

**Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Environment and  
Conservation Fund Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee  
held on 21 June 2013 at 9:30 a.m.  
in Room 502, 5/F., Southorn Centre, Wanchai**

**Present**

Mr Kenneth CHAN	(Chairman)
Mr LAM Chiu-ying	
Dr Arthur PS LAU	
Mr Barry MC KWONG	
Dr SHUM Ho-cheung, Anderson	
Miss Jane HUI	
Mr Victor KWONG	
Mr Victor C LI	
Dr Daniel TSANG	
Mr Conrad PK LAM	Environment Bureau (ENB)
Dr YIP Yin	Agriculture, Fisheries & Conservation Department (AFCD)
Mr Patrick LIU	Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Ms Anita SW TSUI	Secretary (EPD)
Ms Sharon TSAI	Assistant Secretary (EPD)

**Absent with Apologies**

Mr Luther LT WONG  
Dr Kenneth MY LEUNG  
Prof Irene LO

**Welcoming Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all Members, particularly those attending the meeting of the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee (RPVSC) for the first time, including Mr LAM Chiu-ying and Dr YIP Yin, the latter had replaced Mr KW CHEUNG as the representative of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD).

### **Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

2. Draft minutes of the previous meeting were circulated on 22 January 2013. Suggested amendments received from Members were subsequently incorporated and the amended minutes were further circulated on 28 January 2013. No further comment was received. The minutes as amended were confirmed.

### **Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising from Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

3. Ms Anita SW TSUI reported that at the previous meeting, Members had requested that further information and response to the meeting's suggestions be obtained from the Principal Investigators (PI) of two applications, viz., Project 05/2012 and Project 39/2011. The Secretariat had since approached the PIs and obtained their reply. The two applications were therefore brought up at the present meeting for Members' further deliberations.

(a) *ECF Project 05/2012 Carrying capacities of dive sites in Hong Kong [RPVSC Paper 04/2013-14]*

4. Regarding the funding application for ECF Project 05/2012 put forth by the Hong Kong Baptist University, Ms Sharon TSAI reported that in response to Members' request at the previous meeting for information on the number of participating divers that the PI would offer in the proposed complimentary marine conservation dive under the study, the PI indicated that a total of 160 to 240 participants (divers) could be accommodated in the 6 boat trips which the project team planned to organize.

5. Note

6. Note

7. After discussion, the Chairman concluded that the project should be supported, but the PI should be reminded of the need to complete all planned deliverables including publicity initiatives of the study, in order that the effectiveness of the study could be maintained.

8. Dr Daniel TSANG declared interest for the next two items (i.e. ECF Project 39/2011 under Agenda Item 2, and ECF 17/2012 under Agenda Item 3) concerning two applications from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), and withdrew from the meeting.

(b) *ECF Project 39/2011 A holistic approach to a sustainable eco-flood channel design for Yuen Long Nullah [RPVSC Paper 05/2013-14]*

9. Ms Sharon TSAI indicated that Members had examined this project at the previous meeting and decided that the Drainage Services Department (DSD) should be further consulted on whether the department would consider adopting the study's findings and recommendations, if eventually the application was approved. In addition, the meeting requested that the PI be invited to consider Members' various suggestions and comments. The Secretariat had since obtained DSD's views and the PI's response, which were set out in RPVSC Paper 5/2013-2014.

10. Note

11. Note

12. Note

13. The meeting considered that the project should be supported in principle, but that the proposed budget for manpower should be reduced to cover one RA II and one SRA each for a period of 36 months. Accordingly, the budget for the proposed study would be adjusted to \$2,071,880. The support-in-principle was subject to the applicant organization's provision of an estimate of the manpower input of the proposed ecologist adviser for the project. Since the requested funding exceeded \$2 million, the meeting's recommendations would be submitted to the ECF Committee for a decision.

### **Agenda Item 3: New Application**

(a) *ECF Project 17/2012 International Symposium on Zero-Carbon Buildings and IEA ECBCS Annex 58 Working Meeting [RPVSC paper 6/2013-14]*

14. Ms Sharon TSAI briefed Members about the proposal by PolyU seeking funding support at \$240,000 for a 3-day conference to provide an international platform to facilitate the exchange of best practices, expertise and experience on zero-carbon technologies for buildings.

