

**Confirmed Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the  
Environment and Conservation Fund Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee  
held on 10 February 2006 at 2:30 p.m.**

**Present**

Mr. Joseph Lee, BBS, JP	(Chairman)
Prof. Chan Chi-ming	
Ms Lau Ka-shi	
Mr. Man Mo-leung	
Prof. Chan Chak-keung	
Prof. Chu Lee-man	
Dr. Richard Cheung	
Ms Emba Leung WM	
Prof. Jonathan Wong	
Mr. Frankie Yick Chi-ming	
Mr. Eric Chan	EPD
Mr. Richard Chan	AFCDD
Mr. Lawrence Cheung	EPD
Miss Christina Chong	EPD (Secretary)
Ms Winifred Chan	EPD (Assistant Secretary)

**Absent with Apologies**

Ms Edith Ngan Man-ling  
Mr. Richard W Lee  
Dr. John Leung Kon-chong

**In attendance for Agenda Item 3**

Mr. Joseph Chan EMSD

**Welcoming Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the sixth meeting of the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee (RPVSC).

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

2. The draft minutes of the last meeting held on 9 December 2005 were confirmed without any amendment.

## **Agenda Item 2 : Matters Arising**

### Para. 5

3. Ms Winifred Chan reported that following Members' suggestions at the last meeting, the Secretariat had sent emails to Members to invite nominations for international assessors for applications over \$150,000.00. Members might send their nominations to the Secretariat by completing the nomination form on or before 28 February 2006. Members were also welcome to provide new nominations thereafter and the Secretariat would update the database regularly.

### Para. 11 ECF Project 6/2005

4. Ms Winifred Chan reported that subsequent to Members' approval of \$149,250.00 to ECF Project 6/2005 "Environmentally-Friendly Nanosorbents for Recovery of Precious Metals from Waste Effluents", the Woo Wheelock Green Fund (WWGF) agreed to support the project with ECF on an equal-share basis. The project commenced on 1 February 2006.

### Para. 20 ECF Project 4/2005

5. Ms Winifred Chan reported that in accordance with Members' comments, the Secretariat had invited the principal investigator (PI) to revise the proposal. The revised proposal was attached to ECF Paper 31/2005 for further discussion.

### Para. 26 ECF Project 3/2005

6. Ms Winifred Chan reported that subsequent to the discussion at the last meeting and circulation of the ECF Paper 28/2005 on 13 January 2006, all Members, except two who abstained from voting due to conflict of interests, had endorsed the proposal with a grant of \$426,280.00. The proposal would be forwarded to the ECF Committee for formal approval accordingly.

Progress report of ECF funded research and technology demonstration projects  
[ECF Paper 29/2005]

7. Ms Winifred Chan briefed members on ECF Paper 29/2005 on the progress of 19 on-going research projects and four completed research projects as at 31 December 2005. Among the 19 on-going projects, the PI of two projects, namely ECF Projects 22/2003 and 6/2004, would like to apply for extension of project duration and virement of funds respectively. Details were set out in ECF Paper 30/2005 for further discussion. During the period 1 April to 31 December 2005, four research projects were completed. The research findings were summarized in Appendices 20 to 23 of ECF Paper 29/2005 for Members' information.

8. Note

9. Note

10. The Chairman concluded that the ECF Project 4/2002 should be terminated and no more fund would be disbursed to the applicant. The organisation "Wildlife Conservation Foundation Limited" should be blacklisted for further applications.

Proposed variations to details of ECF funded projects  
[ECF Paper 30/2005]

11. Ms Winifred Chan reported to the meeting that the PI of the ECF Project 22/2003 namely "Study of Marine Air Pollutant Emission Around Kwai

Chung Containers Terminal” proposed to defer the project completion date from 31 October 2005 to 31 March 2006. No additional fund would be requested for the extended project period. The PI explained that the project was delayed because only part-time staff were available to assist the study during the period December 2004 to July 2005. Nevertheless, full time staff were engaged from July 2005 onwards. The project was at its final stage. Separately, the PI of the ECF Project 6/2004 “Ecological and Physiological Response of Hong Kong Coral Communities to Changing Temperature and Oxygen Level” proposed to vire funding from the subhead of “Computer and DVD recorder” to cover the cost for the “Data logger and the hydrography sensor”; and funding from “Maintenance of equipment” to “Transportation cost”. The proposed virement was required due to the increase in cost of the equipment and boat hire. No additional funding from ECF would be required. Details of the proposed variation to the two projects were set out in ECF Paper 30/2005. Members discussed and agreed to the proposed extension of project duration for Project 22/2003 and the proposed virement of funds by the PI of the Project 6/2004.

