

**Confirmed Minutes of the 131st Meeting of
the Advisory Council on the Environment
held on 21 December 2005 at 2:30 pm**

Present:

Prof LAM Kin-che, J.P. (Chairman)
Mr James GRAHAM
Prof Howard HUANG
Prof Paul LAM
Ms Goretti LAU
Mr Peter Y C LEE
Dr NG Cho-nam, B.B.S.
Mrs Mei NG, B.B.S.
Prof POON Chi-sun
Mr Markus SHAW
Ms Iris TAM, J.P.
Mr TSANG Kam-lam
Prof WONG Tze-wai
Prof WONG Yuk-shan, B.B.S., J.P.
Mr Esmond LEE (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Prof HO Kin-chung, B.B.S.

In Attendance:

Mr K K KWOK, J.P.	Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment)
Mr C C LAY	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Mr Jimmy LEUNG	Assistant Director/Technical Services, Planning Department
Ms Monica KO	Principal Information Officer, Environmental Protection Officer (EPD)
Ms Josephine CHEUNG	Chief Executive Officer (CBD), EPD
Miss Sarah NG	Executive Officer (CBD), EPD

In Attendance for Agenda Item 3 :

Mr Raymond LEE	District Planning Officer, Planning Department
Mr Kelvin CHAN	Senior Town Planner, Planning Department

Mr Talis WONG	Chief Engineer, Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms Iris TAM	Study Director, City Planning and Maunsell Joint Venture
Mr Eric MA	Deputy Study Manager, City Planning and Maunsell Joint Venture
Mr Lawrence TSUI	Environmental Consultant, City Planning and Maunsell Joint Venture

In Attendance for Agenda Item 4 :

Mr Raymond FAN	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2), EPD
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In Attendance for Agenda Item 5 :

Mr Elvis AU	Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment), EPD
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Action

Agenda Item 1 : Confirmation of the Draft Minutes of the 130th Meeting held on 30 November 2005

A Member referred to paragraphs 9 and 10 of the minutes of the last meeting and reiterated his enquiry on whether there were data on the prevailing volatile organic compound (VOC) concentrations in the environment. He considered that the information would be useful in providing a baseline for assessing the effectiveness of the control measures and it would enable the public to understand and appreciate the extent of reduction in the VOC level after the implementation of the control programme. Another member said that the Chinese University of Hong Kong had conducted a study for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) on toxic air contaminants in Hong Kong about three years ago. He recalled that the report contained monitoring data on a wide spectrum of VOCs and considered the report might be relevant. The Chairman requested the Secretariat to convey the Member's enquiry to the relevant party for a direct reply to him.

Secretariat

(Post-meeting note: A reply had been sent to the Member.)

2. The draft minutes were confirmed without amendment.

Agenda Item 2 : Matters Arising

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 127th Meeting held on 11 July 2005

Para. 55 Hong Kong Disneyland Fireworks Displays

3. The Chairman said that Members asked for the actual air quality and noise data two months after the opening of the Hong Kong Disneyland project at the meeting on 11 July 2005. The relevant information had been issued to Members. The Hongkong International Theme Parks Limited (HKITP) had also provided extracts of relevant fireworks air and noise monitoring results reported in the Monthly Environmental Monitoring and Audit Reports as well as the Report on Continuous Respirable Suspended Particulates Monitoring of Fireworks Emissions for the first two months of operation. HKITP's letter together with the attachments had been copied to Members.

4. In response to a Member's enquiry on the monitoring work conducted by EPD, Mr K K Kwok said that EPD was conducting separate small scale monitoring work by collecting data on site on the air quality. The data could hopefully provide another point of reference for comparison purposes. The Chairman requested that the results of the monitoring work conducted by EPD be submitted to the Council once available so that Members could consider cross-checking the data together with the data in the HKITP's reports.

EPD

(Post-meeting note: An information note reporting the results of the monitoring work had been sent to Members.)

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 130th Meeting held on 30 November 2005

Para. 52 Hunghom Peninsula – Waste Management Plan

5. The Chairman said that the Council had written to the top management of the developer, expressing Members' concern and highlighting that it would be in the interests of both the developer and the community for the developer to provide a waste management plan as early as possible. The developer had replied, stating that they had been putting together a waste management report for the current works and the report would set out the approach in minimizing waste and maximizing reuse and recycling of waste materials. The report would be submitted before the Christmas Holidays and it would then be continuously updated to reflect the latest direction of the project.

