



Room 924, 9th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong
Tel: 2848 2606 Fax: 2530 5264
香港中環花園道美利大廈9樓924室•電話：2848 2606 傳真機：2530 5264

(ACE Paper 11/98)
for information

The 8th Meeting of the
Hong Kong-Guangdong Environmental Protection Liaison Group

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the outcome of the 8th meeting of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Environmental Protection Liaison Group.

BACKGROUND

2. The Hong Kong-Guangdong Environmental Protection Liaison Group (EPLG) was set up in 1990 to enhance the co-operation and co-ordination between Hong Kong and Guangdong on environmental management and pollution control efforts in areas of mutual concern. The Hong Kong delegation is headed by the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands. The Guangdong delegation is headed by the Director of Environmental Protection Bureau of Guangdong Province.

3. Since its formation, the EPLG has met eight times. A Technical Sub-group (TSG) was formed in 1990 under the EPLG to consider common environmental standards and objectives to protect Deep Bay's ecosystem, in particular the general development of the area and the beneficial uses which could be sustained. In recent years, the TSG has taken up a much broader responsibility. Apart from supporting the Deep Bay Water Quality Regional Control Strategy Study, it also helps to implement the EPLG's annual Work Programme. So far, ten meetings of the TSG has been held. Experts of both sides also meet once every two months.

THE 8TH MEETING

4. The 8th meeting was held on 7 January 1998 in Guangzhou. It was the first EPLG meeting held since the reunification. The agenda and membership list of the two sides are at Annexes A and B respectively for Members' reference. After the meeting, we also visited some environmental facilities in Panyu and Shenzhen on 8 and 9 January.

Achievements

5. The meeting covered a wide range of issues on the protection and conservation of the environment. Apart from noting and endorsing reports on the implementation of the 1997 work programme and exchanging information on the latest environmental protection work carried out by both sides respectively, the meeting also decided on a number of actions for the protection of the environment and natural resources. The major achievements are summarised below :

Deep Bay and Mirs Bay

- (a) Joint studies on environmental management and protection of Deep Bay and Mirs Bay had been conducted and action plans prepared. The meeting agreed to implement these action plans and to audit the situation once every six months to ensure they were properly implemented.
- (b) In view of the ecological importance of Deep Bay and Mirs Bay, it was agreed that any new major development projects in these two areas must be subject to thorough environmental impact assessment (EIA) before commencement of the works.
- (c) A study (known as "The Deep Bay Water Quality Regional Control Strategy Study") to confirm Deep Bay's dispersive and self-assimilative capacity would be completed in early 1998. Upon completion of the study, both sides would further discuss control measures for the Deep Bay Catchment Area.

- (d) The Guangdong side undertook to seek the consent of other relevant authorities to release the information gathered in the studies they had done in Deep Bay and Mirs Bay to the HK SAR Government to assist us in carrying out the baseline survey under the SUSDEV 21 study.

Air Quality in the Pearl River Delta Region (PRDR)

- (e) An Expert Group was set up to press ahead with the joint study on the nature and magnitude of air pollution in the PRDR and, if necessary, to consider plans to prevent future deterioration of air quality in the Region. The Expert Group would initially be made up of representatives from the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and the Guangdong EPB and would convene its first meeting in February 1998.

Water Quality in the PRDR

- (f) The meeting agreed to pay more attention to the water pollution problems in the PRDR by exchanging information or undertaking joint study on water quality in the Region.
- (g) Prior to the meeting, EPD had been liaising with the Guangdong side to initiate a programme of work to collect, through field surveys, original information on water quality and pollution loads throughout the Pearl River Estuary and in Mainland territorial waters west, south and east of Hong Kong. This original data would be used to recalibrate our new suite of water quality models which may then be used, inter alia, for the purposes of devising management plans for the surrounding water bodies.
- (h) We were also pleased to note that the Guangdong side was drafting the Pearl River Delta Water Protection Bill to improve and protect the water quality in the Region. They planned to submit the Bill to the Guangdong People's Congress in the near future.

Import and Export of Waste

- (i) The Guangdong side clarified that the issue of import and export of waste was outside their control as it involved different authorities at state level, including NEPA, the Commodity Inspection Bureau and the customs authority. Nevertheless, they undertook to convey our views and concern on this issue to NEPA.

Chinese White Dolphin

- (j) A Study Group on the Conservation of the Chinese White Dolphin had been set up in August 1997. Both sides agreed to enhance cooperation on the protection and conservation of the dolphins and to set up a joint data bank. The Guangdong side said they would consider setting up a marine reserve for the dolphins in the Pearl River Delta.

Seminar on Waste Reduction

- (k) In view of the success of the EIA workshop held in May 1997, the meeting agreed that similar workshops or seminars on other topics should be held in future. Following from this, the Guangdong side undertook to organise a seminar on waste reduction in Guangzhou in the second half of 1998.

Fisheries Resources

- (l) Both sides agreed to start liaison and exchanging information on fisheries resources in the Region.

6. The meeting also endorsed the work programme for 1998; as shown at Annex C.

Conclusion

7. The efforts of both sides in past years have laid a good foundation for the EPLG to begin to turn to regional issues and embark on some more ambitious projects. The basis of our co-operation has gradually widened and deepened both in terms of geographical coverage (from Mirs Bay and Deep Bay to the entire Pearl River Delta Region) and the scope of discussion (from environmental protection to conservation of natural resources).

**Planning, Environment and Lands Bureau
February 1998**