

**Confirmed Minutes of the
33rd Nature Conservation Subcommittee Meeting
held on 27 March 2020 at 9:30 a.m.**

Present:

Prof Kenneth LEUNG, JP (Chairman)
Ms Carmen CHAN, BBS, JP
Prof Nora TAM, BBS, JP
Ir Cary CHAN, JP
Ms Julia LAU
Prof LAU Chi-pang, JP
Dr Michael LAU
Dr Winnie LAW
Dr SUNG Yik-hei
Ms Christina TANG
Ir Conrad WONG, BBS, JP
Ms Becky LAM (Secretary)

In Attendance:

Environmental Protection Department (EPD)

Mrs Vicki KWOK	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)
Ms Daisy LO	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation)
Ms Thebe NG	Senior Administrative Officer (Nature Conservation)
Dr Rex SHIH	Forestry Officer (Nature Conservation)
Miss Dora CHU	Executive Officer (CBD) 1
Miss Carman LEUNG	Executive Officer (CBD) 2

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)

Mr Simon CHAN	Assistant Director (Conservation)
Dr Jackie YIP	Senior Conservation Officer (Biodiversity)

In Attendance for Item 3:

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr Evelyne KUO	Conservation Officer (Biodiversity)1
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Environmental Protection Department

Mr Alex TANG	Senior Countryside Conservation Manager (Planning)
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Conservancy Association

Mr Ken SO	Chief Executive
Ms Kami HUI	Conservation Manager
Mr LAU Sin-pang	Assistant Conservation Manager

Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

Mr LO Wai-yan	General Manager
Ms Vicky YEUNG	Project Manager

In Attendance for Item 4:

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Mr Ray SO	Conservation Officer (Biodiversity) ⁴
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ESCM

Dr Michael LAU	Independent Consultant
Ms YAU Mee-ling	Senior Manager, Conservation and Ecology

Action

The Chairman welcomed Members to the NCSC meeting held on Zoom with regard to the latest status of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Item 1 : Confirmation of the draft minutes of the 32nd meeting held on 19 December 2019

2. The draft minutes were confirmed without amendments.

Item 2 : Matters arising (Closed-door session)

3. There was no matter arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

[Representatives of CA and HKBWS joined the meeting at this juncture.]

Item 3 : Implementation of Nature Conservation Management Agreement Project at Long Valley
(ACE-NC Paper 1/2020)

4. The Chairman informed that the paper briefed Members on the latest status of the Nature Conservation Management Agreement (MA) project at Long Valley and Ho Sheung Heung Priority Site, as well as the experiences gained from the MA project over the years.

5. On the invitation of the Chairman, a Member declared that she was one of the directors as well as honorary secretary of the Conservancy Association (CA), and she

was also an inhabitant in Ho Sheung Heung. A Member informed that he had conducted bird monitoring surveys for the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS). Another Member also declared that he was a member of the HKBWS. The meeting agreed that the three Members could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

6. By way of a PowerPoint presentation, Dr Jackie Yip gave an overview of the MA project and briefed Members on the latest status. Mr Ken So followed to share the management experience and achievements accomplished under the MA project with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation.

Species Conservation

7. A Member was pleased to see that the cumulative bird species had been increasing over the years under the MA project. He requested for annual data on the number of bird species recorded so as to have a better idea on the changes of the bird community under the management of the MA project team.

8. Ms Vicky Yeung reported a steady increase in the number of bird species recorded over the years, with 134 species recorded in 2006, and peaking at 191 in 2013. While a slight decrease was recorded afterwards, over 160 bird species were still recorded every year after 2013. The bird community used to mainly consist of waders and open-country species. After implementation of the MA project, the number of waterbirds and seed-eating birds including the critically endangered Yellow-breasted Bunting had increased. The planting of paddy rice played a significant role in attracting seed-eating birds, and the number of the Yellow-breasted Bunting had a sharp increase from less than ten before 2009 to more than 98 in 2019. However, the number of open-country birds had dropped, mainly due to a decrease in the area of watercress fields. Ms Yeung explained that watercress grew well in cold weather and rich soils. Due to the warmer winters and increased cost of fertilisers in recent years, farmers became more inclined to grow water spinach instead of watercress during winters.