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

#### ECF Project 10/2005 Seabird migration survey in southern and southeastern Hong Kong waters, spring 2006

[ECF Paper 33/2005]

12. Miss Christina Chong briefed Members on the project proposal and the assessments given by the AFCD as summarized in ECF Paper 33/2005. The objective of the proposal was to fill up the present knowledge gap about the abundance and distribution of migrant seabirds in Hong Kong waters; to publish result of the surveys and to promote conservation importance; and to arouse the awareness of the general public on the natural occurrence of seabirds annually in Hong Kong. The total budget of the project was \$160,226.00 but the PI requested for a funding support of \$150,000.00. The remaining balance would be funded by the organization of the PI. The project was expected to last for four months. AFCD supported the proposal. Two representatives of the project team then joined the meeting to answer questions.

13. Note

14. Note

15. After discussion, the Chairman concluded that the proposal was worthy of support. Formal approval to the proposal would be granted subject to AFCD's agreement to the detailed methodology of the survey.

ECF Project 5/2005 Feasibility Study on the Use of Bio-ethanol Fuel in Motor Vehicles in Hong Kong and its Environmental Benefits to Hong Kong  
[ECF Paper 32/2005]

16. The Chairman declared interests in this application as the PI came from the same university of which he was a Court member. Mr. Eric Chan chaired this part of the meeting.

17. Miss Christina Chong briefed Members on the project proposal and the assessments given by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and two external expert assessors as summarized in ECF Paper 32/2005. The main objective of the study was to determine the engine characteristics (such as engine power, fuel economy, durability) and tailpipe emissions (such as CO, HC and NOx) from vehicles using E10 and E85 and compare these with vehicles using pure gasoline; to monitor the engine wear characteristics by analysing the amount of metal component in engine oil at regular intervals; to identify the compatibility of fuel hoses on ethanol blends, including rate of change of physical dimension and tensile strength; and to investigate the feasibility and economy of using ethanol additive in motor fuel in Hong Kong and to determine the most suitable blending ratio. The funding requested by the project was \$614,629.00 and the project was expected to last for 12 months. EPD and two external expert assessors supported the proposal. Two representatives of the project team joined the meeting to answer questions.

18. Note

19. Note

20. After further discussion, the Meeting concluded that the proposal should not be supported.

ECF Project 4/2005 Capacity building - identifying the missing links: developing the Model for future community-operated renewable energy (BIPV) projects

[ECF Paper 31/2005]

21. The Chairman declared interests in this application again as the PI came from the same university of which he was a Court member. Mr. Eric Chan continued to chair this part of the meeting. Mr. Joseph Chan of the Electrical & Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) attended the meeting at this juncture.

22. Miss Christina Chong briefed Members on the revised project proposal as summarized in ECF Paper 31/2005. The focus of the study was revised to develop the model and to exclude the long-term monitoring work. The PI also proposed to include two workshops to bring together participants from different backgrounds. The budget was also revised to allow for the preparation, support and facilitation of the workshops. The funding requested by this project was reduced to \$646,000.00 and the project was expected to last for 12 months. EMSD advised that organizing one workshop would be sufficient. A representative of the project team then joined the meeting to answer questions in relation to the proposal.

23. Note

24. Note

25. After further discussion, Members concluded that the proposal of drawing up relevant operational manual for setting up BIPV system was worthy of support in terms of its educational value. However, Members considered that given the nature of the project, the budget of the project should be capped at

\$150,000.00. Following Members' advice, the Secretariat would ask the PI to provide a further revised proposal with a total budget of no more than \$150,000.00 before inviting Members to further consider the proposal by circulation.

26. Mr. Joseph Chan left the meeting after the discussion.

#### **Agenda Item 4 : Any Other Business**

27. Miss Christina Chong reported to the meeting that following the ICAC's study on the administration of the ECF which had been reported to the ECF Committee in July 2005 and the establishment of the database on external assessors, the Secretariat would examine direct appointment of the independent evaluator for completed research projects with funding over \$150,000.00. It would ensure the independence of the evaluator and quality of the evaluation. The appointed evaluator would also be required to make declaration of conflict of interests arising from his relationship with the principal investigator. Members agreed that direct appointment of independent evaluator should be implemented as soon as possible and it should be applicable to all on-going research projects with funding over \$150,000.00.

#### **Agenda Item 5 : Date of Next Meeting**

28. The RPSVC was scheduled to meet bi-monthly and the Secretariat would inform Members of the date of the next meeting in due course.

29. The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Secretariat, ECF Research Projects Vetting Sub-committee

May 2006

Note: The paragraph will not be included in the version of notes to be uploaded to the webpage of ECFC according to the standing practice of not disclosing the detailed reasons for supporting or rejecting an application. The ECFC 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.”