(Post-meeting note: The developer informed the Council in writing on 3 January 2006 that the waste management plan for the exempted building works had been submitted to EPD on 28 December 2005.)

Para. 59 Petrochemical Plant in Daya Bay and its Risk Management Measures

6. The Chairman said that the Council had written to the corporation, expressing Members' concern and requesting that the HKSAR Government be notified promptly in the event of a pollution incident at the plant which might affect Hong Kong.

Para. 60 Proposal of Opening the Frontier Areas

7. The Chairman said that as advised by the relevant Bureau, the Administration was preparing for the establishment of the new boundary of the Frontier Closed Area (FCA) and intended to publicize the details of the new FCA boundary in early 2006. The Government would commence a planning study on the area around mid-2006. The public and concerned parties would be consulted before statutory plans were drawn up. Preparations for the planning study had begun. The relevant Bureau planned to consult the Council upon finalization of the scope of the planning study.

8. Upon the Chairman's enquiry, Chairman of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Subcommittee said that as far as the planning study was concerned, it was not bound by the EIA framework.

**Agenda Item 3 : Kai Tak Planning Review – Stage 2 Public Participation:
Outline Concept Plans
(ACE Paper 29/2005)**

9. A Member declared his interest as he was involved in a laboratory study on treating contaminated sediment at the Kai Tak Approach Channel (KTAC). The Chairman suggested and Members agreed that the Member could stay at the meeting. The Chairman said that he had been the moderator for a topical open forum for the Kai Tak Planning Review in December 2005 in which he facilitated the exchange of views and no decision was made. Members noted that Ms Iris Tam represented the study team in presenting the paper.

10. Mr Raymond Lee briefed Members on the background of the Kai Tak Planning Review and Stage 1 Public Participation Programme under which the Council was consulted in November 2004. Based on the views received in the Stage 1 Public Participation Programme, the consultants promulgated three Outline Concept Plans (OCPs) in the Stage 2 Public Participation Programme to enable the community to formulate their views on the development concepts for Kai Tak. The main themes of the three OCPs included the City in the Park concept, the Kai Tak Glamour concept and the Sports by the Harbour concept.

11. Ms Iris Tam briefed Members on the details and main features of

the three OCPs. She highlighted that the draft OCPs were not development options to choose from, but provided a basis for public discussion on possible development proposals for the Kai Tak site. Individual land use elements could be modified or deleted as input to the preparation of a more detailed outline development plan. In preparing the three OCPs, they had taken into account comments received in the Stage 1 Public Participation Programme and results of the Baseline Review. The starting point of the development concepts was a “no reclamation” scenario. Comments received in the Stage 2 Public Participation Programme would be consolidated to form an outline development plan for Stage 3 public consultation before proceeding to the statutory planning process.

12. A Member noted that all three OCPs included the building of a cruise terminal. He considered it bad planning to locate the cruise terminal at the Kai Tak site. A home port cruise terminal was quite a major industrial facility involving provisioning and repair and maintenance. These would require an extensive road network to cope with the anticipated heavy commercial traffic and needs of a large number of visitors requiring easy access to the airport and major tourist centres of Tsim Sha Tsui (TST) and Central. Anyone familiar with the area around Kai Tak would know that traffic congestion was already extreme on routes across town to the airport and TST and the serious congestion at the entrance to the Central Harbour Tunnel. Some people in the community had strongly urged for alternative sites for the cruise terminal to be considered such as West Kowloon, which they considered had obvious benefits with its efficient transport links to the airport, its proximity to TST and to the less congested Western Harbour Tunnel for access to Central and tourist centres, when compared with the Kai Tak site. The West Kowloon site had the same advantage as the Kai Tak one in terms of water depth and sea view. He pointed out that in the Government’s invitation document for expressions of interests in the cruise terminal development in the harbour area, West Kowloon was specifically excluded as a site. He questioned why this should be the case, given its very obvious advantages.

