

**Confirmed Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the
Environment and Conservation Fund Committee
held on 5 March 2014 at 2:30 p.m.**

Present

Dr. Joseph LEE, G.B.S., J.P.	(Chairman)
Mr. CHAN Jor-kin, Kenneth	
Ms CHAN Sui-kuen, Agnes	
Ms FUNG Dun-mi, Amy	
Mr. LAM Chiu-ying, S.B.S.	
Mr. LEUNG Wai-kuen, Edward, J.P.	
Mr. Douglas WOO	
Mr. TSE Chin-wan, J.P.	DDEP(1), EPD
Dr. CHUI Ho-kwong, Samuel	P(CR), EPD
Mr. Sheridan SL LEE	Principal Education Officer, EDB
Dr. Jackie YIP	Senior Conservation Officer, AFCD

In Attendance

Ms WONG Sean-ye, Anissa, J.P.	PS(Env)/DEP
Ms Anita SW TSUI	CEO(CR)1, EPD (Secretary)
Mr. TSOI Kwan-sang, Steve	SEO(CR)1, EPD
Mr. KAM Ka-lung, Simon	EM(CR), EPD

Absent with Apologies

Prof. LO Man-chi, Irene
Ms WONG Wai-ching, Connie, S.B.S., J.P.

In Attendance for Items 3 & 4

Mr. Derek LEE	CEO(CR)2, EPD
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In Attendance for Item 5

Mr. YUEN Po-hung	S(WR)1, EPD
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In Attendance for Items 7 and 8

Mr. Wesley WONG	WRO(CR)1, EPD
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In Attendance for Item 7

Mr. KWAN Kin-cheung	Director of Sik Sik Yuen (SSY) Board
Mr. MA Chak-wa	Vice Chairman of SSY Board
Ms Doris SIN	Chief Executive Officer of SSY

In Attendance for Item 8

Mr. Eddie LEUNG	Head of Property and Works of Po Leung Kuk (PLK)
Mr. Stephen MOK	Head of Recreation Services of PLK
Mr. Derek LAM	Camp Manager of PLK Tai Tong Holiday Camp



Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the sixth meeting of the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) Committee.

Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting held on 17.12.2013

2. The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 December 2013 were circulated to Members on 11 February 2014. The meeting confirmed the draft minutes without amendment.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising

Para. 3 Financial Position of the ECF

3. Ms Anita SW TSUI reported that the balance in bank as of end of January 2014 was \$1,150.73 million whereas the uncommitted balance (with amounts for approved projects deducted) was \$281.27 million. Taking into account the amounts earmarked for designated programmes, the balance would become \$236.17 million. Further deducting \$80 million drawn from the capital injection of \$5,000 million which had been reserved for use by the funding schemes in 2014-15, the balance of fund for 2013-14 was about \$156.17 million.

Agenda Item 3: Environment and Conservation Fund Proposed Budget and Arrangement for 2014-15

(ECF Paper 42/2013-14)

4. Dr. Samuel CHUI briefed Members that with the \$5,000 million injection into the ECF as seed money for generating returns, the ECF Committee, at its meeting on 4 September 2013, allocated \$220 million for supporting green community actions in 2013-14. The meeting also agreed to adopt a competition-based vetting mechanism to select the most meritorious and worthy projects for funding support, and to task the various Vetting Subcommittees to work out the arrangements for individual funding schemes.

5. Dr. Samuel CHUI elaborated on the proposed budget for 2014-15 and said that for minor works projects under the Environmental Education & Community Action (EE&CA) scheme, there were about 200 outstanding applications with a total funding demand of \$65 million, whereas for energy conservation projects for Non-government Organizations (NGOs), there were about 300 outstanding applications with a total funding demand of \$70 million. In 2013-14, a total of \$50 million was allocated for these two types of projects. To expedite the clearing of all outstanding applications, an allocation of \$90 million was proposed for these

projects in 2014-15. In addition, a total of \$210 million was proposed for allocation to other funding schemes in 2014-15, including \$105 million for waste reduction projects. Dr. CHUI also briefed Members about the proposed plan for inviting applications under the new competition-based vetting mechanism for the various funding schemes. The Chairman expressed support for the proposed budget allocation with its focus on waste reduction projects, which would promote community actions for tackling the imminent waste problems in Hong Kong.