15. Note

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18. Note

19. Note

20. Note

21. After deliberations, the Chairman concluded that the PI should be requested to suitably revise the project proposal to take into account Members' views, particularly in relation to the budget items of "support for IEA ECBCS Annex 58 participants" and "production of conference proceedings", and to include students of other local universities for sponsorship of participation, for the Subcommittee's further consideration.

22. Dr Arthur LAU declared interest for the next item concerning an application from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), and withdrew from the meeting. Mr Barry KWONG informed the meeting that he was once a student of HKUST and had been taught by the PI of the next application ECF Project 31/2012. The meeting, after reviewing the situation, considered that this had no direct conflict with Mr KWONG's participation in the discussion on this item.

(b) *ECF Project 31/2012 Gordon Research Conference - Marine molecular ecology [RPVSC paper 7/2013-14]*

23. Ms Sharon TSAI briefed Members about the proposal by the HKUST seeking funding support at \$388,340 for a 5-day conference project which aimed to provide an international forum to bring together world-leading scientists in various disciplines to interact and exchange insights in marine

molecular ecology. Ms TSAI further reported that cross-checking with the secretariat of the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) revealed that the Gordon Research Conference (Hong Kong) Limited had submitted an application for funding support at \$2,665,940 to ITF for a project "Expansion of Gordon Research Conferences in Hong Kong", which was related to the conference in the present application. In response to the Secretariat's request for clarifications, the PI explained that there was a need for him to seek ECF support, since available funding for supporting local participants (at US\$810 per person) and invited speakers for the conference was insufficient to meet requirements.

24. Note

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27. Note

28. Note

29. After deliberations, the meeting concluded that ECF should offer funding support for subsidizing specifically the registration fee for a maximum of 40 local students at a sum not exceeding \$251,120 to attend the conference. The PI should provide the ECF with a list of sponsored local students in the completion report upon project completion. Any unspent funding should not be used to support other budget items of the conference.

*[Dr Arthur LAU re-joined the meeting.]*

#### **Agenda Item 4: Project Variations**

(a) ECF Project 15/2010 "Green is the new cool" forum and masterclasses: designing for a low carbon life in a creative, actionable and affordable way) *[RPVSC Paper 08/2013-14]*

30. Ms Sharon TSAI reported that Members' views were sought in March 2013 vide RPVSC paper 55/2012-13 on the proposed budget reallocation for ECF Project 15/2010 to cover the deficit in two budget items, viz., "temporary helpers" and "hiring of project consultants". Subject to Members'

decision on the proposed budget reallocation, Members were also invited to consider whether the project completion should be endorsed. As Members had expressed different views on the proposed virement for the budget item of "hiring of project consultants", the PI's request was put up at this meeting for Members' further deliberations.

31. Note

32. Note

33. After deliberations, the meeting concluded that the decision to reject the requested budget variation for the item of "hiring of project consultants" should be maintained.

34. Dr Daniel TSANG declared interest for the next item concerning a project variation request for a project of the PolyU, and withdrew from the meeting.

(b) *ECF Project 20/2008 Quantitative measurement of acidic ultrafine particles in the atmosphere [RPVSC Paper 09/2013-14]*

35. Ms Sharon TSAI reported that in March 2013, Members' views were invited vide RPVSC paper 54/2012-13 on the PI's proposed budget reallocation to cover the deficit in two budget items of ECF Project 20/2008, viz. "manpower - extra Research Assistant" and "design and modification of Electrical Precipitation Sampler, and purchase of pump and dehumidifier, validation and examination tests related to the EPS". As Members had expressed different views on the proposal for the item "manpower - extra Research Assistant", the PI's request was put up at this meeting for Members' further deliberations.

36. Note

37. After deliberations, the meeting concluded that the decision to reject the requested budget variation for the item of "manpower - extra Research Assistant" should be maintained.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Any Other Business**

38. Members had no other issue to raise.

**Agenda Item 7: Date of Next Meeting**

39. The next meeting would be held in about three months. The Secretariat would inform Members the date and related details in due course.

40. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:15 a.m.

**Secretariat, ECF Research Projects Vetting Sub-committee  
June 2013**

Note:

The paragraph will not be included in the version of notes to be uploaded to the webpage of ECF according to the standing practice of not disclosing the detailed reasons for supporting or rejecting an application. The ECF webpage contains a general disclaimer that "Reasons for supporting/rejecting an application had been made known to the project proponents concerned, and the public could ask the project proponents direct for such information".