13. Mr Raymond Lee explained that the Government had considered Kai Tak as the most ideal location for a cruise terminal, mainly because it was the only location within the Harbour that could offer expansion opportunities. A cruise terminal was included in a previous Kai Tak development scheme which had gone through the EIA process with extensive studies. Mr Eric Ma added that the current proposal was different from the previous one in that there would be a direct road connection to the strategic road links, such as the Central Kowloon Route and Trunk Road T2, for access to West Kowloon and other parts of the territory. The proposed connection was only a typical dual-two road which would be required for circulation in the runway area.

14. A Member questioned why none of the OCPs showed a rail feeder service between the terminal facilities and the Kai Tak rail station. He considered this oversight to be quite typical of the road-centric planning

mentality of the Administration. Mr Raymond Lee said that while there was no definite plan at this stage for the development of rail feeder service to the Kai Tak rail stations, provision would be made on the land use plan for sufficient reserve to enable such a transport mode to be implemented in the future. The Chairman recalled that there had been a development concept in a previous development scheme for turning Kai Tak into an environmental friendly city with environmental friendly transport links.

15. A Member commended the study team on coming up with the impressive concepts. Nonetheless, he was concerned about the water quality and sediment problems of KTAC. He suggested relocating the To Kwa Wan and Kwun Tong typhoon shelters to improve the water circulation of the channel. He asked whether contingency plans would be prepared for the scenario in which the water quality problem could not be resolved.

16. Mr Raymond Lee said that the water quality problem was indeed one of the most critical issues of the project and the study team was making every effort to tackle it without resorting to reclamation. While initial studies showed encouraging results, the option of reclamation could not be ruled out at this stage as the complicated environmental problems of KTAC required detailed technical assessments to ascertain the cost-effectiveness of necessary mitigation measures.

17. Mr Eric Ma said that the narrow and elongated shape of KTAC had made the water circulation very slow and thus given rise to the problem of poor water quality which impeded its carrying capacity and the problem of deposition of sediment from upstream areas on the KTAC seabed. They had examined various possible mitigation measures and on the basis of preliminary assessment results three mitigation approaches had been identified. Firstly, a 600-m gap should be opened at the runway as modeling results showed that it could greatly improve water circulation, enhance tidal effects and reduce sediment deposition. Secondly, the bio-remediation treatment approach adopted in Shing Mun River should be pursued as laboratory test results showed that it could greatly alleviate the sediment problem and thus the odour problem. A full-scale field trial test would be conducted. Thirdly, polluted discharge into the channel should be intercepted, which would help to improve the water quality of KTAC. More detailed investigations were required to ascertain the mitigation measures to tackle the incumbent environmental problems at KTAC. Ms Iris Tam said that as advised by the Marine Department, typhoon shelters were required for working vessels in the Harbour Area to berth during typhoons.

18. A Member considered the OCPs very impressive. He agreed that the water quality problem was a critical issue and he was not optimistic that the problem could be resolved. In the early 1990s, there were strong objections to reclamation inside Victoria Harbour as narrowing the channels like Green Island and Kowloon Bay would have adverse impacts on the water

quality of the harbour. At that time, however, people agreed that KTAC should be reclaimed. The prevailing objections to reclamation at KTAC tended to be political. While it was difficult to revive the reclamation option from the political and legal perspectives, reclamation was desirable from the scientific point of view as it would not affect the water quality nor scenery of Victoria Harbour. Thus, the option of reclamation should not be precluded unless the water quality problem of KTAC could be resolved.

19. A Member considered that the water quality problem had stemmed from sediment quality due to sinking of water pollutants. The remediation measures mentioned would be able to remove the organic matter or nutrients but not persistent organic pollutants. He suggested taking a sediment core to examine the depth of contaminated sediment.

20. The Chairman said that the water quality problem was a concern of the Council over a long period of time. He worried that once the site was built over, it would be extremely difficult to find solutions to the problem and nearby residents would be complaining. He asked about the acceptable water quality criteria for pursuing residential developments on the site and the assumptions on source control from the catchment areas.

21. A Member said that he was not convinced that the opening up of a 600-m gap could improve the water quality of the channel. The odour problem was mainly caused by the accumulation of pollutants in the past years. He believed that the water body could be cleaned up after some years by stopping pollution sources and injecting a sufficient amount of oxygen sources, such as hydro-peroxide and nitrate. After the sediment was removed, it would be necessary to continue the injection of oxygen sources to resolve the odour problem in the long run. For quicker results in the relatively short channel, the addition of peroxide during a dredging process would be an alternative approach.

