

Funding for ECF Collaboration with District Councils

Purpose

This paper sets out a proposed collaboration scheme with the District Councils (DCs) on ECF projects for Members' consideration.

Background

2. At the brainstorming session held on 26 April 2008, the Committee discussed and agreed to invite DCs to coordinate district-wide green lifestyle programmes. DCs may engage or partner with local non-government organizations (NGOs) to implement such programmes.

3. At present, ECF provides funding support to various types of projects including (i) community waste recovery projects, (ii) source separation programme of domestic waste, (iii) environmental education and community action projects, and (iv) research and technology demonstration projects. However, each district has different social and economic characteristics and profiles, which means the priority aspirations on environmental issues will vary. To encourage greater participation of local organisation in promotion of environmental initiatives, it is therefore necessary to facilitate reflection of local aspirations in the determination of programmes details, so long as the central themes are in support of the overall objectives and targets of the Environment Conservation Fund, and prevailing administration rules and guidelines on the use of funds are followed. To achieve these aims, we propose to introduce a collaborative scheme with District Councils so that DCs will be encouraged to take a more proactive role in promoting environmental protection at the district level.

Proposed Collaboration Scheme

4. To tie in with local environmental concerns and to create ownership on the part of DCs, a collaboration scheme with ECF is proposed where DCs would be invited to recruit/invite/partner with local NGOs in promoting environmental protection in the community.

5. DCs will be invited to identify specific district-based environmental protection and conservation issues and invite local NGOs to apply for ECF funding support for implementation of district-wide environmental programme with specific theme(s) supported by DCs. The district-wide environmental programme may include themes on source separation programme for all residential buildings within the district or public education activities meeting the specific needs within the district, programmes or facilities to facilitate waste reduction, and energy conservation initiatives. An overall budget may be prepared for the district-wide programme plan for ECF funding support. While the exact funding support would be subject to the approval of the Committee, the Committee may consider whether a funding cap for each participating district per year is appropriate, e.g. \$2 million to \$3 million.

Administration of the Collaboration Scheme

6. DCs will be invited to take part in this collaboration scheme on a voluntary basis and they may decide on their own programme themes and local partnering organizations. Participating local NGOs must partner with DCs in launching various projects and will be requested to observe the funding criteria of ECF including (i) the benefits of project must accrue to the local community as a whole; and (ii) the funded projects and the recipient organizations of ECF must be non-profit making in nature.

7. Each participating local NGOs will be invited to provide half-yearly progress report to the ECF Committee on the progress of approved projects, the expenditure position of ECF and the outcome of the funded initiatives. The DCs concerned could also be invited to give their comments on the progress reports. The collaboration scheme is proposed to be put on trial for one year.

Intended Benefits

8. The proposed collaboration scheme will raise the awareness and participation of every member of the public in protecting the environment and contributing to tackling their district environmental problems. It will attract more applications of innovative, worthwhile, larger scale, longer terms and

sustainable projects within the districts.

Way Forward

9. Subject to Members' endorsement, the Secretariat will invite DCs to consider the collaboration scheme in September 2008. The Secretariat may arrange briefings to interested DCs to explain the scheme upon request.

Advice Sought

10. Members are invited to approve the proposed collaboration scheme and advise on the funding cap per district per year for implementing environmental projects under this collaboration scheme.

Secretariat, Environment and Conservation Fund Committee
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