

**Confirmed Minutes of the 235th Meeting
of the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE)
held on 4 March 2019 at 2:30 pm**

Present:

Mr Stanley WONG, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Prof Nora TAM, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ms Carmen CHAN, BBS, JP
Ir Cary CHAN, JP
Miss KONG Wing-man
Mr Adam KOO
Miss LAM Chung-yan
Prof LAU Chi-pang, JP
Ms Julia LAU
Dr Michael LAU
Dr Winnie LAW
Mr Andrew LEE
Prof Kenneth LEUNG, JP
Ir Prof Irene LO, JP
Ir MA Lee-tak, SBS
Dr SUNG Yik-hei
Ms Christina TANG
Mr Simon WONG, JP
Prof WONG Sze-chun, BBS, JP
Mrs Alice CHEUNG, JP (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Ms Sylvia CHAN
Prof Albert LEE
Ir Conrad WONG, BBS, JP

In Attendance:

Ms Lily YAM	Assistant Director of Planning/Technical Services, Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr Simon CHAN	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Ms Fanny HUI	Principal Information Officer, Environmental Protection Department (EPD)

Ms Becky LAM	Chief Executive Officer (CBD), EPD
Miss Dora CHU	Executive Officer (CBD) 1, EPD
Miss Carman LEUNG	Executive Officer (CBD) 2, EPD

In Attendance for Item 4:

Mr TSE Chin-wan, BBS, JP	Under Secretary for the Environment, Environment Bureau (ENB)
Mr Dave HO	Assistant Director (Air Policy), EPD
Mr Brian LAU	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Policy), EPD
Dr Kenneth LEUNG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Science), EPD
Mr Freeman CHEUNG	Senior Vice President, Environment, Greater China, AECOM Asia Company Limited
Prof Jimmy FUNG	Professor and Head, Division of Environment and Sustainability, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Prof WONG Tze-wai	Research Professor, the Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care, Faculty of Medicine, the Chinese University of Hong Kong

In Attendance for Item 5:

Ms Daisy LO	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation), EPD
Mr Simon CHAN	Assistant Director (Conservation), AFCD
Dr Jackie YIP	Senior Conservation Officer (Biodiversity), AFCD
Ms Michelle LUK	Conservation Officer (Biodiversity), AFCD

Action

The Chairman informed that apologies of absence had been received from Ms Sylvia Chan, Prof Albert Lee and Ir Conrad Wong. He welcomed Ms Carmen Chan, Ms Sylvia Chan, Miss Kong Wing-man, Mr Adam Koo, Miss Lam Chung-yan, Dr Winnie Law, Dr Sung Yik-hei and Ms Christina Tang who newly joined the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) for the current term. He also registered his sincere thanks to the eight retired members, including Dr Billy Hau Chi-hang, Dr Hung Wing-tat, Mr Anthony Lock Kwok-on, Professor John Ng Cheuk-yee, Ir Michelle Tang Ming-sum, Dr Eric Tsang Po-keung, Mr Luther Wong Lok-tak and Prof Jonathan Wong Woon-chung for their valuable support and

contributions to the ACE in the past years.

Item 1 : Confirmation of the draft minutes of the 234th meeting held on 3 December 2018 (Closed-door session)

2. The draft minutes were confirmed without amendment.

Item 2 : Matters arising (Closed-door session)

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

Item 3 : Election of Chairman/Deputy Chairman of the three subcommittees (Closed-door session)

4. The Chairman informed Members that there were three standing subcommittees under ACE, namely the EIA Subcommittee (EIASC), the Waste Management Subcommittee (WMSC), and the Nature Conservation Subcommittee (NCSC). He referred Members to the composite membership list of the three subcommittees issued to Members before the meeting. 15 Members had signed up for EIASC, 14 for WMSC and 11 for NCSC.