9. Addressing a Member's concern that the Black-winged Stilt could no longer be spotted in Long Valley after land resumption, Ms Vicky Yeung informed that the preparatory work for the construction of Long Valley Nature Park (LVNP) was underway and due to the suspension of habitat management work at the very beginning, some of the farmlands in Long Valley were temporarily dried up or overgrown with vegetation. She assured that inundation of wet farmlands had been resumed. Given that the Black-winged Stilt favoured open water habitats, they were found to have migrated to the nearby wetlands in Ho Sheung Heung. She explained that an emphasis would be placed in maintaining the farming activities in the Ho Sheung Heung to provide suitable habitats for the Black-winged Stilt and other birds during the transition of Long Valley into LVNP.

10. In reply to a Member's question regarding bird monitoring in Long Valley after the termination of MA activities, Ms Vicky Yeung advised that the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) engaged an ecological consultant to conduct monitoring from July 2019 to July 2020 as pre-construction baseline surveys required under the Environmental Monitoring and Audit of the Kwu Tung North and

Fanling North New Development Areas project. The transects and frequency of surveys adopted were the same as that under the MA project, which would enable the direct comparison of data. HKBWS had also been conducting independent surveys since December 2019 to ensure the availability of comparable data.

11. The Chairman opined that information such as the biodiversity index and data on the abundance and biomass of individual species should be provided in addition to the species richness data presented, in order to show a full picture of the biodiversity trends. Mr Ken So explained that the relevant information was included in the progress reports.

Habitat Management

12. A Member suggested that more areas in the site could be used for rice planting with a view to further increasing the food source for the Yellow-breasted Bunting. While expressing support, Ms Vicky Yeung shared that rice planting was labour-intensive and the lack of manpower resources had constrained the area of paddy rice fields. She aspired that the area of paddy rice field could be enlarged in the LVNP if the Government acquired the necessary machinery to reduce the manpower requirements for rice planting. Nevertheless, she suggested that the mosaic pattern and diversity of farmlands and other habitats in Long Valley should be maintained in order to support the high diversity of species with different habitat preferences.

13. With the concern that there might be habitat degradation during the transition of Long Valley into LVNP, a Member enquired whether monitoring would be conducted during the transition period. Mr Ken So shared the Member's concern and informed that a decrease in biodiversity was observed after land resumption when CEDD was making preparatory work for the construction of LVNP. He supplemented that CA and HKBWS had been engaged as CEDD's consultant to provide advice on the management of the site during the construction works.

14. Mr Simon Chan advised that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) was working closely with CEDD to conduct interim maintenance of the habitats at Long Valley. During the construction period of the LVNP, habitat management measures and ecological surveys would be conducted regularly to maintain the conservation value of the site. The land would be handed over in seven phases to AFCD upon the completion of the necessary construction works. The first phase was anticipated to be completed by the end of 2020 and the last phase by the end of 2023.

15. A Member acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining farming practices during the transition period which might lead to habitat degradation. With a view to preserving the habitats and biodiversity of Long Valley, she invited CA and HKBWS to share their experience and challenges encountered in the management of Long Valley.

16. Mr Ken So informed that there had been water shortages in the past and thus the MA project team had provided advice to CEDD on the maintenance of irrigation channels. There should also be control on the visitor flow to minimise disturbance to

the habitats of Long Valley. In order to maintain active farmlands, he further suggested retaining existing farmers for their experience as far as possible.