22. A Member considered the water quality issue a prerequisite for any development concept. Moreover, the development plan should be considered holistically, rather than in isolation, in the context of the harbour as the main natural asset of Hong Kong.

23. Mr Raymond Lee explained that the planning of the site had to abide by the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance and any reclamation proposal must satisfy the legal requirements. So far, it had been difficult to make a case for reclamation based on the study results. Nonetheless, the option of reclamation would be a fallback if the environmental problems could not be resolved.

24. Mr Eric Ma said that they were tackling the sediment problem on three fronts. The existing sediment was the major source of odour and samples had been taken for conducting various tests. The study results

revealed that enhancement in water circulation would improve the long-term sustainability of the mitigation measures and address further deposition of on-going pollutant discharges. The proposed bio-remediation process would involve the injection of oxidizing agents like nitrate to accelerate the biological process and reduce odour emission. In respect of on-going pollutants, a water quality modelling was being conducted to ascertain the magnitude of the problem in terms of the quantity and strength of pollutants in wet and dry seasons. The modelling covered not only the main water body but also main drainage outfalls from the surrounding areas. The updated data would be used for a water quality calibrated model which, with a higher confidence level, would be useful in assessing the effectiveness of the mitigation measures.

25. In response to a Member's enquiry on the time required, Mr Eric Ma said that they anticipated the initial assessment results of the modeling work would be available in mid-2006. Upon another Member's enquiry, Mr Ma confirmed that the bio-remediation process was to tackle the odour problem, but not the odourless yet toxic contaminants in the sediment.

26. A Member considered that residential developments should be planned on the basis of realistic population projections in the context of other residential developments in the territory, following a holistic approach. Ms Iris Tam said that while there was no population target to work for, Kai Tak was a suitable site for residential development taking into account the enhanced accessibility due to Shatin-to-Central Link and Central Kowloon Route/Trunk Road T2 and the harbour view, etc. Many people in the Stage 1 public consultation also expressed their preference for high quality housing at Kai Tak.

27. Upon a Member's enquiry, Mr Raymond Lee said that the potential impact of the Kai Tak Development on the surrounding districts was an important considerations in the preparation of the concept plans, and impact assessments would be conducted to ensure that future developments would not bring about adverse impact on the community nearby.

28. A Member asked about the projection of office space in justifying the building of a premier office node on the site. Mr Raymond Lee explained that the Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy had proposed among the development scenarios to develop Kai Tak as a premier office node in Hong Kong. This proposal was incorporated into one of the OCPs for comments by the public. In response to the Member's enquiry about the civic node on the OCPs, Ms Iris Tam said that it mainly referred to government, institution and community facilities for the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

29. A Member suggested reserving sufficient open space for a large square, like Tiananmen in Beijing, near the multi-purpose stadium which could

serve as a landmark of Hong Kong. Major roads should be widened to form straight grand roads. These could serve as appropriate venues for large-scale celebrations and international events for the territory and leisure activities for the younger generation. Canopy-type structures and congested high-rise buildings should be avoided to minimize any air ventilation problem. More high-class and spacious developments should be considered.

30. Mr Raymond Lee said that an area of 24 hectares had been reserved for a stadium complex, as compared with 17 hectares at Victoria Park. Air ventilation assessment would be conducted and the results would be taken into account in formulating the Preliminary Outline Development Plan. Ms Iris Tam added that the study area was about 328 hectares and open space would be reserved to serve as ventilation corridors and amenity areas. The concept was to spread out the open space so that it could benefit the immediate neighbourhood. Moreover, the waterfront area was mainly reserved for a public promenade, which was a public comment highlighted in the Stage 1 Public Consultation Programme. The Member reiterated his suggestion of enlarging a particular open area for the purpose of a large square.

31. A Member considered the project an important opportunity for Hong Kong to demonstrate the recycling of a polluted water body into a high quality green attraction. The identity of Kai Tak and image of the typhoon shelters could also be recycled. She was concerned that frequent berthing of cruise liners with a large number of visitors, helicopters at the heliport and activities like pop concerts at the multi-purpose stadium would create a noise problem and affect the tranquility of the pleasant environment. She suggested including more bicycle tracks in the site. Ms Iris Tam said that as advised by the Civil Aviation Department (CAD), the helicopters would move along paths towards southwest and southeast from the tip of the runway rather than flying over the residential areas.