5. The Chairman advised that as an established practice, the Chairmen of the three subcommittees as well as the Deputy Chairman of EIASC would be elected amongst the respective subcommittee members. He also reminded Members that only those who had signed up for the relevant subcommittee could take part in the nomination and election.

6. The Chairman called for nominations for the chairmanship of the three subcommittees one by one and presided over the election process. The outcomes of all of the subcommittees were reached by consensus. The Chairman announced the results as follows –

	Chairman	Deputy Chairman
EIASC	Prof Nora Tam	Ir Ma Lee-tak
NCSC	Prof Kenneth Leung	--
WMSC	Ir Prof Irene Lo	--

7. The chairmanship/deputy chairmanship of the three subcommittees would last from January 2019 to December 2020. The Secretariat would upload the membership lists on the ACE website for public information after the meeting.

Secretariat

Item 4 : Review of Air Quality Objectives

(ACE Papers 1/2019 & 2/2019)

8. The Chairman informed that *ACE Paper 1/2019* briefed Members on the outcome of the review of Air Quality Objectives (AQOs) and sought members' views on the proposed way forward. A background note on the subject matter, i.e. *ACE Paper 2/2019*, prepared by the Secretariat had been circulated to Members for reference before the meeting.

9. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, a Member declared that the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology had been involved in conducting the review of AQOs. Another Member declared that he was a member of the AQOs Review Working Group (the Working Group). A Member informed the meeting that his colleague was also one of the members of the Working Group. The meeting agreed that all three Members could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

[The presentation team joined the meeting at this juncture.]

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

10. Mr Tse Chin-wan gave an opening remark, and with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Dave Ho briefed Members on the background, the review process and findings of the review of AQO, views of the Working Group and the way forward. On the review outcome, Mr Ho advised that the Working Group had endorsed the review findings that there would be scope to tighten the 24-hour AQO for Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) from the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Interim Target-1 (IT-1) to Interim Target-2 (IT-2), the annual AQO for fine suspended particulates (FSP/PM_{2.5}) from IT-1 to IT-2, and the 24-hour AQO for FSP/PM_{2.5} from IT-1 to IT-2 with the number of exceedances allowed increased from the current nine to 35. Mr Ho also briefed Members the results of supplementary assessments as requested by the Working Group, which reaffirmed that there would be no scope to tighten the AQO for respirable suspended

particulates (RSP/PM₁₀) and the 24-hour AQO for SO₂ beyond IT-2. Prof Wong Tze-wai also briefed Members on the methodology and results of the Health and Economic Impact Assessment (HEIA).

WHO Air Quality Guidelines (AQGs) and AQOs

11. The Chairman found it encouraging that the projected improvement in air quality in 2025 could bring about significant health benefits and economic savings. The Chairman and a Member enquired how tightening of the AQOs could help improve air quality.

12. Mr Tse Chin-wan explained that with a view to protecting public health, the current air quality management policy of Hong Kong was to continuously improve air quality to attain the WHO AQGs as an ultimate goal. Through introducing a series of on-going and new measures to reduce emissions from major emission sources, the air quality assessment results showed that there would be improvements in both short-term and long-term exposure to air pollutants in 2025 which could bring about significant health and economic benefits, as compared with 2015. He further explained that the AQOs were the interim targets towards the WHO AQGs and also served as benchmarks for air quality assessment for designated projects as required under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) as well as for deciding whether a licence should be issued to a specified process under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO). In this connection, therefore, the setting of the AQOs had to be realistic and achievable with regard to the latest technological development and availability of practicable air quality improvement measures.

Health and economic impacts

13. A Member raised concern that the proposed tightening the AQOs of FSP/PM_{2.5} from IT-1 to IT-2, while relaxing the number of allowable exceedances from nine to 35 might lead to poor public perception. She also enquired about the associated health and economic benefits resulting from the proposed change.

