

**Confirmed Minutes of the 255th Meeting
of the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE)
on 7 November 2022 at 2:30 p.m.**

Present:

Mr Stanley WONG, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Prof Nora TAM, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ms Carmen CHAN, BBS, JP
Ms Sylvia CHAN, MH
Ms Ada FUNG, BBS
Ir Samantha KONG
Ms LAM Chung-yan, MH
Prof LAU Chi-pang, BBS, JP
Prof Alexis LAU, JP
Ms Julia LAU, JP
Dr Winnie LAW
Mr Andrew LEE
Prof Kenneth LEUNG, JP
Dr MA Kwan-ki
Dr SUNG Yik-hei
Ms Christina TANG
Mr Simon WONG, BBS, JP
Dr WONG Kwok-yan, MH
Prof WONG Sze-chun, BBS, JP
Mr Bruno LUK, JP (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Dr Jeanne NG
Dr Raymond YAU

In Attendance:

Mr Simon CHAN	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Ms Maggie CHIN	Assistant Director of Planning / Technical Services, Planning Department (PlanD)
Ms Celia TAM	Principal Information Officer (News), Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Ms Karen CHEK	Chief Executive Officer (CBD), EPD
Miss Sally SHEK	Executive Officer (CBD) 1, EPD
Miss Avynn WONG	Executive Officer (CBD) 2, EPD

In Attendance for Item 1:

Mr TSE Chin-wan, BBS, JP	Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB)
Miss Diane WONG, JP	Under Secretary for Environment and Ecology, EEB

Mrs Millie NG, JP

Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology
(Environment) (Acting) / Director of Environmental
Protection (DEP) (Acting), EEB

Ms Fanny HUI

Press Secretary to Secretary for Environment and
Ecology, EEB

Action

The Chairman welcomed Members for attending the meeting in person or by Zoom. He informed the meeting that apologies of absence had been received from Dr Jeanne Ng and Dr Raymond Yau.

Item 1 : Briefing by the Secretary for Environment and Ecology on 2022 Policy Address (ACE Paper 14/2022)

Presentation cum Question-and-Answer Session (Open session)

2. The Chairman welcomed Mr Tse Chin-wan, Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Miss Diane Wong, Under Secretary for Environment and Ecology, and Mrs Millie Ng, Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Environment) (Acting) / DEP (Acting), to the meeting.

3. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Tse Chin-wan briefed Members on the major policy measures of EEB (Environment Branch) and EPD in relation to environmental protection and other relevant issues in the 2022 Policy Address (PA).

Decarbonisation

4. A Member appreciated the Government's effort in setting ambitious targets for decarbonisation as well as for the promotion of green transport. In response to the Member's enquiry on the allocation of \$240 billion to support mitigation and adaptation measures for combating climate change mentioned in the PA, Mr Tse Chin-wan responded that the budget would mainly be allocated to the development or enhancement of infrastructures such as drainage system, district cooling system and waste-to-energy facilities.

5. With reference to the global decarbonisation trend, a Member highlighted the importance of a nature-based solution, such as tree planting and woodland conservation, on carbon storage and climate adaptation. The Member suggested that the Government should leverage on the abundance of greenery in Hong Kong and incorporate a nature-based solution in the Climate Action Plan. Mr Tse Chin-wan welcomed the suggestion and said that the Government would explore the possibility to incorporate it into the strategy to achieve carbon neutrality and enhance climate adaptation.

The Northern Metropolis

6. The Chairman highlighted that the large-scale development in the Northern Metropolis would be an unprecedented challenge between environmental conservation and development. He enquired about the Government's plan on environmental protection while achieving the goal of carbon neutrality. Prof Alexis Lau echoed the Chairman and further enquired about the plan and synergy between the development of the Northern Metropolis and the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands.

7. Mr Tse Chin-wan explained that the Government would explore the implementation of a New Proactive Conservation Policy under the framework of the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy through which key conservation areas and areas of development would respectively be identified with a view to meeting both the conservation and development needs. Mr Tse remarked that a management plan would be devised to protect the species and enhance the quality of habitats as well as biodiversity of the conservation areas. He said that AFCD had commenced a strategic feasibility study to determine the areas and management model of the conservation areas in the Northern Metropolis. A Member suggested that the New Proactive Conservation Policy should be adopted territory-wide instead of mainly in the Northern Metropolis.