17. As regards a Member's question on the ideal ratio of habitats to support the highest biodiversity, Ms Vicky Yeung recommended maintaining the wet to dry habitat proportion at 65% to 35%, with an allowable variation of 10% depending on the season. For wet habitats, she suggested that the proportion of conventional farmlands consisting of watercress and water spinach fields should be maintained at 50% to 70%, and "Shallow Water Habitats", "Less Intensive Wet Agricultural Lands" and paddy rice fields should take up the remaining areas. She suggested referring to the specific proportions in 2013 which was the year with the highest biodiversity recorded

18. A Member opined that the economic benefit should not be the only consideration in deciding the types of crops to be planted. Greater diversity of crops, such as water chestnuts should be introduced with a view to enhancing the biodiversity. She also suggested conducting a study to ascertain the economic benefits and impacts on the biodiversity of various agricultural practices and cropping regimes. Considering that more resources would be available when the site was managed by the Government, she also suggested reviewing the composition and distribution of habitats within the site, in particular the Less Intensive Wet Agricultural Lands.

19. A Member concurred that more types of crops should be planted such that the LVNP could serve as a demonstration to visitors a diversity of agricultural practices and crops. For enhanced conservation of biodiversity, which was another function of the LVNP, he suggested crops that could serve as a food source for globally or locally threatened bird species should be grown. He considered that when reviewing the ratio of habitats and crops to be planted, farmlands in the vicinity (e.g. Ho Sheung Heung) should also be taken into account given that many bird species were highly mobile and their foraging range would not be limited to the LVNP.

20. Responding to a Member's enquiry regarding *Machilus kwangtungensis* planting in the Fung Shui Wood of Ho Sheung Heung, Ms Kami Hui advised that around 100 seedlings were propagated in 2016 and 2017 with a survival rate of around 60%. She explained that the relatively low survival rate was due to the rapid growth of the Dichotomy Forked Fern. She shared that the project team would cover the ground around the seedlings with cardboards to suppress the growth of the fern. She reported that the application of fertilisers and weed control were conducted regularly and the seedlings had now grown taller than the fern. The project team intended to continue the tree planting vide their new application for funding support from the newly established Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme (CCFS).

21. A Member sought further information on the connection between the farmers in Long Valley and the MA project. She opined that it was important to strike a balance between conservation and economic benefits to farmers so as to prolong the sustainability of the farming practices. Ms Kami Hui explained that the MA project was introduced to conserve the wetland habitats in Long Valley in face of the shrinking traditional wetland farming practice. It was voluntary for farmers to enter into management agreements with CA and HKBWS and the managed area did not cover the

whole of Long Valley. Upon the establishment of the LVNP, she advised that AFCD should accord priority to engagement of existing farmers, especially those with experience in planting watercress and water spinach, to tend to the farmlands in LVNP.

22. Ms Vicky Yeung supplemented that the LVNP of 37 hectares (ha) would be divided into three zones, including the Visitor Zone, the Agriculture Zone and the Biodiversity Zone. In order to maintain the mosaic pattern of habitats and diversified crop production, the farming practice within the LVNP would be subject to guidelines and requirements to be prescribed by the Government.

Control of Invasive Species

23. In reply to a Member's question regarding the threat of Red Imported Fire Ants (RIFA) posed on amphibians, Mr Lau Sin-pang advised that RIFA often became the dominant terrestrial species in infested areas and might adversely affect the abundances of other insects, which were food sources of amphibians. Furthermore, RIFA were aggressive and were known to prey on tadpoles and small frogs.

24. As regards a Member's enquiry on the measures to minimise the negative impact posed by invasive species, Mr Lau Sin-pang said that the control of RIFA was particularly challenging given their wide distribution and large populations. In comparison, the impact of other invasive species was much more limited. While Apple Snails were abundant in Long Valley and were known to prey on the eggs of amphibians, farmers could get rid of them before planting by using lime or tea seed powders. He mentioned that there had been increasing records of captive-bred Chinese Bullfrog due to mercy release activities, but the impact was yet to be ascertained. As for cats, he advised that they were either pets of farmers or stray cats and should be removed before the establishment of the future LVNP.