14. Mr Tse Chin-wan clarified that the HEIA assessed the health benefits according to the projected actual improvements in air pollution concentrations and not the AQO. He explained that to minimise non-compliance of AQOs or ITs

owing to uncontrollable factors such as extreme weather, the WHO explicitly stated in the WHO Guidelines that for legally binding standards, quantifiable compliance criteria in the form of number of acceptable exceedances, should be defined. For Hong Kong, uncontrollable factors affecting concentrations of particulate matters included unfavourable meteorological conditions or regional air pollution influence. The proposed increase in the number of allowable exceedances for the 24-hour AQO for FSP/PM_{2.5} must be seen in the context that the limit value was proposed to be tightened from IT-1 to IT-2. The proposed changes would result in a more stringent AQO and would impose a more stringent requirement for air quality assessments for designated projects under the EIAO. He supplemented that the European Union (EU) also allowed 35 exceedances for the 24-hour air quality standard for RSP/PM₁₀. In contrast, Mr Tse advised that it would not be justified to tighten the AQO for daily SO₂ by relaxing the number of allowable exceedances given that SO₂ was mainly due to local emission sources which could be subject to control.

15. Prof Wong Tze-wai supplemented that the HEIA had assessed the health and economic impact of both long-term and short-term exposure to air pollutants. Nevertheless, the health impact of short-term exposures was only about one-tenth of that of long-term exposures. As such, he advised that the health benefits brought about by the improvement in annual concentration of FSP/PM_{2.5} would be overwhelming as compared with the short-term benefits.

16. In reply to a Member's enquiry on the reason for including only five out of seven major air pollutants in the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI), Dr Kenneth Leung advised that the AQHI estimated the additional short term health risks caused by heart and respiratory diseases based on the three-hour moving average concentrations of four air pollutants, including Ozone (O₃), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), SO₂ and particulate matter. Given that the concentrations of carbon monoxide and lead had remained at levels well below their respective AQGs levels and did not pose any significant risks on public health, they were excluded from the AQHI.

17. A Member observed that the HEIA results did not cover the reduction in hospital admissions and clinic visits due to the improvement in short-term exposure to SO₂ as well as reduction in premature deaths attributable to the improvement in long-term exposure to SO₂. Prof Wong Tze-wai advised that on-going control

measures had been effective in decreasing the concentration of SO₂ to such a level that it was deemed statistically insignificant for the additional health risks due to the exposure of SO₂.

Methodology of air quality assessment

18. A Member commended the Government's persistent efforts for improving the air quality. Given that the air quality modelling was based on many assumptions, he suggested reviewing annually the number of allowable exceedances for daily FSP/PM_{2.5} based on the most updated information with a view to identifying opportunities to further tighten the standard.

19. A Member followed that in presenting the results of the air quality assessment, limitations and assumptions of the air quality modelling should be made known so as to enable verification of the validity of the model. She enquired whether the modelling had taken into account the introduction of new air quality improvement measures and uncontrollable factors such as extreme weather conditions caused by global warming.

20. Dr Kenneth Leung advised that the model used in the assessment had taken into account the hourly meteorological data for the whole year of 2015 based on a grid size of one times one kilometre (km) covering the entire Pearl River Delta (PRD) region as well as all available emission factors of the whole of China, and could deliver results with a reasonable level of accuracy. To minimise modelling error due to inaccurate assumptions, air quality assessment results were compared against the monitoring data obtained for the base year of 2015 such that statistical adjustments could be made for projected 2025 modelling results. Assuming there were no changes in the meteorological condition and global factors given the difficulty to make any forecasts, the modelling results should be able to show the changes in air quality brought about by the introduction of air quality improvement measures with quantifiable emission reductions between 2015 and 2025.

21. In reply to a Member's enquiry regarding the emission inventory of the PRD region in 2025, Dr Kenneth Leung explained that the PRD Region emission targets for 2020 endorsed by the Guangdong (GD) Provincial Government and Hong Kong Government were adopted as 2025 emissions, since official projection beyond 2020 was yet to be available.