32. In response to a Member's enquiry, Mr Raymond Lee said that the open space provision in all the OCPs were well above the minimum requirements stated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines. Upon another member's enquiry, Mr Lee said that planting of trees on the concrete runway surface was feasible. One of the examples was the temporary plant nursery in the West Kowloon reclamation area.

33. A Member suggested that some new grand attractions for tourists and local people should be included in the site. Another member considered the proposed Chinese name of the New San Po Kong as “新蒲點” a bit too local and did not match the high-class and distinguished status of the development.

34. A Member said that he was quite dissatisfied with the responses to his questions. He queried the reasons for not choosing the West Kowloon site for the cruise terminal and not planning rail feeder service from the very

beginning. Although a direct road connection would be built to strategic road links, it would still cause unnecessary traffic and pollution in the area. On the other hand, the road network in West Kowloon had room to cope with the demand. Mr Raymond Lee explained that West Kowloon was considered not a suitable site for the cruise terminal mainly because the depth of the channel was not sufficient for mega cruise liners and there would be anticipated navigating problems. The Member responded that this was not the case and that water depth analysis showed West Kowloon to have no disadvantage to Kai Tak from this point of view.

35. Mr Talis Wong said that the Kai Tak Development was a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) and assessment results and monitoring proposals would be included in the EIA report to be submitted to the Council. Members would be invited to discuss the report at a later stage.

36. The Chairman summarized Members' comments as follows -

- (a) the project was a golden opportunity for Hong Kong to demonstrate how to turn a piece of land, in the centre of the harbour but with a notorious channel, into an attractive water body;
- (b) the Planning Department should consider putting the Kai Tak project in the context of harbour planning and development in a holistic view and consider again the need for a cruise terminal and a heliport;
- (c) the water quality of KTAC remained a critical issue: a constraint as well as a prerequisite. It required careful consideration and planning as supported by rigorous scientific models for remediation actions. Unless it was absolutely sure that the water quality issue could be resolved, the option of reclamation should not be precluded;
- (d) the development concept of turning the area into an environmental friendly city with environmental friendly transport links proposed in a previous development scheme for Kai Tak should be maintained; and
- (e) the project should avoid potential environmental problems such as noise pollution caused by the multi-purpose stadium and heliport as well as air pollution caused by heavy traffic flow. These issues should be dealt with in the EIA report.

Agenda Item 4 : A Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste in Hong Kong
(ACE Paper 30/2005)

37. Mr Raymond Fan briefed Members on the background of and salient ideas in the strategy document “A Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)” (the Policy Framework). He highlighted the seriousness and imminence of the municipal solid waste (MSW) problem, the overall strategy and targets as well as major initiatives and milestones under the Policy Framework.

38. Chairman of the Waste Subcommittee said that the Waste Subcommittee had conducted three workshops on various key issues of the MWS problem with the participation of stakeholders, academics and green groups and put forth a number of recommendations. He was pleased that most of the recommendations were incorporated in the Policy Framework, which spelt out a clear roadmap and timetable. He urged the Administration to implement the initiatives in accordance with the timetable, in particular the MSW charging scheme and integrated waste management facilities (IWMF). He was concerned about the rumours that the implementation of the MSW charging would be deferred, which would affect the implementation of other related initiatives. While he noted that there was a concrete timetable for the extension of landfills, the development of IWMF still had a long way to go. He urged that priority should be given to the development of IWMF by establishing a timetable and starting its groundwork as soon as practicable. A Member was concerned about the tight timeframe for implementing various initiatives, having regard to the short life span of landfills and the relatively long lead time required for major initiatives to be implemented.

39. Mr Raymond Fan assured Members that the Administration would try to implement the initiatives in accordance with the timetable with the support of the community. Nonetheless, it was inevitable that there would be uncertainty in the legislative process for the bills. Regarding waste treatment and disposal facilities, both approaches of extending landfills and developing IWMF would be pursued in parallel. They were actively working on the details of IWMF, which involved complicated issues of land and new technologies.

