

**Proposed Application of  
the Convention on Biological Diversity  
and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to Hong Kong**

**Purpose**

This paper aims to seek Members' views on a proposal to extend the application of the Convention on Biological Diversity ("the Convention") and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety ("the Protocol") to Hong Kong.

**Background**

2. The Convention, that came into operation in 1993, seeks to provide a guidance framework on the essential components of and the key considerations involved in formulating a comprehensive conservation strategy to achieve the following objectives –

- (a) conservation of biological diversity;
- (b) sustainable use of the components of biological diversity; and
- (c) fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.

There are currently 188 Parties to the Convention including China.

3. The Protocol was adopted under the Convention in 2000 to protect biological diversity from potential risks posed by living modified organisms, which include genetically modified live food crops, seeds and fish, etc. obtained through the use of modern biotechnology, by regulating their trans-boundary movements. It has come into force since 11 September 2003 and there are currently 87 Parties to the Protocol. China has signed the Protocol and will become a Party to it upon completion of the ratification procedure.

4. To better protect biological diversity in Hong Kong, the Government plans to extend the application of these two international agreements to Hong Kong. A new legislation will need to be drawn up to implement the requirements of the Protocol. Details of the proposal are set out in the bilingual consultation paper at Annex.

## **Public Consultation**

5. We commenced a three-month public consultation exercise in January 2004 to solicit views on the proposal. The bilingual consultation paper has been uploaded onto the websites of the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for public comments. We have also been arranging a number of consultation sessions with the key stakeholders including food trade associations, relevant importers / traders, environmental groups, academics, and relevant advisory committees. We will take into account the views received in deciding the way forward and drawing up the detailed implementation plan.

## **Advice Sought**

6. Members are invited to provide your views on the proposed application of the Convention and the Protocol to Hong Kong.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau  
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department  
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