6. Mr. Kenneth CHAN, Chairman of the Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee (RPVSC), informed the meeting that grants totalling about \$9 million were approved for Research, Technology Demonstration and Conference projects in 2013-14, against an allocated budget of \$14 million from the ECF. He said that based on RPVSC's experience, quite a number of proposed projects were shown to be of limited practical value or benefits, or could not benefit the community or the relevant industries / trades as a whole. Mr. CHAN suggested that the ECF could consider conveying its requirements / objectives more clearly to prospective applicants, in an attempt to bring in more meritorious projects. The Chairman shared Mr. CHAN's views and agreed that supported research projects should be able to yield deliverables with practical value.

7. In response to Ms Agnes CHAN's enquiry about the details of "Demonstration Projects" for which an allocation of \$5 million was proposed for 2014-15, Dr. Samuel CHUI advised that as over 90% of the applicants for minor works projects were from the school sector and about 50% of the schools had installed different types of environmental facilities in the past few years through implementing minor works projects, Members of the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) were of the view that greater emphasis should be placed on the educational and innovative elements in selecting projects for ECF support in future. Against this background, "Minor Works Projects" was proposed to be replaced by the new "Demonstration Projects", which highlighted the demonstration aspects starting from 2014-15. Mr. LAM Chiu-ying added that prospective applicants of the proposed new "Demonstration Projects" should provide detailed plans in their applications to demonstrate how, through the installation of hardware, the educational momentum could be sustained even after project completion. The Chairman shared Mr. LAM's views and considered that ECF-funded projects should, on one hand, support the Government's policy priorities on environmental protection, and on the other, be able to deepen the social impacts through social engagement, mobilization and capacity building. Cultural and behavioural changes were of utmost importance to the success of efforts in protecting the environment of the community.

8. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded the meeting's view that the proposed budget allocation for 2014-15 and related arrangements should be approved.

Agenda Item 4: Proposed Budget of Environmental Campaign Committee Programme for Financial Year 2014-15

(ECF Paper 43/2013-14)

9. Mr. Derek LEE briefed Members about the proposed annual programmes by the ECC for 2014-15. The core programmes in 2014-15 would include community engagement programmes in support of policy priority; Hong Kong Green School Award; Student Environmental Protection Ambassador Scheme and other on-going School Programmes; the Hong Kong Awards for Environmental Excellence; sharing sessions of EE&CA Projects; World Environment Day 2014; Promotion Programme on Source Separation of Waste (PPSSW). The estimated total budget for the proposed ECC programmes and secretariat support expenses was \$32.22 million. Mr. LEE added that there was an increase of about 30% increase in budget for the ECC for 2014-15 as compared with that of last year mainly for the reasons that \$2 million was proposed for the continuation of the PPSSW and another \$4 million was reserved for organizing engagement programmes in support of policy priorities.

10. Ms Amy FUNG said that the Waste Recovery Projects Vetting Subcommittee (WRPVSC) considered at its recent meetings the first batch of food donation projects. She noted that the budgets proposed by the applicants often covered substantial publicity and promotion costs, and enquired whether the ECC had reserved any budget for the promotion of food donation. The Chairman said that it was common for applicants to propose a budget for promoting their projects so as to achieve the intended project objectives. While the Government had a role in formulating the overall waste policies, ECF recipients could serve as key drivers for community actions complementing these policy priorities. He considered it helpful for the Government to brief WRPVSC Members about the current waste policies and related strategic priorities.