Impact of Disease Outbreaks

25. In reply to a Member's question on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the MA project, Mr Ken So advised that all MA activities in Long Valley were terminated after its reversion to Government Land, and the MA project team was transitioning their operations in Long Valley to Ho Sheung Heung. Having regard to the COVID-19 outbreak situation, the number of participants involved in farming activities were limited in order to practise social distancing, and all school programmes and activities were suspended.

26. As regards a Member's question regarding the precautionary measures against the recurrence of avian influenza outbreak in the future LVNP, Ms Vicky Yeung advised that the Government had put in place a preventive and surveillance programme. According to the prevailing guidelines, if three or more dead birds in the vicinity were tested positive for avian influenza within a period of ten days, the subject country/wetland park would be closed for a certain period of time. Mr Simon Chan supplemented that AFCD collected samples regularly to test for the avian influenza virus and the public could call the Government hotline 1823 if suspicious sick or dead birds were found.

Habitat Zoning

27. In reply to a Member's enquiry regarding the distinctions between wise use zone and eco-agriculture zone, Ms Vicky Yeung explained that flexibility was allowed in the wise use zone in terms of the management practice and choice of crop planted. She supplemented that it was more difficult to engage farmers for the eco-agriculture zone due to limited resources and the stricter requirement of using ecologically-friendly farming practices throughout the whole planting period, and thus the area of eco-agriculture zone under the MA project was only around 12 to 14 ha compared with the wise use zone of over 20 ha.

Experience and Knowledge Transfer

28. The Chairman suggested that the MA project team could consolidate its rich management experience accumulated over the years and publish research papers or other literature, such that other organisations or individuals could make reference and apply the experience to conserve and enrich the biodiversity of their farmlands. He also suggested sharing the socio-economic benefits achieved by the MA project, including the preservation of the local culture and products, and the strengthening of public awareness and knowledge in environmental conservation.

29. Mr Ken So informed that the project team had consolidated and documented their management experience, and had been sharing them with the Government and relevant parties. While socio-economic issues were beyond the expertise of the MA project team, Mr So agreed that they could share their experience with relevant experts for conducting in-depth analysis as necessary.

30. A Member recalled that there was a paper on the socio-economic value of Long Valley published earlier. She would pass the paper to Members for reference after the meeting.

[Post meeting notes: The Member had provided the literature related to socio-economic value by email on 9 April 2020.]

Conclusion

31. With no further questions from Members, the Chairman thanked CA, HKBWS and AFCD representatives for their presentation and detailed clarifications.

[Dr Evelyne Kuo of AFCD and representatives of CA and HKBWS left the meeting at this juncture.]

Deliberation

32. The Chairman invited views from Members on whether NCSC would continue to support the project should the project team apply for funding support from the newly established CCFS to sustain its conservation efforts in Ho Sheung Heung.

Members were also invited to suggest areas of improvements for reference by the project team.

33. A Member supported the project team to sustain its conservation efforts in Ho Sheung Heung. With the experience accumulated in the management of Long Valley, he believed that the project team would do better in the future. Furthermore, the project team could leverage on the brand equity built up in Long Valley to promote the local products of Ho Sheung Heung. The Member also remarked that the monitoring data at the MA project site could be compared with that of the future LVNP so as to assess the effectiveness of different management measures in the conservation of biodiversity.

34. A Member concurred and appealed to the project team to provide suggestions to CEDD to ensure there would be no adverse or irreversible damage to the habitats during the construction period. She also suggested that the project team should collect more scientific data to serve as the basis for the better operation and management of the future LVNP. This suggestion was supported by another Member.

35. A Member commended the conservation efforts of the project team in Long Valley and supported their continued operations in Ho Sheung Heung. He and another Member echoed the earlier suggestion of the Chairman that the project team should consolidate and share their experience and achievements so as to increase public awareness and support for the project. A Member added that the project team could share lessons learnt at the socio-economic level, for instance, insights gained from and difficulties encountered in engaging or partnering with local farmers, such that an action model could be formulated for reference by other similar projects.

