about the effectiveness of the BrandHK programme launched in 2001. Mrs Mary Leung observed that the programme was more successfully implemented overseas than in Hong Kong. The Information Services Department (ISD) had worked closely with Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) outside Hong Kong and related organizations, such as Invest Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Tourism Board, by using the BrandHK as a platform to promote the city’s image and core competence. The feedback from ETOs showed that BrandHK was relatively positive but of course the respondents were confined to the ETOs’ interlocutors.

6. A Member considered that branding a city was different from branding a company or a commercial product. In the BrandHK review, he suggested that the Administration should focus on the city’s unique local cultural and historical elements. Rather than relying on the design of a logo, the buy-in process of the local community was crucial in promoting ownership of the Brand. He believed that as the vast majority of the local population was Chinese, a Brand design based on western culture would stand a lower chance of public acceptance.

7. Mrs Mary Leung explained that the focus of the 2001 branding exercise was primarily external with the aim of promoting a positive image of Hong Kong to the international audience. The programme was launched then to augment Hong Kong’s external promotion programme after Reunification in 1997 and the subsequent Asia’s financial crisis. She agreed that public ownership was instrumental to BrandHK’s success. The current Brand review would focus on creating and fostering a shared vision for the local community based on the views and aspirations of the community. “Culture and heritage”

was indeed included as one of the major pillars of a location brand as stated in paragraph 9 of the paper. The current exercise would include qualitative and quantitative opinion surveys, consultative sessions and public engagement programmes covering different sectors of the community to tap the views and aspirations of the public, “co-create” a vision for the city and promote ownership of the Brand.

8. A Member agreed with the Member that branding without local historical value could not gain public acceptance and would not be successful. While promoting a positive image to the international audience was essential, recognition of the Brand by the local community was equally important. He cast doubt on the rationale behind branding Hong Kong as “Asia’s world city”. Mrs Mary Leung explained that the positioning of Hong Kong as “Asia’s world city” in the 2001 branding exercise was based on the results of extensive surveys conducted prior to the launch of the Brand. The Brand tagline reflected both the strengths and aspirations of Hong Kong. To illustrate this point, she quoted the inaugural speech for the BrandHK programme 2001 made by the then Chief Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang: “Hong Kong’s positioning as Asia’s world city is a natural fit with everything we have achieved, as a community and an economy. But more importantly, it provides us with a constant reminder, that we can never stand still - not just in the realm of economic freedom and development, but in many other areas that impact on the quality of life, and the quality of the society in which we live.”

9. Noting that Hong Kong was far from being a sustainable city, a Member sought clarification on whether the branding exercise should reflect the reality or project people’s aspirations. Ms Rachel Chan explained that the two concepts complemented each other. Location branding included the projection of strengths of a place at the present stage but at the same time aspirations for the future based on its core competence. For example, comments from some focus groups reflected that the core competence of Hong Kong at the present stage was efficiency, flexibility and adaptability of Hong Kong people. If Hong Kong were to increase its competitiveness in the world, Hong Kong would require more creativity and imagination as well as a better environment and better quality of life. Thus, both the reality and the aspirations for the vision of Hong Kong by 2020 would be built into BrandHK.

10. A Member asked what if the aspirations were not founded on

reality and did not reflect prevailing policies. Ms Rachel Chan explained that branding had to be founded on solid core values and attributes based on the past, such as culture and history, as well as the core competence at present. It was based on this solid foundation that the brand vision could be developed. The brand vision of a city with community consensus had to be aligned with corresponding policies and road maps to set the way forward in order to achieve the vision.

11. A Member referred to page 31 of the booklet *This is Hong Kong* (tabled at the meeting), which described Hong Kong as a “healthy city” and introduced “Victoria Harbour” and “A symphony of lights”. He noted that the findings of a survey showed that there were 600 cases of pre-mature death per year and the estimated economic loss due to air pollution problems was \$1 to \$2 billion per year. Moreover, the natural coastline of Victoria Harbour was greatly affected by reclamation. Display of incessant neon lights after midnight was wasteful and some residents were affected by light pollution. He was concerned that Hong Kong’s image projected by the booklet might not reflect the real situation. On the branding exercise, he considered that Hong Kong should earn its own brand through solid hard work by every sector of the community with the implementation of corresponding policies to achieve the long-term vision.

12. A Member agreed that it was necessary for Hong Kong to earn the brand which reflected the reality. To some extent, the brand could be aspirational with vision for the future but it should still be built on the reality for achievable targets.