22. In response to a Member's question, Dr Kenneth Leung explained that natural sources, such as soil dusts and sea salts, were major components of coarse particulate, i.e. RSP/PM₁₀ less FSP/PM_{2.5}. It was very unlikely that the emissions from these sources could be controlled in the foreseeable future. He assured Members that all emissions from human activities had already been accounted for in the air quality modelling, and the Government would keep in view new emission sources for inclusion in future reviews. Mr Tse Chin-wan supplemented that as required by the APCO, the Secretary for the Environment would review the AQOs at least once in every five years.

Possible scope for tightening of the AQOs

23. Noting that the concentration of O₃ was projected to increase slightly in 2020/2025, a Member suggested the Government formulate plans and inject more resources to explore measures to control the O₃ level.

24. Mr Tse Chin-wan explained that O₃ was a regional issue. It was not a pollution emitted directly from emission source but caused by chemical reaction amongst different air pollutants in the atmosphere. Furthermore, while the reduction in nitric oxide (NO) emissions from motor vehicles as a result of control measures being / to be implemented effectively reduced the concentrations of NO₂, the reduction in NO would reduce the titration effect on O₃, i.e. removal of O₃ from its reaction with NO, thereby leading to a slight increase in O₃ levels especially in areas with higher traffic flow. The O₃ level would only start to decrease when the levels of its precursors, including nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), drop below a certain threshold. He supplemented that under the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, coordinated preventive and control measures against pollutions caused by O₃ and FSP/PM_{2.5} would be taken, including studies to investigate the role of FSP/PM_{2.5} and major types of VOCs in the formation of photochemical smog.

25. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry on the possibility of setting AQOs that exceeded the WHO AQGs, Mr Tse Chin-wan advised that the WHO AQGs were based on a wealth of studies on health effects caused by air pollution and were widely adopted by countries in setting their own air quality standards. There would be no scientific basis to tighten the AQOs beyond the targets recommended in the AQGs. He understood that WHO would review from time to time to

determine whether any updating was required to the AQGs. Prof Wong Tze-wai added that the latest edition of the AQGs was published in 2006, and WHO had started work to review the AQGs. It was expected that recommendations to update the AQGs would be available shortly to better protect worldwide populations from adverse health effects of air pollution.

Public consultation

26. A Member suggested that comprehensive information, including past discussions in relevant boards and committees including the ACE, should be provided to enhance public understanding and encourage public support for the air quality improvement measures being/to be introduced. Mr Tse Chin-wan thanked the Member for the suggestion.

Conclusion

27. The Chairman summarised the views of Members and concluded that Members were supportive to tightening the AQOs with the ultimate aim of achieving the WHO AQGs to protect public health. He thanked the subject team for their detailed presentation and explanations. In view of the complexity of the subject, he invited Mr Tse Chin-wan to stay for the internal discussion session to address any further queries of Members.

[The presentation team left the meeting at this juncture.]

Internal Discussion Session (Closed-door session)

28. Given the complexity of the review processes, a Member was concerned that the public and the media might not be able to understand the findings of the review. The Government should make necessary preparations and pull the discussion back on track if the public overly focus on the AQOs of RSP/PM₁₀ and O₃ not being tightened to the next level, or specific policies or measures such as the promotion of electric vehicles in Hong Kong. She opined and Mr Tse Chin-wan agreed that it would be important to present relevant information to the public in a clear and simple manner to allow better comprehension, especially on health and economic benefits that could be brought about by improvements in air quality. Mr Tse said that the Government would also strive to enhance public understanding on

the fact that the tightened AQOs would be legally binding on designated projects under the EIAO, and hence would have long term benefits on the air quality.

29. In reply to a Member's enquiry on any target or planned timeframe for achieving the ultimate WHO AQGs, Mr Tse Chin-wan advised that among the 12 AQOs, six of them were already set at WHO AQGs levels. There was yet to be any country that could achieve all WHO AQGs and it could only be accomplished by continuous efforts to improve the air quality and gradually tightening the AQOs.