36. A Member considered Long Valley an ideal showcase to educate the public on the integration between wet agricultural practice and ecology. Apart from the environmental conservation, the cultural heritage of Long Valley should be respected and preserved. He suggested collaborating with Heung Yee Kuk which was conducting a programme to revitalise and promote the cultural heritage in the New Territories. In the future management of the LVNP, he reminded that there was a need to control visitor flow in order to provide a sustainable balance between habitat conservation and public enjoyment of the site.

37. Mr Simon Chan advised that AFCD would take into account the experience of the MA project team for the long-term management of the LVNP. He informed that the LVNP would be divided into three zones. While farming activities would be mainly conducted in the Agriculture Zone, the Biodiversity Zone for ecological conservation would also allow ecological-friendly farming activities which were subject to more stringent requirements. An outdoor classroom in the Visitor Zone and a visitor centre would provide venues for educational activities to be held. Addressing the concerns of Members in the possible degradation of the habitats during the transition and construction period, Mr Chan advised that various measures were put in place to alleviate the situation, which included:-

- (i) conducting minimal work, which comprised mainly of the removal of non-compliant or illegal structures, rehabilitation of degraded

- (ii) agricultural lands and construction/restoration of irrigation channels; constructing and handing over the site to AFCD in phases to minimise the duration of the suspension of habitat management; and
- (iii) engaging CA and HKBWS as advisors to formulate interim management plans.

38. Ms Daisy Lo thanked Members for their suggestions for the CCFS to grant funding support to the project upon its expiry. She advised that all applications would be considered by the Advisory Committee on Countryside Conservation on their merits.

39. The Chairman concluded that Members showed unanimous support to the MA project team to continue its conservation efforts in Ho Sheung Heung with funding support from CCFS.

[Mr. Alex TANG of EPD left the meeting, and Mr Ray So of AFCD and Ms Yau Mee-ling of ESCM joined the meeting at this juncture.]

Item 4 : Development of a Risk Assessment Protocol for Identification of Invasive Alien Species
(ACE-NC Paper 2/2020)

40. The Chairman informed that the paper briefed Members on the findings of a consultancy study on developing a risk assessment protocol for invasive alien species (IAS), under the Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) 2016-2021.

41. On the invitation of the Chairman, Dr Michael Lau declared that he was one of the consultants in the IAS study. Another Member declared that he had participated in a workshop to provide advice on the IAS study. The meeting agreed that the two Members could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

42. As invited by the Chairman, Dr Jackie Yip briefed Members on the background of the consultancy study on IAS and with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Dr Michael Lau briefed Members on the study methodology, international IAS management strategies, risk assessment protocol developed for Hong Kong and risk assessment for herpetofauna.

Scoring Methods

43. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry on the scoring methods, Dr Michael Lau explained that the risk level of species was assessed based on the scores summed up from the assessment questions answered by the assessors. A workshop involving local experts was held to discuss the preliminary results of the assessment. Through exchange of information and expert opinion at the workshop, the draft assessment protocol as well as the assessment results were further modified. As such, a consensus-based approach was considered in reaching the final scores of species.

44. While agreeing that the weighting of "probability of impact" should be doubled due to its importance, a Member questioned whether the different number of

questions and scores allocated for each of the four aspects of risks would affect the assessment of the overall risk level of species. She further suggested sub-weighting be given to different types of impacts, including economic, social and ecological impacts caused by IAS under the aspect of “probability of impact”. The Member was concerned that the score only reflected the potential risk of species in the future, without taking into account the current impacts. This might cause underestimation of the risk level of IAS that had already arrived Hong Kong. She considered that current impacts were equally important and would influence the implementation of management strategies in the future.