13. A Member said that the branding exercise involved image building and promotion of the unique features of Hong Kong. He was frustrated by the fact that promotional campaigns had failed to highlight the natural beauty of Hong Kong. On the contrary, the image of Hong Kong was often linked with pollution. From the environmental point of view, Hong Kong was actually a very balanced city in terms of nature conservation and development. About 50% of the land was protected and only about 20% of the land was urbanized. It was unique that Hong Kong, being an urbanized city with a huge population packed on a small piece of land, had a large number of endangered species and was famous for its biodiversity of different habitats. Some foreigners who learnt about the natural beauty of Hong Kong were amazed that Hong Kong had

the best for both worlds – within one day, people could enjoy nature in the country parks, wetlands, beaches and scenic coastlines and within a short time frame, they could also enjoy the excitement of a metropolitan city with world-class shopping centres and facilities. He suggested that the city's contrast of having a beautiful countryside right behind a highly urbanized centre should be promoted alongside with its cultural contrast of the East meeting the West. The landscape contrast of having a natural jungle with dense woodlands at the back of a concrete jungle of tall buildings should be emphasized.

14. A Member echoed the Member's suggestion of promoting Hong Kong's uniqueness of being a city with "two tales" – with the urbanized cosmopolitan city centre located in the proximity of natural rural landscape. Moreover, he considered that Hong Kong was at present a rather wasteful city from the environmental point of view. To make Hong Kong a truly sustainable city, the Government should tackle the problems strategically, such as in the aspects of energy efficiency and behavioural change of wasteful habits. Otherwise, Hong Kong would lose its competitive edge in the global marketplace.

15. Mrs Mary Leung explained that Hong Kong's natural beauty had been publicized through various channels. For instance, the main aim of *This is Hong Kong* was to promote BrandHK's core values, which were drawn up based on the results of a major branding survey covering over 10,000 interviewees. A special section was inserted in the booklet to highlight the pristine nature of the city - its hiking trails, tree planting programme, the Mai Po Marshes, its amazing biodiversity and unique geology. Moreover, pictures on local scenic spots and highlights of Hong Kong's pristine nature were included in other important publications, such as the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorative book and song sheets for top officials going on road shows overseas and in the Mainland. Efforts to promote the natural beauty of Hong Kong would continue.

16. The Chairman noted that there was a remark made at the conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) held last year about making reference to Singapore as an ecological city. He doubted the positioning of Hong Kong in this aspect after learning the remark. A Member agreed that Hong Kong was more qualified than Singapore to become an "ecological city" in view of its biodiversity, existence of endangered

species and wildlife. In comparison, about 43% of the land in Hong Kong was designated as natural reserve but in Singapore, only about 6% to 7%. Singapore would better represent a garden city which was more artificial, homogeneous and with little wildlife.

17. A Member considered that the BrandHK review was important for Hong Kong to develop a brand for the next decade. It should not only be a marketing or promotion exercise but also more importantly, a strategy mapping out exercise for the future of Hong Kong by 2020 which involved social, cultural as well as political aspects. He suggested the establishment of a committee with representatives from relevant sectors to work with the consultant to consider branding Hong Kong from a more macro perspective. Entrusting the task to a private consultant would inevitably narrow the scope to that of branding a company or a commercial product. Mrs Mary Leung explained that the ISD was in the process of engaging the public in the Brand review exercise. There were plans to tap the inputs from experts of different sectors by going through a process of strategic thinking and coming up with values and aspirations for Hong Kong in the next decade. Some co-creation teams would later be formed to work on proposals based on specific themes, including the environment. Team members would include senior government officials, professionals, business leaders, entrepreneurial talents and representatives of the public. A high-level leadership team chaired by the Financial Secretary would be set up to consider the branding proposals, some of which might eventually be selected for incorporation into the Government's policy objectives.

18. Ms Rachel Chan solicited Members' support in completing the questionnaires on "My HK 2020", whilst noting that members might not be able to take part in the collage exercise at the meeting. She said that the consultation sessions were only the beginning of the Brand review. Efforts would be made to establish the relationship between reality and the brand vision, and to work out the implementation plan for a shared vision based on consolidated views and aspirations of the Hong Kong community.

19. The Chairman summarized Members' views as follows –

- (a) branding of Hong Kong was not only for marketing to the international audience, but also building a unique identity with ownership by those who lived and worked in Hong Kong;

- (b) Hong Kong should take up the challenge of “dare to be different”. Hong Kong was different as a city of contrasts in various aspects – tradition versus modernity, East versus West, natural beauty versus cosmopolitan city, natural jungle versus urban jungle;
- (c) Hong Kong had to be different as Hong Kong had to stand out among the thousands of cities in China. Standing out as a green and ecological city could provide ample business opportunities for Hong Kong; and
- (d) Hong Kong could be different by aligning practices and policies with aspirations. There was a need for a high-level committee to take forward the BrandHK review from strategic and holistic perspectives in order to realize the aspirations and visions. The local community would require a green and sustainable city to build a quality home.

