

**Confirmed Minutes of the Second Meeting of the
Environment and Conservation Fund Committee
held on 1 March 2005 at 9:30 a.m.**

Present

Prof. LUNG Ping-ye, David, S.B.S., J.P.	(Chairman)
Prof. CHAN Chi-ming	
The Hon CHOY So-yuk	
Ms LAU Ka-shi	
Mr. Joseph LEE, B.B.S., J.P.	
Mr. MAN Mo-leung	
Dr. TSO WONG Man-yin, B.B.S.	
Mr. Raistlin LAU	PAS(E)1, ETWB
Mr. Anthony POON	PEO(CD), EMB
Mr. CHAN Ping-kwong, Richard	Sr Nature Conservation Officer, AFCD
Dr. Samuel CHUI	AS(E)1A, ETWB (Secretary)
Ms Winifred CHAN	SEO(E), ETWB (Assistant Secretary)

Absent with Apologies

Mr. Robert LAW, J.P.	DEP
Mr. LAU Chi-kit, Edwin	

In Attendance

Mr. Eric CHAN	PAS(E)4, ETWB
Miss Christina CHONG	AS(E)4B, ETWB
Mr. Fletch CHAN	AS(E)1B, ETWB
Mr. Sean LAW	CRO, EPD
Mr. Alphonso HUNG	S(ECC), EPD

In Attendance for Agenda Item 4

Mr. Raymond LEUNG	PEPO, Air Division, EPD
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Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the second meeting. He introduced the following officers who were invited to attend the meeting -

- Mr. Eric Chan of ETWB who would shortly take up the work of representing the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works in the ECF Committee;
- Miss Christina Chong of ETWB who would shortly take up the work of the Secretary of the ECF Committee
- Mr. Raymond Leung of EPD to give a presentation on the air quality and air monitoring work of Hong Kong;
- Mr. Alphonso Hung and Mr. Sean Law of EPD, and Mr. Fletch Chan of ETWB to brief members on the work of the Waste Recovery Projects Vetting Subcommittee, the Environmental Education & Community Action Projects Vetting Subcommittee and the budget of the Environmental Campaign Committee.

Agenda Item 2: The Confirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 November 2004

2. The minutes of the last meeting held on 2 November 2004 were confirmed by Members by circulation in December 2004. There was no further amendment.

Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising

Para. 5 Membership of the Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee (RPVSC) and the Waste Recovery Projects Vetting Subcommittee (WRPVSC)

3. Dr. Samuel Chui reported that all Members had responded to the invitations to join the two Subcommittees. For the RPVSC, four Members joined the Subcommittee together with nine co-opted members nominated by Members. Two meetings were conducted and the results of the applications vetted by the RPVSC would be reported under Agenda 6. For the WRPVSC, only one Member signed up to join the Subcommittee and the Secretariat received six nominations of co-opted members. The Secretariat had also invited the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) to nominate its members to join the WRPVSC. On the other hand, nominations from the ACE's Waste Subcommittee would follow after its first meeting in March 2005. The Secretariat would report the finalized membership of the WRPVSC to Members by circulation in due course.

Para. 8 Nature Conservation Policy Review – Pilot Conservation Management Agreement Projects

4. In response to the Chairman's concern with the negative responses from the Heung Yee Kuk towards the new nature conservation policy, Mr. Eric Chan explained that green groups, community organisations and the general public generally supported the Government's new nature conservation policy. Nevertheless, there were negative responses from some of the landowners in the New Territories who opined that the Government should resume all the private land within the 12 priority sites for enhanced conservation. Mr. Eric Chan pointed out that the sites concerned were mainly held under agricultural leases under which the landowners were not entitled to any development rights. In view of the financial and land resource implications, we considered that land resumption was not a practical and sustainable option.

5. A Member enquired if consensus from landowners would be obtained prior to the implementation of the proposed new pilot scheme that involved private land. Mr. Eric Chan stated that co-operation from landowners would be one of the important factors to ensure the successful implementation of the pilot scheme. In reply to the comments by two Members on controls over developments, Mr. Eric Chan reinstated that any proposed development on agricultural land would require prior approval by the Government.

6. A Member said that the ECF Committee was not fully aware of all the potential reaction from the various concerned groups when approving the funding application. In approving a project, it would be appropriate for members to be presented with an overview of all the various aspects and issues (both positive or negative) affecting such a project. Another Member commented that the ECF Committee had approved the funding commitment for the pilot scheme on management agreement based on whether the proposal was worthwhile to support. How the Government addressed the various public concerns on the New Nature Conservation Policy was not within the ambit of ECF Committee.

Para. 16 Air monitoring work in Hong Kong

7. Dr. Samuel Chui reported that the information on air quality and air monitoring work would be presented by EPD under Agenda 4 of the meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Presentation on air monitoring work by EPD

8. The Chairman welcomed Mr. Raymond Leung to the meeting. Mr.

Raymond Leung briefed Members on the work of air pollution control in Hong Kong.

