Evaluation Questionnaire

I Communication

1 Context

Does the report describe the organization's business and operations enabling the reader to determine the perspective of the information provided?

Score

0 No mention or very insufficient / very little

1 Some / little /partial mention or coverage

2 Most important aspects covered, average

3 Better than average, current state-of-the-art practice of several leading reporters

4 Pace-setting creative new approach, outstanding, best practice

Explanations, Characteristics and Examples

This section provides additional Explanations and Definitions of terms and key expressions used to describe this item.

It also includes Characteristics that enable better understanding of the item. Furthermore, there are illustrative examples of practices applied in reporting and reference to examples from reporting standards/guidelines.

Examples:

Context may include:

■ Nature of a Bureau/Department's business and activities including main functions, overall objectives, programs, policy areas, facilities operated and number of offices occupied.

■ Key financial figures and other key figures.

■ Organization structures.

■ Possible major changes in organizational context (e.g. organization size, and activities) since last report.

References:

■ "A Guide to Environmental Reporting for Controlling Officers" produced by Hong Kong Environmental Protection Department, Chapter 3, Section 1: "Controlling Officer's Profile of Key Responsibilities".

■ GRI Version 2000 Part C, Section 2: "Profile of Reporting Organization".

I Communication

2 Basic Principles of Reporting

Does the report describe the basic Reporting Principles, including reporting period, scope, entity and data collection?

Score

0 No mention or very insufficient / very little

1 Some / little /partial mention or coverage

2 Most important aspects covered, average

3 Better than average, current state-of-the-art practice of several leading reporters

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Explanations, Characteristics and Examples

Reporting period is the period that the data and information included in the report refers to (e.g. calendar year).

Reporting scope means the areas of concern, issues or activities that are covered by the report and respective limitations (e.g. environmental aspects, and local, regional, or global environmental impacts).

Reporting entity defines the parts of the reporting organization (and related boundaries) to which the described aspects, activities and performance refer to (e.g. certain facilities, which part of the offices where the Bureau/Department has activities).

Boundaries and limitations are any restrictions or exclusions to scope or entity. For example, the report explains when it covers a limited scope or only part of the organization (e.g. selected activities or facilities), and the report includes reasons for omitting certain aspects of the scope or parts of the organization, and specifies plans for more extensive coverage in the future.

Data collection – how the data and information included in the report has been collected and handled, including limitations regarding data and data collection, information about methods of calculation on which data is based and any changes in methods of calculation and how these have affected the reported figures, compared to previous year's practice and Qualitative Reporting Characteristics (see GRI).

References:

■ GRI version 2000:

- ■ Part B, Section 1: Underlying Principles of GRI Reporting.
- ■ Part B, Section 2: Qualitative Characteristics for GRI Reporting.
- ■ Part B, Section 5: Disclosure of Reporting Policies.
- ■ Part C: General Notes.

I Communication

3 Report Structure

Does the report have a clear structure, comprehensible logic in the sequence of chapters, and is the reader guided through the complex matter in a way that facilitates reading and assists understanding?

Score

0   No mention or very insufficient / very little

1   Some / little /partial mention or coverage

2   Most important aspects covered, average

3   Better than average, current state-of-the-art practice of several leading reporters

4   Pace-setting creative new approach, outstanding, best practice

Explanations, Characteristics and Examples

The report has a **logical structure** or **"Red Thread"**, throughout the document, which is related to significant aspects and information needs of the target audience.

The **sequence of chapters** makes the report an entire story. The issues covered and the ways they are reported make sense to a reader considering the organization's context.

A **rationale** for the structure and flow/sequence of sections in the report chosen is described.

Examples:

A report can follow a structure recommended by a reporting standard, such as GRI or Hong Kong Environmental Protection Department "A Guide to Environmental Reporting for Controlling Officers". There could be sections for each function or type of activity and for the reporting organization as a whole. The structure can be based on the significant aspects identified or specific information needs from different stakeholders.

I Communication

4 Readability

Does the report use an understandable language; clear charts, relevant pictures, necessary explanations, as well as useful tools that help the reader navigate through the document?

Score

0 No mention or very insufficient / very little

1 Some / little /partial mention or coverage

2 Most important aspects covered, average

3 Better than average, current state-of-the-art practice of several leading reporters

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Explanations, Characteristics and Examples

The report uses a comprehensible **language** and a style that is understandable for the audience targeted with the report (e.g. careful usage of vocabularies with respect to the target audience).

Charts are the graphical presentation of performance metrics and indicators. Charts or figures should not mislead or unintentionally lead readers to make incorrect interpretations of data and results (e.g. selection of axes, scales, use of ratios and indices).

Pictures are photographs and drawings that illustrate the written information. They can help to facilitate better understanding of the written information and improve the attractiveness of the report.

Explanations are definitions and explanatory information on terms and vocabularies used in the report which not all readers might be sufficiently familiar with (e.g. glossary of technical, sector-specific terms and environmental vocabularies, abbreviations and uncommon units, use of footnotes, appendices, reference to the organization's own websites and to other organizations for the purpose of explanation).

Navigation tools are graphical or any other type of tools that provide guidance to the reader. These may include colour codes, symbols, specific fonts, use of boxes, their location on the page, inserts, flaps, index and cross-references to standards/frameworks that the report is following (e.g. lists of GRI indicators and lists of pages in the report where the information is presented). They can be indicators of chapters for specific target groups or short introduction of the report structure that help readers to prioritize what to read and in what specific order. They can also be selection boxes, which allow the reader to specify his/her particular interest (e.g. stakeholder group, for reports on the internet).

I Communication

5 Accessibility and Quick Reading

Does the report allow feedback and provide channels for report readers to facilitate contact, provide feedback and receive more information on the organization and its relevant issues? Does the report include an executive summary that allows readers to capture the most important aspects of the report in a short period of time?

Score	*Explanations, Characteristics and Examples*
0 No mention or very insufficient / very little	**Mechanism for contact and feedback** includes the provision of contact details, encouragement of providing any kind of feedback (e.g. with the help of a dedicated questionnaire). The organization can report on how it has used or intends to use the given feedback.

Score

0 No mention or very insufficient / very little

1 Some / little /partial mention or coverage

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Explanations, Characteristics and Examples

Mechanism for contact and feedback includes the provision of contact details, encouragement of providing any kind of feedback (e.g. with the help of a dedicated questionnaire). The organization can report on how it has used or intends to use the given feedback.

Examples:

Contact names, addresses, email addresses and telephone/fax numbers for the whole organization, or for example, specific subjects, activities or facilities, a reply card or questionnaire and website address should be included in the report.

Opportunity for more information includes ways that a reader can access more or specific information that he/she may want to receive from the organization.

Executive summary is a concise overview of a report. It provides the reader with a quick and effective way to understand the report's content and key messages with a balanced overview.

Examples:

Links to further information on the organization's home page, reference and links to the organization's annual report, to other organization reports, or to other reports discussing relevant issues that can help the reader better understand the report and evaluate the organization's environmental performance. Information about different languages in which the report is available.

References:

■ GRI version 2000, Part C, Section 3: "Executive summary and key indicators".