40. The Chairman asked whether the drafting of the MSW Charging Bill could be advanced in order to allow buffer for uncertainty and ensure early implementation of the legislation. Mr Raymond Fan explained that the Administration aimed to introduce the bill into the Legislative Council in 2007. The most crucial and difficult step was to agree on an effective and widely accepted means of imposing waste charges.

41. A Member welcomed the Policy Framework. He agreed that the problem was very imminent in view of the limited remaining capacity of

landfills. While the Policy Framework set out the targets and initiatives, there were still challenges ahead in turning the key initiatives into concrete policies. In response to the Member's enquiries, Mr Raymond Fan explained that the target of reducing the amount of MSW by 1% per annum up to the year 2014 had been set after taking into account the views of the Sustainable Development Council, stakeholders and relevant parties. The target was considered reasonable and achievable. As to strategies on landfills, while it was inevitable that the lives of the landfills had to be extended in the medium term, the long-term target was to reduce reliance on landfills by recovery and recycling, and to develop other waste treatment technologies. Regarding construction and demolition (C&D) waste which accounted for about 38% of waste in Hong Kong, the amount of waste dumped at landfills was expected to be reduced with the introduction of the construction waste charging scheme in December 2005. For inert C&D materials, an agreement had been reached with the Mainland authorities for transporting them to the Mainland for reclamation purposes.

42. A Member welcomed the Policy Framework, which provided a clear roadmap for the way ahead. She, however, considered that there was still room for more aggressive targets. She suggested the establishment of a designated fund for scientific research purposes after the implementation of the MSW charging scheme to avoid the misunderstanding that the purpose of the charging scheme was to increase government revenue. Mr Raymond Fan explained that the purpose of the charging scheme was to establish a clear linkage between consumption and the environmental costs entailed in order to change the consumption and disposal behaviour. This proved to be effective in overseas countries. The charges were mainly to recover, in line with the polluter-pays principle, the administrative costs incurred. Concerning research and development, there were existing funds, such as the Environment and Conservation Fund, and the Innovation and Technology Fund, for the purpose. The suggestion of establishing a designated fund would be further examined.

43. A Member supported the Policy Framework. He considered that the key to success was the implementation of the MSW charging scheme which would require the support of the Legislative Council. Thus, it would be important to gain the support of the community for the scheme. To promote the charging scheme, it was essential to demonstrate to the general public how convenient it would be for them to separate domestic waste at source by providing more waste separation facilities in residential blocks and expanding the types of waste to be collected, such as metal cans and old clothes which should have outlets. Moreover, the rolling out of the territory-wide source separation scheme should be expedited. He supported another Member's suggestion of establishing a designated fund which could help reduce resistance from the general public. Mr Raymond Fan said that the scheme should be easy to administer and cause minimal disturbance to the public. He agreed that it was necessary to review the means of source

separation other than the three-coloured waste separation bins.

44. A Member considered it important for the recycling industry to be positioned clearly in the economy and for the local recycling industry and the EcoPark to establish medium and long-term visions. Moreover, the planning and development of IWMF should be integrated with the EcoPark, rather than as standalone initiatives, for the long-term sustainable development of waste treatment.

45. A Member considered that all the main ingredients necessary for waste management were included in the package and one of the key elements was the promotion of the local recycling industry. For the recycling industry to thrive, more attention should be paid to the economic concerns of recyclers such as providing incentives to encourage small and medium enterprises to participate in the industry, increasing the supply source of recyclable waste and enlarging market outlets for recycled products.

46. Mr Raymond Fan agreed that there was a missing link in the circular economy whereby recyclable materials generated in economic activities could be returned to the consumption loop and thus there was a need to develop a robust recycling industry locally, such as by improving the collection network through programmes on waste separation at source. The long-term objective of the EcoPark was to promote the development of the local environmental and recycling industry, in particular the more advanced and high level processes. The provision of long-term sites with a sea frontage and basic infrastructure at reasonable rates would be one of the major incentives to encourage investment in more advanced and cost-effective technologies. They would continue their dialogue with the recyclers for the long-term development of the recycling industry.

47. A Member considered that inter-departmental co-operation was important to shared vision and responsibility in achieving the targets, for example, cooperation with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Housing Department and Buildings Department in the collection of waste and placing of waste separation bins. Mr Raymond Fan said that the Policy Framework was a policy document issued by the Government and EPD would work with other bureaux and departments to achieve the targets.