45. Dr Michael Lau explained that it would be difficult to set the same number of questions with the same score in each aspect of risks. Nevertheless, even though the number of questions were different, such as five, seven and four questions were scored under “probability of entry”, “probability of establishment” and “probability of spread” respectively, it would not affect the assessment of the overall risk level of species. With double weighting given to “probability of impact” due to its importance, he said that the score in this aspect accounted for about half of the total score. Dr Lau mentioned that in the early stage of the study, both current and potential impacts of the species were scored. However, a problem was found in the preliminary results in which arrived species were scored higher than that of the potential species since the score of current impacts for potential species was zero. Having liaised with AFCD, it was considered more appropriate to score the potential impacts only, while the current impacts were described qualitatively. The scores given to the potential impacts were made reference to the answers on current impacts.

Development of Risk Assessment Protocol

46. In view of the growing problems caused by IAS globally, a Member considered that the IAS study for Hong Kong was worth conducting. Given that there were a considerable number of alien plant species in Hong Kong, she opined that more plants species should be included in the risk assessment. She suggested that reference should also be made from the experience of Mainland China and Southeast Asian countries in managing IAS. Apart from the economic loss caused by IAS, the Member opined that the costs of implementation of eradication and management measures should also be taken into account.

47. Ms Yau Mee-ling advised that the purpose of assessing the two alien plant species was to test the draft protocol, and they were selected because they were relatively well studied.

48. Dr Michael Lau explained that official information and experience from Mainland China and Southeast Asian countries in IAS management were lacking. He informed that the costs for tackling the IAS problem would vary depending on the stages of invasion and the objectives set for managing the IAS, so it was difficult to estimate the cost of eradication and management for the risk assessment.

49. A Member suggested, with the support of the Chairman, that teams of experts should be involved to review the risk assessment results of species in different

taxonomic groups. Given that some taxonomic groups only had a few local experts, the Chairman suggested inviting overseas experts so that the assessment results would be considered as more objective.

50. Dr Michael Lau advised that a team of local experts was engaged in the risk assessment for herpetofauna conducted in this consultancy study. During the testing of draft protocol with species from different taxonomic groups, opinions from relevant local experts were also obtained.

Way Forward

51. In response to the Chairman's enquiry on the way forward to manage IAS, Dr Jackie Yip advised that the development of risk assessment protocol and the risk assessment for herpetofauna were nearly completed. Given the considerable period of time required for assessing the risk level of alien species, the work would be continued on taxonomic groups with greater concern. In the meantime, close collaboration with different stakeholders would be maintained. For some well-recognised IAS, such as RIFAs and *Mikania micrantha*, while control measures were currently in place, risk assessment would also be conducted in order to prioritise the management efforts.

Stakeholder Engagement and Education

52. The Chairman remarked the importance of engaging stakeholders from relevant fields, including representatives from the pet trade, veterinary surgeons and aquaculture farmers, in the management of IAS. This could serve as a means of education to raise their awareness on the adverse ecological consequences of introducing alien species and help bring greater benefits to IAS management.

53. While acknowledging the importance of engaging different stakeholders, Dr Jackie Yip advised that the IAS study was largely a technical study that aimed at reviewing strategies in managing IAS adopted by different countries and developing a risk assessment protocol that best suit the local circumstances. The study provided the Government with much-needed scientific basis for managing the IAS problem, which was important for communication with relevant stakeholders.

54. Dr Michael Lau supplemented that risk analysis of IAS comprised three components, namely risk assessment, risk management and risk communication. The development of risk assessment protocol at current stage referred to risk assessment only. In the next stage, various measures would be taken to manage IAS and close communication with different stakeholders would be maintained.

55. A Member remarked that the lack of public knowledge on IAS might be damaging to the ecological environment, for example mercy release of animals to the wild and unauthorised planting in the countryside. The Member considered that education was essential in the stage of risk management to enhance public knowledge on IAS. She also noted that the supply of some exotic species as pets in the market might not be conducted in a humane manner and suggested that the Government should consider including animal rights and welfare in the education programmes.

56. Dr Jackie Yip agreed that education was an important part of the risk management as well as risk communication to enhance public knowledge on IAS. She advised AFCD should encourage the public to stop releasing exotic animals to the wild since this might cause potential adverse impact on local ecology and animal welfare.