9. A Member enquired the deviation of Air Pollution Index (API) provided by Greenpeace and that of EPD. Mr. Raymond Leung said that Greenpeace had conducted the API calculations by indiscriminately applying the European Union's (EU) air quality standards without recognizing that scientifically the EU standards are not designed and are not suitable for API reporting. In short, the EU allowed the daily average Respirable Suspended Particulates standard to be exceeded 35 days a year whereas in Hong Kong it would be considered falling short of the Air Quality Objectives (AQO) if it was exceeded by more than one day. Mr. Raymond Leung considered the API launched by Greenpeace was misleading the public.

10. In reply to a Member's question on reporting the concentration and distribution of size of Respirable Suspended Particulates, Mr. Raymond Leung explained that the size distribution data were not available real time continuously using automatic analysers. In fact, such data could only be obtained upon detailed analysis in the laboratory, and as such it could not be reported instantly together with the API.

11. A Member did not agree to the API launched by Greenpeace. Nevertheless, she commented that the Government should consider additional measures to tackle the air pollution problem including, for examples, controlling the emissions from power plants; requiring the power companies to increase the use of natural gas in electricity generation; providing incentives to the vehicles operators to adopt Euro III vehicle instead of the installation of catalytic converters to the pre-Euro diesel vehicles; and increasing significantly the penalty for smoky vehicles from \$1,000 to \$1,500 with reference to the fixed penalty for littering.

12. The Chairman thanked Mr. Raymond Leung for briefing Members on the air monitoring work and commented that EPD should consider various measures to improve the air quality in Hong Kong. Mr. Raymond Leung left the meeting at this juncture.

Agenda Item 5: Financial Position of the ECF (ECF Paper 51/2004)

13. Dr. Samuel Chui briefed Members on the latest financial position of the ECF as summarized in the ECF Paper 51/2004. Over the past 12 months, the Committee had approved almost \$20 million to various projects. As at 15.2.2005, the uncommitted fund balance was \$46.44 million. Mr. Raistlin Lau supplemented

that the Administration would monitor the fund balance carefully and would initiate new injection whenever necessary.

Agenda Item 6: Report of the Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee from March 2004 to February 2005 (ECF Paper 52/2004)

14. Dr. Samuel Chui briefed Members on the work of the RPSVSC which was summarized in the ECF Paper 52/2004. During the reporting period from March 2004 to February 2005, the RPSVSC held 4 meetings and considered 32 applications the results of which were summarized below:

Projects approved	10
Projects supported and recommended to ECF Committee for consideration	2
Projects rejected	15
Projects to be further considered	2
Projects referred to the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee	1
Projects withdrawn	2
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Total	32

15. Dr. Samuel Chui added that the two projects recommended by the RPSVSC for the Committee's consideration would be discussed under Agenda 9.

Agenda Item 7: Report of the Waste Recovery Projects Vetting Subcommittee from March 2004 to February 2005 (ECF Paper 53/2004)

16. Mr. Alphonso Hung briefed Members on the work of the WRPVSC which was summarized in the ECF Paper 53/2004. Members noted the results/progress of the 51 applications received by the WRPVSC for the period March 2004 to February 2005. The results were summarized as follows:

Projects approved	24
Projects rejected	8
Projects withdrawn	3
Projects being processed	16
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Total	51

17. In reply to the enquiry by a Member, Mr. Alphonso Hung confirmed

that the approved applications included source separation projects carried out in housing estates. Mr. Sean Law added that quite a lot of housing estates had indicated interests in joining the source separation programme.

Agenda Item 8: Report of Environmental Education and Community Action (EE&CA) Projects Vetting Subcommittee from March 2004 to February 2005 and Application for Grant to Fund New EE&CA Projects in 2005/06 (ECF Paper 54/2004)

18. Mr. Alphonso Hung briefed Members on the work of the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee which was summarized in the ECF Paper 54/2004. Members noted that a total of 96 applications were processed by the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee during the period from March 2004 to February 2005. The results were summarized as follows:

Projects approved	76
Projects approved in principle	1
Projects to be further considered	2
Projects rejected	14
Projects withdrawn	2
Projects referred to the WRPVSC	1
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Total	96

19. Mr. Alphonso Hung reported that about \$1.55 million had been granted to the approved projects. In considering new applications, the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee would meet in April, August and December each year and the cut-off dates were scheduled at the end of March, July and November each year. Members noted the new meeting schedule. The Chairman concluded that the meeting approved an allocation of additional \$1.26 million to top up the uncommitted fund balance to \$2.4 million so as to enable the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee to fund new EE&CA projects from April 2005 to March 2006.