30. A Member suggested the Government consider possible actions and roles that could be undertaken by relevant committees and boards such as the ACE and members of the public that could help strengthen the work to promote air quality improvement.

31. Mr Tse Chin-wan said that given Hong Kong's extremely high density, merely adopting the same air pollution control technologies applicable in other places would not be sufficient for the achievement of the ultimate AQGs. It had to be supported also by a low-carbon society. This would rely on the participation and efforts of all members of the public to maintain a low-carbon lifestyle in terms of transportation, food consumption, energy usage etc.

32. Addressing a Member's observation that many developing countries had set a more stringent target for FSP/PM_{2.5} than Hong Kong, Mr Tse Chin-wan advised that the high density of Hong Kong and regional influence were major causes of the higher level of FSP/PM_{2.5}. Notwithstanding the above, the FSP/PM_{2.5} level in Hong Kong had been rapidly reducing over the past years due to various emission control measures. The 2018 annual average level of approximately 20 microgrammes per cubic metre (ug/m³), which was lower than that in Seoul and comparable to the level of Taipei. The PRD was the first region of the country to achieve an annual average FSP/PM_{2.5} level of below 35 ug/m³. To strengthen the coordinated efforts to improve the air quality, Mr Tse reiterated that preventive and control measures against pollutions caused by O₃ and FSP/PM_{2.5} would be taken in accordance with the Outline Development Plan of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

33. The Chairman thanked Mr Tse Chin-wan for his detailed explanations.

[Mr Tse Chin-wan left the meeting at this juncture.]

Item 5 : Progress of Implementation of Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2021

(ACE Papers 3/2019 and 4/2019)

34. The Chairman informed Members that *ACE Paper 3/2019* updated Members on the latest progress of implementation of the Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) 2016-2021, and a background note on the subject matter (i.e. *ACE Paper 4/2019*) prepared by the Secretariat had been circulated to Members for reference before the meeting.

35. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, a Member declared that his company provided services to AFCD to conduct study on invasive alien species under BSAP. The meeting agreed that the Member could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

[The presentation team joined the meeting at this juncture.]

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

36. Mr Simon Chan gave an opening remark and with the aid of a power point presentation, Dr Jackie Yip updated Members on the major achievements under four key action areas of BSAP. Dr Yip further advised that an Inter-departmental Working Group on BSAP had met regularly to discuss the progress of implementation and the Government had earmarked \$100 million for implementation of the action under BSAP in the next two financial years (i.e. 2019/20 and 2020/21).

Knowledge transfer and information sharing

37. With a view to strengthening biodiversity mainstreaming, a Member suggested developing a centralised database to consolidate the data collected from ecological surveys under the environmental impact assessments (EIA) by different project proponents. He further suggested defining the ownership of data which should belong to the Government with project proponents during tender procedures.

38. A Member echoed the view of another Member that a platform for information sharing among various parties was necessary to facilitate effective use of resources.

39. Dr Jackie Yip agreed and advised that a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based platform to facilitate sharing of data among different groups of users was being developed under Action 16(b). A stakeholder workshop which involved over 60 stakeholders was held in January 2018 to gather user requirements and views. In addition to exploring technical requirements on developing the framework of the platform under a consultancy study, she pointed out that given the sensitivity of ecological information, for example those of Incense Tree and freshwater turtles, the manner of information disclosure would be carefully considered.

40. A Member expressed appreciation towards efforts made by AFCD in implementing BSAP. Given the considerable period of time required for setting up the GIS-based platform for sharing ecological data, he suggested AFCD share findings and reports of the completed studies/reviews under BSAP so as to promote knowledge building among experts and the general public.