11. Ms Anissa WONG advised that each project might reserve a budget for publicity purpose to facilitate communication with and promotion to target participants and stakeholders. The WRPVSC could consider the reasonableness of the proposed budget for publicity having regard to the merits of the projects and activities involved. She agreed with the Chairman's views that the promotion of waste reduction should be implemented through a multi-prongs approach. All along, the Government had devoted substantial efforts and resources in raising the public's awareness on waste reduction and recycling through massive campaigns and publicity, e.g. "Food Wise Hong Kong" campaign. Ms WONG suggested that a briefing could be arranged to Members at the next meeting about the Government's efforts and plans on publicity for waste management / waste reduction matters, to better facilitate the ECF Committee in selection of projects for funding support. Such presentation would also facilitate ECC Members in planning and organizing publicity campaigns to collaborate with the Government's efforts. Ms Amy FUNG agreed with Ms WONG's views and considered that the success of implementing waste reduction in the community would rely on a holistic approach to tackling the waste problems.

12. Members noted and made no further comment on the ECC annual programmes. The Chairman concluded the meetings' view that the ECC annual budget for 2014-15 was approved with a grant of \$32.22 million.

Agenda Item 5: Environment and Conservation Fund – Subsidy to Support Source Separation of Waste

(ECF Paper 44/2013-14)

13. Mr. YUEN Po-hung briefed Members about the proposed continuation of the subsidies for the housing estates, commercial and industrial buildings for applying the Source Separation of Waste (SSW) Programme under the Waste Recovery Projects. The ECF Committee endorsed an allocation of \$5 million in August 2005 to partially support private housing estates to participate in the SSW Programme. In August 2008, the ECF Committee allocated an additional amount of \$5 million to expand the scope to cover commercial and industrial buildings. The level of funding support was reviewed in August 2006 and October 2011, and increased from 25% and a ceiling of \$800 per building floor to the current level of 50% and a ceiling of \$1,000 per building floor. At present, 114 housing estates had been granted with a total amount of approximate \$4.87 million for procurement of waste separation facilities. The application period lapsed on 30 September 2013. EPD proposed to continue to provide funding support to the SSW Programme. To enable better use of funding, it was proposed to incorporate the SSW Programme into the Waste Recovery Projects such that applications could be handled in a more coordinated manner in future.

14. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded the meeting's views that the continuation of the SSW Programme should be supported and that its incorporation into the Waste Recovery Projects should be approved.

Agenda Item 6: Proposed Arrangements to Enhance Flexibility in Processing Programme Variation Requests from Green NGOs

(ECF Paper 45/2013-14)

15. Ms Amy FUNG declared her employment with the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups which was one of the seven Green NGOs. The meeting agreed that Ms. FUNG could stay on and participate in the discussion.

16. Dr. Samuel CHUI briefed Members that over the past few years, the ECF had successfully secured the participation of seven well-established charitable bodies / youth organization to become its strategic partners. With ECF's in-principle funding support totalling \$128.48 million, these organizations would launch systematic greening programmes for transforming themselves into Green NGOs. Since the original scope and budget of individual projects included under

each Green NGO's greening programme were proposed based on the best estimates when these were submitted in a bundle under the greening programme to the ECF Committee for consideration, during the course of programme implementation, the Green NGOs might find that they needed to adjust the scope of the original programme for various unforeseeable reasons such as technical constraints or safety concerns in relation to the details of individual projects. Under the existing arrangements, when there was a need for a Green NGO to adjust the scope of the approved programme for various reasons, they would need to seek the ECF Committee's approval, and then the approval of the relevant Vetting Subcommittee for specific project variations, resulting in a rather cumbersome process. From time to time, the Secretariat had received feedback from the Green NGOs for streamlining of the procedures.

17. Dr. Samuel CHUI said that to streamline existing arrangements, the Secretariat proposed that the ECF Committee might consider delegating the authority for approving programme variations, as follows, to the relevant Vetting Subcommittees:

- (i) requests for reallocation of budget and changes of scope among approved / proposed projects within the purview of the Vetting Subcommittee; and
- (ii) new projects proposed to replace projects rejected by the Vetting Subcommittee or withdrawn by the Green NGO, and new projects to be supported through the deployment of uncommitted fund from individual projects,

subject to the conditions that the original budget ceiling under the same Vetting Subcommittee and the overall programme period would not be exceeded.