57. The Chairman suggested AFCD could collaborate with the Education Bureau (EDB) to introduce the topic of IAS in the school curriculum in order to enhance students' knowledge and understanding. In addition to sharing information about IAS through animation on Facebook, he suggested that AFCD should launch a dedicated website for IAS.

58. Apart from collaboration with EDB, a Member suggested that professional trainings and relevant teaching resources on IAS should be provided to school teachers.

59. Dr Jackie Yip advised that AFCD had been sharing information on animal release and animal welfare through social media like Facebook and AFCD website. With a view to building capacity as mentioned under the BSAP, she said that relevant information and findings of the consultancy study on IAS would be published through existing platforms in a simpler version to facilitate understanding by the general public.

60. A Member raised his concern that there might be issues on animal rights when taking relevant eradication measures to manage IAS. He considered that both animal rights and nature conservation should be included in the education programmes with a view to promoting a clear concept to the general public.

61. Dr Jackie Yip thanked Members for their suggestions and remarked that the development of a risk assessment protocol was just the first step in IAS management. The Government would continue to carry out the risk assessment on selected alien species in various taxonomic groups and collaborate with different stakeholders in managing IAS. The work on IAS would proceed gradually, in parallel with other concurrent projects under the BSAP, such as the compilation of the Hong Kong List of Threatened Species.

Conclusion

62. The Chairman thanked the presentation team for their detailed presentation and explanations. He summarised the views of Members and concluded that Members were in general supportive of the work of the Government in managing IAS.

[Dr Jackie Yip and Mr Ray So of AFCD and Ms Yau Mee-ling of ESCM left the meeting at this juncture]

Item 5 : Any Other Business

Designation of New Marine Parks

63. The Chairman informed the meeting that a Member had proposed that a briefing be given to Members on the status of the designation of the two new marine parks near Tai O and Soko Islands. Upon invitation by the Chairman, the Member said that the briefing should also include the status of designation of a marine park of about 2 400 ha as mentioned during the Three-Runway System (3RS) discussion.

64. Ms Daisy Lo advised that more information on the proposed marine parks would be available in the next few months. The Government would address the issue in the next NCSC meeting.

[Post meeting note: The status of the designation of the marine park for 3RS and the South Lantau Marine Park were targeted to be discussed on the ACE meeting in Q3 2020 and ACE-NCSC meeting in Q4 2020 respectively.]

Proposed Dredging Work in Deep Bay near Shekou

65. On the invitation of the Chairman, a Member drew the meeting's attention to the proposed dredging work for a tourism project in Deep Bay near Shekou. While the project was outside Hong Kong water, in view of its proximity to the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site, the construction work might affect the ecology of southern part of Deep Bay and the migratory birds that used the Deep Bay wetlands. He informed Members that environmental impact assessment (EIA) had been conducted for the project and the public inspection period would end on 2 April 2020.

66. Noting that the project might affect wetlands in Futian, a Member said that she would liaise with her collaborators in the Futian Nature Reserve in order to have a better understanding of the situation. She suggested, with the support of another Member, that the Government should be more proactive in liaison with relevant Mainland authorities on the development of the project in order to strengthen the collaboration between the two governments.

67. Ms Daisy Lo advised that the Government did not have much information on the project at this moment. She would obtain more information from the counterparts of the relevant Mainland authorities after the meeting.

[Post meeting notes: Two Members informed Members that the public inspection of the said EIA report was terminated on 27 March 2020. The Government had followed up with the Mainland authorities and was given to understand that the project proponent was being asked to conduct a more comprehensive EIA to further evaluate the ecological impacts of the project. The Government would keep in view the development of the matter.]

68. There was no other business for discussion at the meeting.

Item 6 : Date of next meeting

69. The Chairman said that Members would be advised on the date of the next meeting and the agenda in due course.

**Nature Conservation Subcommittee Secretariat
August 2020**