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for information

Lantau Port Development - Stage 1
Information Paper on Proposed Chinese White Dolphin Survey

Purpose

This note updates members on the progress of implementing the dolphin baseline survey.

Background

2. The environmental impact assessment report for the Lantau Port Development - Stage 1 Container Terminals 10 & 11 Ancillary Works (Design) concluded that the Lantau Port area was not a major site for the dolphins in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, to address the possible works impacts on the dolphins, a set of mitigation measures will be implemented, including the provision of a buffer zone of at least 500m for the dolphins during underwater percussive piling and undertaking dolphin spottings when operating in these waters. A dolphin baseline study will be carried out so that its results will be comparable to those of the Dolphin Research Team of the University of Hong Kong.

Present Position

3. An environmental consultant will be commissioned from late June 1995 onwards to undertake a survey for an initial period of six months. The survey will include a regular marine survey every two weeks, covering the area bounded by Kau Yi Chau, Peng Chau and Lantau Island. Experienced observers familiar with marine survey techniques will be employed. The consultant has proposed to engage experts currently conducting research at the Swire Marine Laboratory of the University of Hong Kong. Specialist advice will also be sought from Dr Stephen Leatherwood of the Ocean Park.

4. To further examine the high quality of observation, an accurate vessel positioning device and range finder will be used. All sightings will be supplemented by photographic records. This will facilitate the identification of individual dolphins and the survey results can then be compared with the earlier records of dolphin movements and habits.