41. Dr Jackie Yip said that the above-mentioned GIS-based data-sharing platform would form part of the BSAP initiative to develop a web-based information hub to provide a one-stop shop for information on local biodiversity to stakeholders at all levels, under Action 16(a). A consultancy study was commissioned to explore the software requirements, structure and design of the information hub. The relevant findings and reports of relevant studies would be released through the information hub after its launch.

Stakeholder engagement

42. A Member suggested with the support of another Member that AFCD should be more proactive in inviting external experts who had contributed to the formulation of BSAP to comment on the progress of its implementation, with a view to building capacity and fostering momentum.

43. A Member suggested that more external experts should be involved before relevant review or study was conducted.

44. A Member opined that it was important to engage experts from different areas, including urban planning and green building, for mainstreaming BSAP in different sectors. He suggested that elements of biodiversity could be incorporated into the green building assessment.

45. Mr Simon Chan advised that the implementation of BSAP required the concerted efforts of various parties. Different stakeholders had been involved in the implementation of the 67 specific actions, including the compilation of a list of threatened species for Hong Kong that involved more than 100 local experts. The continuous involvement of stakeholders was important in the smooth implementation of various BSAP initiatives, and the Government would continue to gauge the views of relevant stakeholders in preparing future BSAPs.

Education and promotion

46. In response to a Member's suggestion on involving students in field surveys to enhance next generation's interest in biodiversity, Dr Jackie Yip said that various citizen science projects were conducted by non-governmental organisations under the Subventions for Biodiversity Education scheme of AFCD to promote awareness and community involvement in biodiversity.

47. In reply to a Member's enquiry on whether there was electronic version of the learning and teaching resource packages for kindergarten, Dr Jackie Yip said that it was available for download at both the Education Bureau and AFCD websites.

Measuring effectiveness

48. In reply to a Member's suggestion of developing a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of education programmes, Dr Jackie Yip advised that under the Subventions for Biodiversity Education scheme of AFCD, the recipient organisations were required to conduct evaluation through means such as questionnaire to assess the effectiveness of the education programmes. She added that a survey was conducted to obtain baseline information regarding the public knowledge and awareness towards biodiversity in Hong Kong, and the Nature Conservation Subcommittee (NCSC) under ACE was consulted on the initial

results in July 2018. The results obtained could be used to review the effectiveness of public education programmes under the BSAP.

49. With reference to overseas studies and surveys that related biodiversity with public wellness, a Member suggested that in addition to the level of knowledge and awareness, the survey could also cover aspects of public wellness to assess the level of happiness of the general public towards biodiversity.

Computer-aided Sustainability Evaluation Tool (CASET)

50. In reply to a Member's question on the meaning of integrating biodiversity in CASET, Dr Jackie Yip explained that the CASET was part of the sustainability assessment system, through which Government bureaux and departments had to assess the potential environmental, social and economic impacts of their new strategic initiatives or major programmes at the project planning stage.

51. In response to a Member's enquiry on the biodiversity parameters that were integrated in CASET, Dr Jackie Yip explained that the CASET were revised to include updated parameters on protected areas, as well as to include parameters on habitats of high ecological value and checklist questions concerning connectivity and ecosystem services, with a view to better supporting biodiversity considerations in major policies and plans.

Wetland conservation

52. A Member noticed that AFCD was conducting a review of the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site Management Plan (RSMP) under Action 1(d). He enquired whether NCSC under ACE which advised the Administration on nature conservation matters, including the management of the Mai Po and the Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site, would be consulted.

53. Mr Simon Chan said that subsequent to the 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention in October 2018, AFCD was reviewing the existing RSMP to take into account the latest developments. The updated RSMP would be implemented by 2021. The NCSC would be consulted on the draft updated RSMP in due course.

54. A Member opined that matters regarding wetland conservation were seldom discussed at the NCSC meetings. She suggested introducing a new committee similar to the previous Wetland Advisory Committee, for enhancing wetland conservation and management.