8. A Member supported the various environmental policy measures set out in the PA and hoped that they could be implemented as soon as possible. Apart from striking a balance between environmental conservation and development, the Member proposed that the Government should formulate a strategic territorial land use plan to address the needs of different industries including agriculture and fisheries so that the limited land resources could be put to their best use. Mr Tse Chin-wan responded that a blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries would be formulated to promote the upgrading and sustainable development of the industries concerned.

9. A Member noted that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) had been conducted on Hong Kong as a whole in the context of Hong Kong 2030+, but the relevant report was not published. He suggested that the Government should conduct another high-level SEA for the development of the Northern Metropolis in cooperation with the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and gauge the views of the public in the process.

10. A Member suggested that EEB should promote the key environmental initiatives in the PA such as nature conservation measures in the Northern Metropolis by quantifying and highlighting the financial resources involved. The Chairman pointed out that it might be difficult to quantify the efforts and financial resources at this stage. Mr Tse Chin-wan added that the Government needed to be prudent to make good use of the resources available to achieve its targets under the current economic situation. Mr Tse and the Chairman considered that the commitment to

reserve around 2,000 hectares (ha) of land in the Northern Metropolis demonstrated the weight of nature conservation in the government policy.

Nature conservation

11. A Member enquired about the total area of country parks and the increase in percentage as compared with the existing total area after the designation of the Robin's Nest as one of the country parks in Hong Kong. Another Member sought further details on the upcoming work plan for the Robin's Nest Country Park (RNCP). Mr Tse Chin-wan pointed out that the total area of country parks in Hong Kong was increasing continuously over the years and the ratio of country park areas to the total area of Hong Kong would increase proportionately after the designation of the RNCP. He added that the detailed figures on the total area of country parks in Hong Kong would be provided to Members after the meeting. The Chairman supplemented that based on his knowledge there should be about a 1% increase in the total area of country parks after the designation.

(Post-meeting notes: After the designation of the proposed RNCP which was about 530 ha in size, the total area of country parks in Hong Kong would increase by about 1.2% from the existing 44,312 ha to 44,842 ha.)

12. While a Member was pleased with the proposed establishment of Nature and Wetland Conservation Parks under the framework of the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy, she noticed some illegal land filling and fly-tipping activities near Sha Ling in Lok Ma Chau Loop which damaged the habitats since the announcement of the Strategy. She opined that appropriate actions should be taken to conserve the habitats during the transitional period before the conservation areas were officially designated as the Nature or Wetland Conservation Parks. Trusting that the relevant government departments would take enforcement actions against illegal activities as and when appropriate, Mr Tse Chin-wan said that Members were welcomed to share their observations for the relevant departments to take appropriate follow-up actions.

13. Pointing out that there had been serious illegal hunting of wild animals in the country parks, a Member reminded that without effective management measures as well as stringent enforcement actions, the designation of country parks per se would not suffice in protecting wildlife. The Member advised the Government to strengthen monitoring and reinforce enforcement actions, particularly patrols during night time when illegal activities usually took place. The Member further suggested that a fixed penalty system could be adopted to facilitate the enforcement actions of AFCD and enhance the deterrent effect. As some organised illegal hunting activities were noticed in the country parks, Mr Simon Chan shared with the meeting that AFCD had collaborated with the Police Force in a large-scale operation in May 2022 during which some offenders were arrested. He remarked that AFCD would continue the efforts to combat illegal wildlife hunting and collection in the countryside.

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP)

14. A Member suggested the Government to devise key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the effectiveness of protective measures for nature conservation and biodiversity enhancement. He added that performance reviews should be conducted regularly and the result should be released for public information. Mr Simon Chan advised Members that 67 specific actions with clear targets and deliverables were set out in the BSAP 2016-2021. Pointing out that BSAP 2016-2021 had lapsed, the Member enquired about its renewal plan. Mr Tse Chin-wan explained that the BSAP would be updated with reference to the global biodiversity framework to be discussed at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference which was postponed due to the pandemic. Another Member considered it necessary for the Government to review the effectiveness and progress of the 67 specific items set out in the BSAP 2016-2021 and gauge the views of the ACE in formulating the next BSAP taking into account the review outcomes as well as the global framework.

