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for information

Mid-term Review of ACE

Purpose

The present term of office of the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) is from 1 January 1996 to 31 December 1997. The purpose of this paper is to review the activities of the Council in the first half of its term of office from January to December 1996.

Introduction

2. The ACE is government's principle advisory body on matters related to pollution control and sustainability of the environment. It is consulted on a wide range of issues relating to new legislative proposals and the implementation of existing pollution control and conservation measures. Major policy initiatives are also referred to ACE for advice before they are adopted by the government.

Summary of the activities of the Council

3. The Council has held monthly meetings since January 1996. In addition, three special sessions were held: meeting with the International Review Panel to discuss issues relating to the pilot plant chemical dosing and disinfection study for the Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme Stage I; and two briefing sessions on the SUSDEV 21 study and the Territorial Development Strategy Review respectively.

4. The Council also organised four site visits to obtain a better understanding of the matters being discussed, viz, a visit to the Stonecutters Island to inspect the Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme Stage I project on 29 May 1996, two field trips to the Sha Lo Tung valley on 23 November 1996 and 5 December 1996 respectively and a visit to the Shenzhen River Regulation Project on 20 September 1996.

5. During the period (January to December), ACE considered 28 discussion papers and noted 42 information papers. A full list of these papers, which includes a breakdown of the discussion papers into new legislative proposals, implementation of existing pollution control and conservation measures and major policy initiatives and the outcome of the Council's discussions, is at Annex I.

6. Apart from that, the Council also considered 21 environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports presented and recommended by the EIA Sub-committee. A list of the EIA reports is at Annex II.

Programme for 1997

7. A list of tentative topics to be considered by the Council is at Annex III. It should be noted that the month of submission is subject to change depending on the progress of the relevant programmes.

Conclusion

8. During 1996, the Council was informed and consulted on a large number of issues on a wide range of subject matters. Under the leadership of the Chairman and with the support of all members, the Council has been able to give valuable and sound advice to the various environmental programmes and legislative proposals which ensures that they are effective and appropriate to the situation in Hong Kong.

Planning, Environment & Lands Branch
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