55. Mr Simon Chan advised that the work of the Wetland Advisory Committee had been subsumed into NCSC. He said that matters regarding wetland conservation and management would be brought to discussion at the NCSC meetings.

Progress update on specific actions

56. With reference to the Annex to *ACE Paper 3/2019*, a Member suggested that it would be helpful to present the percentage of completion instead of descriptions of progress for each of the specific action.

57. Mr Simon Chan advised that the progress of implementation was generally in line with the timeframes set out in the BSAP and said that AFCD would explore other ways to present the progress for easier comprehension. While some actions were short-term and had already been completed, he reminded Members that some of the actions such as compilation of a list of threatened species for Hong Kong and development of a GIS-based data-sharing platform were long-term actions. The targeted completion of such actions would go beyond the timeframe of the first BSAP.

58. In addition to the description of progress of each specific action, a Member suggested including impacts and outcomes of the actions completed in the progress update.

59. In response to a Member's enquiry on difficulties encountered, Dr Jackie Yip considered that it was challenging to carry out actions that were technically demanding in view of the limited manpower resources and tight timeframe; and to mainstream biodiversity to the diverse groups of stakeholders as the messages of communication needed to be tailor-made.

60. A Member suggested measuring the value of ecosystem services in monetary terms with assumptions, under Action 17, could serve as a management

tool for biodiversity conservation.

61. Dr Jackie Yip advised that AFCD was conducting background research and planning to commission a study on the baseline profile of ecosystem services of major habitats in Hong Kong. She remarked with reference to recent overseas work on ecosystem services that the valuation of ecosystem services in monetary terms had considerable limitations, and its applicability to Hong Kong should be duly considered.

Conclusion

62. The Chairman thanked the subject team for their presentation. He summarised the views of Members and concluded that Members were in general satisfied with the progress of implementation of BSAP. He welcomed the subject team to report progress again with ACE in future meetings.

[The presentation team left the meeting at this juncture.]

Internal Discussion Session (Closed-door session)

63. A Member appreciated AFCD's efforts to make good progress of implementation of BSAP.

64. In response to a Member's enquiry on financial resources, Mr Simon Chan said that a total of \$150 million had been allocated by the Government to take forward relevant initiatives under the BSAP in the first three financial years. The Government would earmark another \$100 million in the next two financial years to sustain the implementation of actions in the first BSAP. In preparation for the second BSAP, AFCD would conduct review and seek funding through established procedures. While there were adequate financial resources, Mr Chan pointed out that manpower resources were still limited. As such, he mentioned that AFCD had been engaging external stakeholders to render support to carry out the actions.

65. As regards a Member's suggestion on creation of more positions given the limited manpower resources, Mrs Alice Cheung advised that resources would be sought through established procedures if necessary.

Item 6 : Any other business (Closed-door session)

EIA report not selected by EIASC for submission to ACE

66. The Chairperson of the EIASC reported that since the last Council meeting, EIASC received the Executive Summary of the EIA report on “Yuen Long Effluent Polishing Plant” which the Subcommittee had not selected for discussion. The EIA report was exhibited for public comments from 28 February to 29 March 2019. The Executive Summary had been circulated to EIASC Members upon commencement of the public inspection period, with the relevant hyperlinks copied to non-EIASC Members for information. Individual Members were advised to provide their comments, if any, on the EIA report directly to the Director of Environmental Protection within the public inspection period. As the EIA report had not been selected by EIASC for presentation and discussion, the Chairperson concluded that EPD would take that ACE had no adverse comments on the EIA report upon close of the public inspection period.

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

Item 7 : Date of next meeting (Closed-door session)

68. The next ACE meeting was scheduled on 1 April 2019 (Monday). Members would be advised on the agenda in due course.

[Post meeting notes: As there was no proposed item for discussion at the ACE meeting in April and May, the meetings scheduled on 1 April and 6 May 2019 were cancelled.]

ACE Secretariat
June 2019