**Agenda Item 4 : Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS) planning parameters for the commencement of the design and construction of HATS Stage 2B**

*(ACE Paper 21/2008)*

20. Mr Elvis Au briefed Members on the levels and trends of key planning parameters in relation to the design and construction of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS) Stage 2B. He highlighted that the HATS Stage 2 was being implemented in two stages, namely Stage 2A and Stage 2B, with centralized treatment at Stonecutters Island. Stage 2A, mainly comprised a deep tunnel system, expansion of chemical treatment facilities and provision of disinfection facilities. Completion of Stage 2A was targeted for 2014. Stage 2B would further upgrade the sewage treatment level by addition of a biological treatment plant adjacent to the Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works (SCISTW). The programme would depend on a review of key planning parameters for Stage 2B planned for 2010/11. Based on the prevailing trends and projections of the planning parameters for Stage 2B, it was concluded that it remained appropriate to review the programme for the commencement of the design of Stage 2B in 2010/11.



21. A Member said that he was glad to note the improvement of the water quality brought about by the HATS Stage 1 implemented so far. Nonetheless, he observed that the problem of water-borne refuse was increasingly serious which had affected the water quality. The amount of refuse on beaches had increased substantially. The deterioration of the situation at the Big Wave Bay was a typical example. In launching beach cleaning exercises, much more manpower resources were required to clean up a beach as compared with few years ago. He wondered which department was responsible for tackling the problem of water-borne refuse.

22. The Chairman echoed a Member's concern about the problem of refuse on beaches. During a recent field trip to Sai Wan in Sai Kung, he was surprised to see a large amount of refuse on the beach and lagoon which spoiled the beautiful scenery.

23. Mr Elvis Au agreed that the problem of water-borne refuse was a cause for concern. He said that the problem straddled different government departments, including the Marine Department and Drainage Services Department, and concerted efforts would be required. Public education would be important in raising public awareness of the issue and in changing the habit of littering, in particular littering on beaches and waters.

24. A Member learnt that some experts held the view that the biological treatment plant under Stage 2B might not be necessary given the large amount of land and financial resources required and the significant improvement brought or expected to be brought by the Stage 1 and Stage 2A. He asked whether the Stage 2B project could be dispensed with so that resources could be diverted to other worthy courses. Mr Elvis Au explained that based on the findings of the "Environmental and Engineering Feasibility Assessment Studies in relation to the way forward for the HATS" conducted in 2004 for medium and long-term planning, the Stage 2B would be required. The key planning parameters, such as dissolved oxygen (DO) and unionized ammonia, would approach or even exceed the limit in view of the anticipated increase in population and sewage discharge. The uncertainty was the timing to trigger the implementation of Stage 2B. Thus, the levels and trends of key parameters in relation to the design and construction of the Stage 2B were being closely monitored. Planning works for Stage 2B were carried out in parallel. A study

on the co-use of the land by the biological treatment plant and other container and port related uses was being conducted to ensure the availability of land and infrastructure for construction of the biological treatment plant once decision was made.

25. The Chairman said that the Council was consulted on a number of occasions for the HATS project. The consensus was that a phased implementation approach would be adopted. The Government was committed to Stage 2B and it was a matter of timing for the implementation. The review programme for the commencement of the design and construction of Stage 2B was scheduled for 2010/11.

26. The Chairman noted that the planning parameters for the Stage 2B included sewage flow, unionized ammonia and DO which mainly related to toxicity to marine life. He considered that the planning parameters would also depend on the use of water body. If the water were to be used for other purposes, such as recreational and sports, the measurement of bacterial level as a parameter would also be required. Mr Elvis Au agreed that the bacterial level was also an important parameter in assessing the water quality. He explained that the disinfection facilities under Stage 2A had been advanced for completion in October 2009 to help reduce *E. coli* level in the water body. With the implementation of the Stage 2A, the remaining 25% of sewage outflow along the northern and southwestern shores of Hong Kong Island would be conveyed to the SCISTW for treatment. The bacterial level would be anticipated to decrease significantly. Thus, the problem of bacterial level was being closely monitored and addressed in an earlier stage.

27. A Member referred to Figure 3 (4-day average unionized ammonia levels in the vicinity of the HATS outfall) and Figure 4 (minimum DO and depth average DO levels in the vicinity of the HATS outfall) and asked whether these monitoring data included the projection of sewage outflow increase from SCISTW after completion of Stage 2A.