15. Pointing out that green groups had been advocating the designation of 30% of Hong Kong's waters as marine protected areas by 2030, a Member enquired about the Government's views in this regard and suggested strengthening marine conservation actions, particularly in connection with the development of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands. Mr Tse Chin-wan responded that various action plans on marine conservation, such as designating new marine parks, enhancing fisheries management measures within marine parks and conducting surveys of priority marine habitats and species, were set up in the current BSAP. With biodiversity mainstreaming as one of the key areas of the BSAP, Mr Tse opined that nature conservation in development projects would be given due consideration by the government departments involved. He added that marine conservation measures would be further examined when the next BSAP was formulated.

16. As climate change would adversely affect the survival of species and their habitats, a Member opined that the Government should examine the potential impact of climate change and take appropriate measures to protect species diversity. Another Member suggested strengthening collaboration with the GBA in nature conservation and enhancing biodiversity through the translocation of appropriate and rare species, such as freshwater turtles, to the GBA as joint conservation efforts.

Wetland and Marine Conservation

17. A Member highlighted the importance of wetland conservation with reference to President Xi's recent speech on strengthening efforts for its conservation. He said that the Government should carefully consider the appropriate carrying capacity of the Northern Metropolis with a view to ensuring the conservation of Pak Nai as well as expanding the coverage of the Mai Po Wetland. Bearing in mind President Xi's directives, Mr Tse Chin-wan assured Members that EEB would spare no efforts in conserving the wetlands of Hong Kong.

18. While a Member was supportive of the New Proactive Conservation Policy, she questioned why Tsim Bei Tsui, Lau Fau Shan and Pak Nai were reserved as Coastal Protection Parks instead of Wetland Conservation Parks. She cautioned that the status of Coastal Protection Parks would not provide sufficient protection to these areas. The Member highlighted that the Pak Nai areas were of high ecological value with rich mangroves which could provide food sources to the migratory birds. Taking into consideration the potential rise in sea level in the future, the Member and another Member reminded that sufficient buffer zones around the wetlands should be reserved to avoid pest problems as well as to maintain the health of the mangroves. With reference to President Xi's aspiration to build an international mangrove centre in Shenzhen, one of the two Members reminded that the mangroves near Tsim Bei Tsui, Pak Nai and Mai Po were playing an important role in creating a synergy in wetland conservation with Shenzhen. She furthered that the Government should strengthen regional cooperation with the GBA in this regard. Acknowledging the importance of both local and regional wetland conservation, Mr Tse Chin-wan assured Members that EEB would strive to enhance cooperation with the GBA on the subject matter.

19. Pointing out that the traditional district cooling system which deployed sea water and chlorine would kill marine lives, a Member suggested the adoption of new technology with closed-loop cooling system to minimise the adverse impact on marine lives. Mr Tse Chin-wan thanked the Member for his suggestion and responded that EPD would follow up on the matter accordingly.

Air Quality

20. A Member noted that the Government had required the catering premises to improve their indoor ventilation through more frequent air exchange during the pandemic. Considering that such requirement would result in more electricity consumption but the overall indoor air quality (IAQ) might not necessarily be improved, he reminded that due consideration should be given in energy saving while improving IAQ with a view to achieving carbon neutrality. Mr Tse Chin-wan agreed that decarbonisation and the enhancement of IAQ should be considered together to create a synergy. Mr Tse pointed out that EEB would explore the possibility to enhance energy saving, and improve air quality in older buildings under the Building Environment Assessment Method (BEAM) Plus Scheme.

21. In response to a Member's enquiry on the function of the supersite to be set up for the GBA air quality laboratory and meteorological monitoring, Mr Tse Chin-wan responded that the supersite focused on monitoring the level of air pollutants such as Volatile Organic Compounds which would provide a scientific foundation for formulating policies to improve regional ozone problem and in turn contribute to the improvement of air quality in Hong Kong.

Odour and Noise Control

22. A Member suggested that the Government should tackle the odour problem near the Tsing Yi Rural Committee which had lasted for years. Mr Tse Chin-wan explained that measures such as territory-wide underground sewers replacement and rehabilitation would help tackle the overall odour problems of Hong Kong at source. He supplemented that targeted measures would be deployed to proactively investigate and trace the major pollution sources in stormwater drainage systems at the seafront of the Tsuen Wan district and follow up on the rectification of sewer misconnections.