18. The Chairman supported the proposed arrangements as the streamlined procedures would enhance flexibility in processing requests for programme variations from Green NGOs. He pointed out that the prime objective of the Green NGO scheme was to leverage the wide network of these organizations to help cultivate and spread green messages to the community. In assessing the impacts of the Green NGO programmes, focus should be placed on the software aspect, i.e. whether the activities had brought about any cultural and behavioural changes among stakeholders, instead of the facilities installed or activities organized. Only with the cultivation of a green culture could the social responsibility for protection of the environment be transformed into a core value rooted in the community. Mr. Edward LEUNG and Ms Agnes CHAN shared the Chairman's views. Mr. LEUNG opined that the seven Green NGOs could be invited to organize major campaigns jointly with the ECC. Ms CHAN and Mr. Kenneth CHAN considered that the development of a set of guidelines / benchmarks would be useful to assist the Green NGOs in evaluating the effectiveness of their programmes. Mr. Douglas WOO shared his experience in cultivating green corporate culture in the business sector, through using the Global Reporting Initiatives (GRI) as a platform for assessment of green actions taken.

19. Ms Anissa WONG appreciated Members' suggestions which she considered as meaningful and inspiring. She agreed that a review could be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the previous ECF-funded projects. To take forward this task, the ECF Committee might consider setting aside an amount to hire a suitable organization to conduct the review, managed by the Secretariat and under the steer of Members, say the Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee. Details could be further deliberated and the Secretariat would work out a proposal for Member's consideration.

20. The Chairman emphasized the importance of ECF-funded projects in cultivating green culture in Hong Kong. Mr. LAM Chiu-ying concurred with the Chairman's views. Mr. LAM opined that public participation was vital to the success of environmental protection, and through which the development of green attitude among the general public could be enhanced gradually.

21. Note

22. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded the meeting's views that the proposed delegation of authority for approving Green NGO programme variations to the ECF Vetting Subcommittees should be approved.

**Agenda Item 7: Sik Sik Yuen – To Move Towards a Green Organization:
Progress Report**

(ECF Paper 46/2013-14)

23. Ms Anita SW TSUI briefed the meeting that to enhance the green partnership between the ECF and the Green NGOs, the ECF Committee had previously agreed on the need to maintain frequent communications with these organizations to facilitate regular exchange of views for the successful implementation of their greening programmes. To follow up with the ECF Committee's decision, the Secretariat had invited representatives of two Green NGOs, namely Sik Sik Yuen (SSY) and Po Leung Kuk (PLK), to join the meeting on this occasion to report on the overall progress of their greening programmes.

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31. The Chairman thanked SSY's representatives for the presentation on the progress of their greening programme. SSY representatives were discharged from the meeting at this juncture.

Agenda Item 8: Po Leung Kuk – Request for Extension of the Greening Programme and Report on the Latest Programme Implementation

(ECF Paper 47/2013-14)

32. Ms Anita SW TSUI briefed the meeting that at the ECF Committee meeting on 30 January 2013, Members approved PLK's request for extension of the consultancy services for the two camp sites of its greening programme (viz., Pak Tam Chung Holiday Camp and Jockey Club Tai Tong Holiday Camp) to 4 November 2014. To tally with the approved extension of the camp site consultancy services, PLK would like to further seek Members' approval for extension of the duration of the overall programme to 4 November 2014 without additional funding from ECF. PLK representatives would hence report to Members the overall progress of their greening programme as well as their proposed programme extension.

33. Note

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39. The Chairman thanked PLK's representatives for the presentation on the progress of their greening programme. Representatives of PLK were discharged from the meeting at this juncture.

40. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded that the meeting's views that PLK's request for extension of the greening programme to 4 November 2014 with no additional funding from ECF should be approved.

Agenda Item 9: Any Other Business

41. Members had no other business to raise.

Agenda Item 10: Date of Next Meeting

42. The next Meeting would be held in around three months. The Secretariat would inform Members of the details in due course.

43. The meeting ended at 5 p.m.

Secretariat, Environment and Conservation Fund Committee March 2014

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.”