28. Mr Elvis Au explained that the monitoring data in Figures 3 and 4 showed the actual measurement of the parameters in 2006 and 2007 with the implementation of Stage 1. For projection of water quality after implementation of Stage 2A, separate water quality modelings had been conducted and results presented in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

report on “HATS Stage 2A” to be submitted to the Council shortly.

29. A Member considered that the review of the Stage 2B should not only take into account actual measurement after the implementation of Stage 1 but also modeling results with the increased sewage outflow of the SCISTW under Stage 2A. Mr Elvis Au explained that the review of the Stage 2B would take into account all available information at the point in time, including the actual monitoring data, modeling results, information in the EIA report of Stage 2A and updated forecasts of population growth and increase in sewage outflow.

30. Dr H Y Yeung added that the main purpose of the paper was to review whether there were significant changes in the planning parameters which warranted a change in the original schedule for reviewing Stage 2B in 2010/11. Continuous monitoring would be conducted and more information, including actual monitoring data and modeling results, available at a later stage would help predict more accurately the timing for commissioning Stage 2B.

31. A Member asked whether there would be external inputs for the review of Stage 2B, such as the expert panel established for the HATS project some years ago. Mr Elvis Au said that the Environmental Protection Department would initiate and conduct the review of Stage 2B. The expert panel which offered advice on the HATS project at the initial stage had dissolved.

32. A Member suggested engaging relevant parties and the public widely in conducting the review of Stage 2B in order to gain public acceptance as there would be divergent views on the need and technical aspects of the project. Mr Elvis Au assured Members that there would be a transparent engagement process for this major review for collecting views of the experts, stakeholders and concerned parties. For example, an engagement process was underway for the co-use study which examined the potential sites of the biological treatment plant under Stage 2B.

33. Ms Anissa Wong said that regular monitoring of the water quality would continue to be conducted to keep track of any signs of unexpected early deterioration in the water environment. At the present stage, priority would be given to the early implementation of Stage 2A. In conducting the review of Stage 2B, considerations would be given to the details of the consultation

process, including the need for wider inputs and establishment of another expert panel.

34. The Chairman summarized Members' views as follows –

- (a) the Victoria Harbour was an important asset of Hong Kong and the water quality should continue to be improved according to the plan of the HATS project;
- (b) the Council understood that the Government was committed to take forward Stage 2B and the timing of the project would be subject to a review scheduled for 2010/11;
- (c) based on the update of monitoring data on the planning parameters, there was no evidence to suggest the need for advancing or postponing the planned time frame for reviewing the programme for the commencement of the design and construction of Stage 2B in 2010/11; and
- (d) the Council suggested engaging the stakeholders, experts and general public widely in the review and planning process of Stage 2B.

(Post-meeting note: A Member jotted down a question about the public safety issue of the chlorine for the disinfection facilities before leaving the meeting. The response to the question was provided to him after the meeting and recorded below.

The Member asked whether the Administration had made a presentation or explanation of the transportation/handling/storage of the very large quantities of chlorine for the disinfection of Stage 2A.

The response was that disinfection of HATS effluent would be carried out by dosing with sodium hypochlorite solution, followed by dechlorination using sodium bisulphite in order to remove any residual chlorine. The final effluent would then be discharged to the sea via the existing submarine outfall. The chemicals would be delivered to SCISTW either by truck or barge in compliance with the relevant requirements of the Fire Services Department and the Marine

Department for delivery of such goods. Regarding the potential risks and hazards associated with the handling and storage of the chemicals at SCISTW, a detailed impact assessment had been undertaken under the EIA on “HATS – Provision of Disinfection Facilities at Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works”, the report of which was approved under the EIA Ordinance by the Director of Environmental Protection in November 2007. The assessment results confirmed that, with the implementation of the precautionary and mitigation measures proposed in the EIA study for the handling and storage of the chemicals, the potential impacts would be within acceptable limits and the potential risks to the public were in compliance with the criteria stated in the Technical Memorandum of the EIA Ordinance. The above assessment and findings were presented during the public consultation forum with green groups, academics and professional bodies on 22 August 2007. The topic was also presented and discussed at the EIA Subcommittee meeting held on 17 September 2007 when the disinfection EIA report was considered. The EIA report was endorsed by the Advisory Council on the Environment with conditions on 15 October 2007 and the conditions had been incorporated into the Environmental Permit issued under the EIA Ordinance.)

**Agenda Item 5 : Any other business**

**Tentative items for discussion at the next meeting**

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

**Agenda Item 6 : Date of next meeting**

36. The Council agreed that no meeting would be held in August 2008. The next meeting was scheduled on 8 September 2008.

(Post-meeting note: The meeting scheduled for 8 September 2008 was cancelled.)

**ACE Secretariat**  
**July 2008**