23. A Member was impressed by the significant reduction in noise level by the specific renovation equipment. The Member and another Member enquired whether the Government would take the lead to adopt such equipment in major public works and development projects, which would help promote their usage in the private sector. One of the two Members further enquired whether there would be any time restriction for small-scale noisy works at home. Mr Tse Chin-wan explained that such equipment was usually used for small-scale renovation works and might not be applicable to large-scale constructions. He highlighted that there were existing regulations under the Noise Control Ordinance to regulate the use of powered mechanical equipment or percussive piling works for large-scale works projects. For example, those projects with percussing piling works near school areas would need to obtain the agreement of the schools concerned on the timing of the noisy works.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

24. While pleased with the early regulation of disposable tableware and other plastic products, a Member was concerned about the readiness of the downstream recycling facilities to cope with the expected surge in collected recyclables in the community. Mr Tse Chin-wan highlighted that the proposed regulation focused on reducing disposable plastic tableware at source by banning the sale and free distribution of disposable plastic products with readily available alternatives. This notwithstanding, he agreed that more recyclables would be collected upon the upcoming implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging. To ensure that the recyclables collected would be properly handled, Mr Tse said that the contractors would be required to recycle and turn the collected wastes into useful materials for sale in the future contracts. To promote circular economy and achieve carbon neutrality, another Member suggested the Government to provide support to the development of local recycling industry.

25. While considering the goal commendable, a Member was concerned whether MSW charging and the development of I•PARKs would suffice in achieving the challenge of “Zero Landfill” by 2035. She suggested that the Government should strengthen publicity efforts with a view to facilitating the understanding of the public as well as soliciting their support and participation in the journey. Mr

Tse Chin-wan advised Members that the detailed roadmap for achieving “Zero Landfill” had been set out in the Waste Blueprint for Hong Kong 2035. He thanked the Member for her suggestion and said that the Government would consider different measures to raise public awareness and to achieve the goal.

Streamlining the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process

26. A Member enquired about the possibility to consolidate those minor scale EIA projects for an integrated assessment with a view to streamlining the procedures. Mr Tse Chin-wan explained that development projects of a larger scale would be required to undergo a consolidated and comprehensive EIA process under the EIAO. Mr Tse said that the current review would streamline the EIA process by putting in place standardised requirements to replace the outdated or redundant assessment procedures.

27. To facilitate information sharing, a Member held the view that different government departments should put in concerted efforts to standardise the format of the environmental data to be collected and stored in the centralised platform. Mr Tse Chin-wan agreed with the Member and indicated that project proponents of EIA projects would be required to submit the findings of ecological surveys into the Centralised Environmental Database direct.

28. With a view to enhancing the quality of EIA reports, a Member further expressed that the professional qualifications of the personnel involved in the EIA process should be regulated such as through a chartered scheme. He supplemented that EEB could also explore the possibility of a certification mechanism of the EIA reports by relevant environmental experts during the EIA process review.

29. To achieve the goal of carbon neutrality, a Member opined that EEB should grasp the opportunity of the current review to include new requirements on climate change impact and carbon emissions in the EIA reports.

Environmental Education

30. Highlighting that all environmental policy measures required the cooperation and support of the public, a Member suggested with the support of the Chairman that the Government should strengthen environmental education with a view to raising environmental awareness and inducing behavioural changes in the community. With reference to the examples of other economies, EEB should consider devising a holistic blueprint for enhancing environmental education under the new Office of Climate Change and Carbon Neutrality. Mr Tse Chin-wan responded that there were existing policies on public education such as extra-curriculum activities in schools as well as various campaigns coordinated by the Environmental Campaign Committee to promote public awareness of environmental issues. He indicated that EEB would continue to explore ways to further step up efforts on public education.

Conclusion

31. Mr Tse Chin-wan thanked Members for their valuable comments and suggestions which would be taken into consideration in the work and plans of EEB and EPD. The Chairman thanked Mr Tse for his detailed explanations to address the questions raised by Members. He remarked that Members could continue to provide their comments on the environmental policy measures of the 2022 PA which would be recorded in the meeting minutes and passed to EEB / EPD for consideration and follow-up actions.

(Mr Tse Chin-wan, Miss Diane Wong and Mrs Millie Ng left the meeting at this juncture.)