Agenda Item 9: New Applications Recommended by the RPVSC

Project 16/2003 The Use of Biomarkers for Ecotoxicological Assessments of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and Heavy Metals on Birds at Mai Po Nature Reserve and Other Wetlands (ECF Paper 55/2004)

20. Dr. Samuel Chui briefed Members on the proposal submitted by Hong Kong Baptist University. The proposal had been assessed by AFCD, EPD and two external expert assessors and all of them considered it worthy of support. The RRVSC had considered the application during its meeting on 2.12.2004 and 1.2.2005 and recommended the ECF Committee to support the proposal. The meeting approved the grant of \$588,000.00 to the project.

Project 8/2004 Development of Pre-bloom Fluorimetric Assays for the Monitoring of Harmful Algal Blooms
(ECF Paper 56/2004)

21. Dr. Samuel Chui briefed Members on the proposal submitted by Hong Kong University of Science & Technology. The proposal had been assessed by AFCD, EPD, FEHD and two external expert assessors and all of them considered it worthy of support. The RRVSC had considered the application during its meeting on 2.12.2004 and recommended the ECF Committee to support the proposal. The meeting approved the grant of \$960,000.00 to the project.

Agenda Item 10: Budget for the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) for 2005/06
(ECF Paper 57/2004)

22. Mr. Fletch Chan briefed Members on the proposed ECC campaigns and activities to be implemented in 2005/06. The ECC had reviewed its role and decided to adopt partnership and capacity building as its general directions in future. The ECC would establish long term partnership with –

- (a) District Councils;
- (b) Green groups;
- (c) Schools and tertiary institutions;
- (d) Professional and trade associations;
- (e) Community groups; and
- (f) Media.

The ECC would organize a small number of major campaigns. Where appropriate, it would be responsible for promoting the themes to the whole community while the District Councils, green groups and other community groups would be invited to organize activities for the community to participate. With ECC emphasizing more on partnership with environmental conscious groups, but less on hands-on event organization, the Secretariat would focus more on liaison with the strategic partners

and supervision of outsourced work. The budget for the ECC for 2005/06 would thus be allocated to the following three major areas –

- (a) Full budget of major activities in the work plan 2005, including World Environment Day 2005 (WED), Environmental Protection Festival 2005 (EPF), trial scheme on partnership and capacity building programmes, environmental seminars and roundtable discussion with DC members, environmental seminars for media workers, 6th Hong Kong Green School Award, Environmental Ambassador Scheme for Youths, 2005 Hong Kong Eco-Business Award, retreat of ECC and revamp of ECC website;
- (b) Portion of the budget of uncompleted activities in the work plan 2004 that had not been funded in the previous financial year, including 5th Hong Kong Green School Award and Schools Environmental Award Scheme cum Student Environmental Protection Ambassador Scheme 2004/05;
- (c) Staffing for three liaison teams, namely, Community Liaison Team, School Liaison Team and Business Partners Liaison Team, and other duties.

23. In reply to the question by a Member on the calculation of staff cost, Mr. Fletch Chan stated that the estimated staff cost was for the year 2005/06 and the ECC would review the requirement of staff strength when the Secretariat of ECC and strategic partners became more familiar with the new arrangement. Another Member added that the presentation of the budget was different from that of last year submission. In the past years, the sum of staff cost was included in the budget for individual programme. For the budget in 2005/06, the programme cost and the staff cost was separated so as to provide a clearer picture.

24. A Member also enquired on the relatively high cost of the publicity programmes. In response, Mr. Fletch Chan pointed out that TV APIs, which required high production cost, would be used to promote the themes to the whole community. TV API, despite expensive, was quite effective in arousing interests of the public, but local community groups would not be able to afford such mass scale of publicity.

25. The meeting noted that the proposed ECC budget of \$8.05 million for 2003-04 represented a reduction of more than 40% compared with that of last year. The meeting also noted that part of ECC's budget would be allocated to green groups/community organizations etc for implementing environmental activities. Moreover, members noted that although the budget for the proposed programme "Hong Kong Eco-Business Awards 2003" had been reduced, the number of participating companies was expected to increase.

26. Mr. Richard Chan remarked that in last year's meeting members

raised concern on funding of the Eco-business Award as the Award had been organized for a number of years and the participating companies from the private sector would ultimately benefit themselves and hence the participants should shoulder a large part of the expenses. He also commented that the proposed sum of \$450,000.00 for hiring the consultancy for assessment made up more than half of the proposed budget. Mr. Fletch Chan explained that the budget for this award had been reduced from \$960,000 in 2004 to the current request of \$700,000 in 2005. Regarding the consultancy fee, the actual expenditure might be less in view of the past experience that the consultant might provide sponsorship to the project.

27. The Chairman concluded that the meeting approved the sum of \$8.69 million to ECC for the year 2005/06.

Agenda Item 11: Date of Next Meeting

28. Members noted that the next regular meeting of the Committee was proposed to be held in June 2005. The Secretariat would check out the availability of Members and confirm the meeting date nearer the time.

29. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:20 a.m.

Secretariat, ECF Committee
March 2005