48. A Member supported the Policy Framework, which provided a clear way ahead for managing the MSW problem. He considered that success would depend very much on the effectiveness of the proposed initiatives in reducing MSW.

49. Upon a Member's enquiry about the projection of waste generated, Mr Raymond Fan said that the projection had taken into account waste generated by various sectors of the population, including commercial waste generated by tourists. One point worth noting was that the rate of

increase in waste generation in correlation with gross domestic product per capita for Hong Kong was higher than those of other developed countries which reflected the urgency and seriousness of the waste problem in Hong Kong.

50. A Member considered that in implementing the product responsibility schemes (PRSs), priority should be based on the benefits to be gained on waste reduction by different categories of products, for example priority should be given to toxic and large size products such as large electronic products. Mr Raymond Fan agreed that priority should be accorded to different types of products for the introduction of PRSs and the Government would be open to views on the approach in determining the priority.

51. A Member considered that fairness should be observed in charging the primary producer who produced a large amount of waste rather than shifting the charges to the consumers. Mr Raymond Fan said that the proposed charges under PRSs would involve manufacturers and different players and stakeholders along the supply chain.

52. A Member strongly supported the Policy Framework. She noted that while most of the initiatives had concrete targets, there seemed to be no specific targets laid down for public education. Another member agreed that public education was the first step for success in source separation and waste minimization. Mr Raymond Fan said that public education was an indispensable part of the overall strategy underlying each of the policy initiatives in inducing behavioural change and gaining public support. In the Policy Framework, emphasis was put on the shared responsibility of the public as well as stakeholders to take ownership of the problem. A series of environmental education programmes had been going on, for example some 12,000 student environmental protection ambassadors from 750 schools had signed up in 2004. Their mission would be to promote waste avoidance and reduction at schools in 2005-06. A territory-wide publicity and education campaign would be launched to spread the waste management message to the public.

53. A Member suggested that the Government make reference to the experience of overseas countries such as Austria in levying charges on plastic bags in supermarkets, which had proved to be effective in reducing the consumption of plastic bags. Mr Raymond Fan said that they had made reference to overseas practices and were liaising actively with the two main local chain stores on the approach in discouraging the use of plastic bags in supermarkets. Nonetheless, it was noted that while the levying of charges on plastic bags had effectively reduced the use of plastic bags in supermarkets overseas, the number of plastic bags ending up in landfills was not much reduced as people bought garbage bags instead for disposing of domestic waste.

54. The Chairman concluded that -

- (a) the Council welcomed the publication of and strongly supported the initiatives in the Policy Framework, which showed the Administration's determination to tackling the waste problem in a holistic view with vision and clearly defined objectives and timetable;
- (b) the Council considered that there were still a lot of challenges ahead before the initiatives could be successfully implemented and the Policy Framework provided a package of important tools for the implementation of these initiatives, in particular the MSW charging scheme and PRSs;
- (c) the Council considered that tackling the waste problem at source should be the starting point of the waste management cycle. Thus, it would be essential to encourage waste minimization and source separation at the household level as well as to enhance the long-term development of the recycling industry as exemplified in the EcoPark;
- (d) the Council considered that acceptability and support of the community would be extremely important as it involved changes in behaviour and habits. Public education would be an indispensable part of the overall strategy for both the general public and the stakeholders. Measures should be taken to encourage public acceptability and reduce resistance such as setting up a designated fund after the implementation of the charging schemes; and
- (e) the Council hoped that the proposal could gain the support of the Legislative Council as the provision of a legal framework would be essential to the success of implementing the policy tools.

55. A Member expressed concern about the construction waste generated by redevelopment projects initiated by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA). He suggested and Members agreed that the Council invite representatives of URA to attend a Council meeting to discuss environmental aspects of renewal and redevelopment projects, in particular on management of construction waste generated by redevelopment projects.

Secretariat

(Post-meeting note: An invitation letter had been sent to URA after the meeting.)