Nature Conservation

32. Given that country parks accounted for about 40% of the area in Hong Kong, a Member remarked that the Government should leverage on such valuable asset in attracting tourists as well as talents from other places. Drawing reference from the Yellowstone National Park, she suggested that visitor centres with ecotours and ranger services could be set up in the country parks of Hong Kong to enhance their functions.

33. A Member was pleased to see that the Robin's Nest would be designated as a country park. To facilitate public understanding, she considered that the Government should elaborate and illustrate how the RNCP would echo with the Shenzhen Wutong Mountain Scenic Area to create a cross-border ecological corridor.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

34. With reference to the community solar programme in other economies, a Member suggested that the Government should consider setting up community renewable energy facilities with a view to increasing the use of renewable energy. She furthered that the two power companies should explore the possibility to deploy hydrogen fuel in electricity generation. The Chairman echoed with the Member and looked forward to seeing more concrete plans from the Government to raise the ratio of renewable energy in the fuel mix in Hong Kong.

35. A Member expressed that the Government should strengthen the use of passive design in buildings by imposing regulations and leading by example. Considering that Hong Kong still relied on traditional fuels such as coal or oil for generating electricity during peak hours, the Member opined that the Government should explore putting in place a prime tariff programme with a view to reducing electricity consumption during the prime hours. Sharing his past experience in serving the Energy Advisory Committee, the Chairman pointed out that it was difficult to implement a prime tariff programme in Hong Kong as most of its

domestic and economic activities required electricity supply during the peak hours. He indicated that this would be an issue to be further explored in the long term.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

36. A Member opined and echoed by another Member that the targeted coverage of 30 public rental housing (PRH) blocks in phase 1 and up to 100 blocks in 2023/24 in the trial scheme on food waste collection were too conservative. One of the two Members suggested that the Government should elaborate to the public the difference of the proposed trial scheme with the previous trial schemes on food waste collection to facilitate their understanding.

37. A Member indicated that the Government should tackle the issue of increased waste, such as rapid antigen test kits and packaging from online shopping, brought by the pandemic. To enhance public education and motivate their participation, the Government should step up cross-departmental collaboration and set out the KPIs to demonstrate the expected outcomes of the environmental measures.

38. A Member opined that there was little coverage on waste reduction, particularly on food waste, and recycling measures in the PA. She would like to learn more about the upcoming plan to enhance synergy in waste collection and recycling after EEB took over the policy schedule of waste collection by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. She viewed that the Government should establish community waste treatment facilities, particularly for food waste, instead of transporting them to large-scale facilities in remote areas. The community waste treatment facilities would also encourage the public to practise waste recycling at source. While it would be desirable to have the food waste treated locally within the community, the Chairman highlighted the practical difficulty especially for the catering trade given the volume of food waste involved. He remarked that the Government should continue to explore the possibility to increase the scope of food waste treatment in the future.

39. Having regard to the popularisation of electric vehicles (EV), a Member said that appropriate plans should be devised for handling the increasing number of phased out non-EVs. In addition, the Government should ensure that there would be sufficient charging facilities to support the EVs.

Noise Control

40. While regulating the use of loudspeakers for street cries would benefit the residents in the neighbourhood, a Member reminded that the Government should strike a balance to take into account the need of the commercial sector in promoting their business.

Streamlining the EIA Process

41. With reference to the discussions on some EIA reports in the previous ACE meetings, a Member recollected that the Government would need to adhere to the requirements set out in the Technical Memorandum on EIA process (TM) in deciding whether an EIA report should be approved. The Member was concerned that the TM might not be able to live up to the increasing public expectation in environmental protection. The Chairman recalled that EPD had commenced the process to review and update the TM to enhance the standard of the EIAO framework.

42. In response to a Member's comments, another Member explained that a project proponent needed to meet the requirements set out in both the TM and the EIA study brief under the EIAO. Under the EIAO framework, upon receiving the project profile submitted by a project proponent, the ACE could submit comments to the DEP on the environmental issues to be addressed and other requirements such as the research methodologies that the EIA study should adopt. Having regard to the comments from the public and ACE, the DEP would issue an EIA study brief to the project proponent based on which the EIA report would be prepared. Under the existing framework, the ACE had the opportunity to propose additional requirements on top of the TM baseline before the project proponent proceeded to prepare the EIA report. In case Members did not provide comments on the additional requirements or survey methodologies at the stage of the EIA study brief, it would be unfair to impose additional requirements to a project proponent after they had completed the EIA study. Members were reminded to grasp the opportunity to put forward their views upon receiving the project profile for future projects. The above notwithstanding, the Chairman remarked that it would be beneficial to elevate the environmental standards or baseline requirements in the TM in the coming review.

