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(ACE 9/95)
for advice

Report of the EIA Subcommittee:

Studies considered since the January ACE Meeting

The Subcommittee has had three meetings to consider three EIA reports since the full Council meeting held on 16 January 1995. Two other EIA reports were considered by circulation.

- 1. EIA Studies for Lantau Port Development Stage 1 - Container Terminals Nos. 10 & 11 (Preliminary Design and Ancillary Works)**
2. Members considered the EIA studies for the proposed port development at a special meeting on 23 January. The proposed Stage 1 development consists of Container Terminal No.10 and 11 and the associated backup areas for container storage; service land for port-related industrial and commercial development and associated infrastructure. An approach channel and a local breakwater will also be constructed under the Stage 1 development.
3. After discussion, Members agreed to recommend the reports to the full Council for endorsement subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) EIAs on the borrow areas should come to ACE. The proponent should also consult ACE first if they were to choose the mega land borrow area option. The recently completed EIA report for the mega land borrow area should be submitted to ACE;
 - (b) there should be early diversion of all effluent from Discovery Bay and Peng Chau to the treatment plant at North Lantau; PELB should liaise with the relevant government departments to ensure that the required works are implemented in time;
 - (c) monitoring programmes on the Chinese White Dolphins should be implemented during the construction stage;

- (d) an independent monitoring and audit office should be set up to monitor the cumulative construction impacts when multiple contracts take place;
- (e) CED should implement all the recommendations in the EIA studies, especially those noise mitigation measures;
- (f) the reports were endorsed based on a drained reclamation scheme. If other reclamation methods were to be used, separate EIAs had to be completed and presented to ACE;
- (g) there should be contribution from this project to off-site compensation programmes such as the artificial reef project currently considered by AFD;
- (h) considerations should be given to extension of the North Lantau Country Park up to the boundary of the proposed development.

II. EIA Study for the Proposed Aviation Fuel Receiving Facility (AFRF) at Sha Chau

4. Members considered the EIA study for the proposed aviation fuel receiving facility at their meeting on 6 February. The project proponent, the Provisional Airport Authority (PAA), proposes to construct at Sha Chau an AFRF which comprises two fuel vessel berths each approximately 160m long, 27m wide and 5m above sea level, a Supply and Emergency Response Base of about 30m by 90m attached to the AFRF and a twin pipeline linking the AFRF with the new airport.

5. The findings of the Initial Environmental Impact Assessment (IEIA) on this facility was presented to the Subcommittee in September 1994. The subcommittee advised that PAA should look at a number of issues carefully in the final EIA. These issues are addressed in the present final report. The report has also identified the potential risks to life associated with transporting aviation fuel through Ma Wan Channel and the potential impacts on marine ecology especially the Chinese White Dolphins as the main issues.

6. At the invitation of the Subcommittee, the Dolphin Research team of the Swire Institute of Marine Science of the University of Hong Kong and Dr. Stephen Leatherwood, an international cetacean expert, were invited to attend this meeting to share with Members their expert advices regarding the dolphins. PAA also invited another international cetacean expert, Dr. Bernd Wursig, who is a professor of the Texas A & M University of USA, to attend this meeting to give comments and advise on the mitigation measures.

7. After discussion, the Subcommittee felt unable to recommend the report to the Council for endorsement because of the following:

(I) Choice of Site

- (a) The list of ten potential sites considered for the AFRF was not exhaustive and some possible sites were not included.
- (b) Environmental criteria were not included in the initial site selection process.

(II) Risk

- (a) Members considered the risk to human life at Ma Wan due to the existing and projected marine traffic carrying hazardous substances unacceptable. According to the consultants, the proposed facility is strictly speaking not ALARP (i.e. the risk is not As Low As Reasonably Practicable).
- (b) The planned operation span of the AFRF (5-7 years) appeared longer than technically necessary. Members were not convinced why it had not been possible to install a permanent pipeline within a shorter period of time.

(III) Ecology

- (a) The proposed facility would be adjacent to a Site of Specific Scientific Interest, and might be of critical importance to the Chinese White Dolphins. The site would also be regarded as the prime location for a dolphin sanctuary if one was to be established.
- (b) There were different opinions on the likely impacts the facility would have on the dolphins and how compatible it could be with a dolphin sanctuary. No firm conclusions could be drawn by the consultants as to the acceptability of the environmental impacts. Because of this uncertainty, the "precautionary principle" should apply.
- (c) Both the report and the dolphin expert had only recommended mitigation measures, but no compensatory measures had been proposed.

8. In accordance with the agreed procedures, the PAA have been informed of their right to present their case to the full Council for a final decision.

III. EIA Study for the Main Drainage Channels for Ngau Tam Mei, Yuen Long and Kam Tin - Kam Tin Section and Village Flood Protection Works

9. Members considered the EIA study for the main drainage channels at a special meeting on 13 February. The project is designed to alleviate the severe flooding in the lower and middle parts of this river basin.

10. This report covers only the Kam Tin section of the main drainage channel and the Village Flood protection Works. A separate EIA study to cover both construction and operational impacts for all stages of the proposed main drainage project is currently under way and will be presented to ACE when it is complete in late 1995.

11. Members accepted the findings of the report and agreed to recommend this report to the full Council for endorsement on the condition that the final EIA report will address the compensatory measures for loss of wetland.

IV. EIA Study for the Ash Lagoon of the Hongkong Electric Co Ltd - Lamma Power Station

12. Members considered this report by circulation. This report was presented at the request of Members on the revised design of the ash lagoon and its environmental performance. The ash lagoon is to be built next to the Lamma Power Station to provide a controlled storage environment before harvesting the fuel ash for reclamation.

13. Members accepted the conclusions of the study that the environmental impacts associated with the revised lagoon proposal could be minimised through implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, including proper on-site management and monitoring programmes during construction and operations.

14. Members found the findings and recommendations of the report acceptable and agreed to recommend this report to the Council for endorsement.

V. EIA Study for Reclamation and Servicing of Tuen Mun Area 38 for Special Industries

15. Members considered this EIA report by circulation. This project involves reclamation of 125 ha. of land for development of a Special Industries Area and a River Trade Terminal, and the reprovisioning of the existing submarine outfall from the sewage treatment works at Pillar Point.

16. Members accepted the findings and recommendations of the report and agreed to recommend the report to the full Council for endorsement.

Advice Sought

17. Members are requested to endorse the recommendations of the Subcommittee contained in Para.3, 7, 11, 14 and 16.

**Planning, Environment & Lands Branch
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