Agenda Item 5 : Any Other Business

ACE Open Forum on Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste

56. The Chairman said that the success of the Policy Framework depended very much on the implementation details and participation of the community. He had discussed with Chairman of the Waste Subcommittee and they suggested the Council hold an open forum to discuss and exchange views with the stakeholders, concerned groups and members of the public on the key policy initiatives. The forum would be co-chaired by the Chairman and Chairman of the Waste Subcommittee. The draft programme rundown and proposed groups of invitees were tabled for Members' consideration. Members agreed that an open forum be held on 21 January 2006 in the Lecture Hall of the Hong Kong Museum of History.

57. Upon a Member's enquiry on the approach in following up the comments, Chairman of the Waste Subcommittee said that the Waste Subcommittee would take into account the views and comments collected in the forum before giving advice and recommendations to the full Council on the way forward in the detailed implementation of the initiatives. The Subcommittee would follow up issues which required further deliberation and action.

Environmental Impact Assessment for the Tamar Development

58. A Member expressed concern about the use of outdated EIA data in 1999 for planning the Tamar development project and Central Reclamation III (CRIII). She circulated a paper before the meeting which had been presented to the Legislative Council Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 17 December 2005.

59. Mr Elvis Au clarified that the proposal of an office type development on the Tamar site was not a designated project under EIAO. The proposed development was on an existing piece of land rather than a part of CRIII. The proponent had reviewed the environmental implications of the proposed development. In respect of CRIII, the EIA report was approved under EIAO in 2001. The report concluded that the cumulative air quality impacts at the existing and planned air sensitive receivers would be within established standards. The study started in 1999 and used background air quality data at that time and the prediction adopted a worst-case scenario with traffic flow projection up to 2027. The air quality assessment methodology adopted for the study was considered conservative.

60. Upon a Member's enquiry, Mr Elvis Au clarified that the predicted air quality impacts included the background level plus the estimated increase in pollution level arising from future increases in vehicular flow or other sources. In response to another Member's enquiry, Mr Au confirmed that the prediction had taken into account not only existing developments but also cumulative impacts of planned developments in the assessment area at the time of assessment, such as the Central Government Complex on the Tamar site and Wanchai Development Phase II.

Noise Impact from Helipads

61. A Member expressed concern about the noise impact from helipads, in particular the development of new helipads in the core of the harbour district. Mr Elvis Au explained that the control of helicopter noise due to existing helipads was governed by the Civil Aviation (Aircraft Noise) Ordinance (Cap. 312) administered by CAD. A new helipad was controlled under EIAO only if the helipad was within 300 m of existing or planned residential developments.

62. Mr Elvis Au briefed Members on the latest progress of several proposed helipad projects. The proposed expansion of the helipad at Macau Ferry Terminal was a designated project under EIAO and the project was not selected by the EIA Subcommittee. EPD would take into account public comments received in November 2005 before finalizing the decision. In response to a Member's enquiry, Mr Au said that the helipad was about 200 m away from some noise sensitive receivers and the noise level from the existing helipad was about 63 to 68 dB(A) Leq(4 hours) based on the measurement conducted by the consultant.

63. Mr Elvis Au said that there were two proposals for construction of helipads near the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) and both were not designated projects under EIAO. The Government Flying Services (GFS) proposed relocating the existing GFS helipad affected by the Central and Wanchai Reclamation Development to the northeast corner of HKCEC. The project did not require reclamation and was primarily for emergency and operation purposes. The proposal submitted by the Hong Kong Regional Heliport Working Group (RHWG) was more controversial as pontoons were involved, which was generally regarded as reclamation. The project proponent had to satisfy the overriding public need test for reclamation. A Member informed Members that through her involvement in the Wanchai development project, she understood that RHWG would like to avoid the issue of reclamation and was proposing a helipad at the ground level.

64. The Chairman proposed and Members agreed that CAD should be urged to consider using the quietest possible type of helicopters and

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designing flying paths with minimal noise impact. A Member suggested and Members agreed that CAD be invited to brief Members and exchange views on the issue of noise impact from helipads, such as the scope of sensitive receivers, noise limits and environmental impacts.

(Post meeting note: Members' concern had been conveyed to CAD, which was invited to attend a Council meeting.)

Agenda Item 6 : Date of Next Meeting

65. The Chairman suggested and Members agreed that unless there were urgent matters requiring the deliberation of the Council, no regular meeting would be held in January 2006. The next regular meeting was scheduled for 13 February 2006.

(Post-meeting note: The meeting scheduled for 19 February 2006 was cancelled.)