Conclusion

43. The Chairman concluded the discussion of the item and asked the Secretariat to pass the meeting minutes with Members' comments and suggestions recorded to EEB / EPD for consideration and follow-up as appropriate.

Item 2 : Confirmation of the draft minutes of the 254th meeting held on 8 and 19 August 2022 (Closed-door session)

44. A Member proposed some amendments to paragraphs 18 and 44 whereas another Member to paragraph 47 of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2022. One of the above Members also proposed some amendments to paragraphs 90, 128 and the post-meeting notes under paragraph 131 of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 August 2022.

45. Apart from the above, a Member further suggested with the support of the Chairman to incorporate the time of adjournment in the meeting minutes. The meeting agreed that this arrangement would apply to the minutes in the future. The

draft minutes with the above amendments incorporated were endorsed by the meeting.

Item 3 : Matters arising (Closed-door session)

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

Item 4 : Report on the 156th Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee Meeting (Closed-door session) (ACE Paper 15/2022)

47. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Chairperson of the Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee (EIASC) reported that *ACE Paper 15/2022* had summarised the discussion and recommendation of the EIASC meeting held on 17 October 2022 in respect of the EIA report on “Improvement of Lion Rock Tunnel”.

48. Having regard to the findings of the EIA report and the information provided by the project proponent at the meeting, the EIASC recommended the full Council to endorse the aforesaid EIA report with one condition and five recommendations. With no further comments from Members, the Chairman concluded that the meeting agreed to recommend the DEP to endorse the EIA report with the recommendation as set out in paragraph 9 of *ACE Paper 15/2022*.

Item 5 : Any other business (Closed-door session)

EIA Reports not selected by EIASC for submission to ACE

49. The EIASC Chairperson explained that only EIA projects selected by at least half of the EIASC Members would be discussed at its meeting. Since the last Council meeting, the EIASC received the Executive Summary of the EIA reports on “New Contaminated Sediment Disposal Facility to the West of Lamma Island”, “Upgrading of Tai Po Sewage Treatment Works” and “Revitalisation of Fo Tan Nullah”. While the three EIA reports were not selected by Members for discussion at the meeting, the EIASC Chairperson highlighted that some Members had received from green groups some comments on the EIA report on “New Contaminated Sediment Disposal Facility to the West of Lamma Island”. Those comments had already been passed to EPD for consideration and reply.

50. Upon commencement of the public inspection period, the Executive Summary of the EIA reports had been circulated to EIASC Members, with the relevant hyperlinks copied to non-EIASC Members for information. Members were advised to provide their comments, if any, on the EIA reports directly to the DEP within the respective public inspection period. Given that the EIA reports had not been selected by the EIASC for discussion and Members had no further comments, the EIASC Chairperson remarked that EPD would take that the ACE had no comments on the EIA reports under section 8(3)(b) of the EIAO.

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

Item 6 : Date of next meeting (Closed-door session)

52. As it would likely be the last meeting of the current term, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank Members for their valuable time and contributions in the past years, in particular those who would have served the ACE for six years by the end of the term, including Prof Nora Tam, Prof Lau Chi-pang, Ms Julia Lau, Mr Andrew Lee, Prof Kenneth Leung, Mr Simon Wong and Prof Wong Sze-chun, as well as Dr Jeanne Ng who could not continue to serve the ACE due to her personal plan. The Chairman remarked that the work of the ACE was not an easy one as Members would need to balance the need between environmental protection and the development of Hong Kong. He said that the ACE had all along tried its best to contribute to the enhancement of environmental conservation in Hong Kong and the Council would continue to do so in the coming term.

53. The Chairman remarked that Members would be advised on the agenda and date of the next meeting in due course.

(Post-meeting notes: As there was no proposed item for discussion at the ACE meeting, the meeting scheduled for December had been cancelled.)

54. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

**ACE Secretariat
December 2022**