

**Confirmed Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the
Environment and Conservation Fund Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee
held on 10 June 2008 at 10:00 a.m.
in the Conference Room, 33/F., Revenue Tower, Wanchai**

Present

Mr. Joseph Lee, BBS, JP	(Chairman)
Prof. Jonathan Wong Woon-chung	
Prof. Chan Chak-keung	
Mr. Man Mo-leung	
Dr. Kenneth Leung Mei-yee	
Dr. Alain Lam Kwok-lun	ENB
Mr. Richard Chan Ping-kwong	AFCDD
Mr. Lawrence Cheung Shing-hsi	EPD
Mr. Francis Wong	EPD (Secretary)
Ms. Angie Wan	EPD (Assistant Secretary)

Absent with Apologies

Prof. Chau Kwai-cheong
Ms. Emba Leung Wun-man

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 25.2.2008 were confirmed without amendment.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising

Para. 4 ECF Project 04/2002 – a terminated project

3. Ms Angie Wan reported that the Secretariat had written to the Principal Investigator (PI), Mr. Suen Kai-yuen, requesting for his confirmation of “no counter-claim”, but no reply had been received from Mr. Suen so far. Having consulted internal legal advice, the Secretariat wrote to Mr. Suen again on 5.6.2008 with the attachment of the discussion notes taken on 20.12.2007, in which his agreement to “no counter-claim” was recorded. If there was no reply from Mr. Suen by 19.6.2008, his agreement to the discussion notes would be assumed, and the project would be closed by then.

Para. 5 ECF Project 02/2007 “Easy identification of dinoflagellates : Phase I – Rapid Identification of Dinoflagellates With Protein/peptide Mass Fingerprints Obtained Using MALDI-TOF Mass spectrometry”

4. Ms Angie Wan reported that the ECF Committee had endorsed the recommendation of the RPVSC and granted \$384,000 to the project. The project was expected to commence in July 2008.

Para. 6 ECF Project 25/2004 – a terminated project

5. Ms Angie Wan reported that, in response to the request of the Secretariat, the University of Hong Kong had refunded to the ECF the whole sum of the initial payment of the project amounting to \$74,686.

Para. 13 ECF Project 11/2006 “Ecological sustainability of vegetated steep soil cutslopes”

6. Ms Angie Wan reported that the ECF Committee had endorsed the recommendation of the RPVSC and granted \$788,600 to the project. The project would commence in July 2008.

Proposed variations to details of ECF funded projects

ECF Project 6/2006 “To establish a three dimensional real-time marine environment

monitoring system in Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park with connection to the internet”

[ECF Paper 01/2008-09]

7. Mr. Francis Wong reported that the PI of the project would like to seek approval for transferring the unspent balance of \$2,000 from the budget item of “Equipment-computer” to cover the over-expenditure on “Installation” cost as a result of additional installation costs due to shark danger in summer time. The PI also applied for extension of the project period for one month, i.e. up to 30 June 2008, for the modification of the datalink. No additional fund would be requested for the whole project.

8. Members approved the variation of budget items and extension of project period for ECF project 6/2006.

ECF Project 7/2007 “A Study of the biodiversity of coral-associated polychaetes in Sharp Island”

[ECF Paper 02/2008-09]

9. To avoid conflict of interest, Prof. Jonathan Wong of Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) declared interest as the PIs for the Projects 7/2007 and 8/2007 (i.e. a new application to be discussed under Agenda Item 3) also came from the Department of Biology of HKBU, and withdraw himself from the conference room. As a member of the Court of the HKBU, the Chairman also declared interest and requested Dr Alain Lam to chair the discussion of the two projects.

10. Mr. Francis Wong reported that, in response to Members’ comments made at the last meeting, the PI had revised the proposal by providing more details about those five sites under study. Mr. Richard Chan advised that the Agriculture, Fisheries & Conservation Department (AFCD) had studied the revised proposal and was supportive of the project.

11. Mr. Francis Wong pointed out that the proposed sum of \$50,839, being the overseas expenses to be incurred by the PI during his visit to the University of Amsterdam, should not be supported.

12. After discussion, Members agreed to support the revised proposal with a grant of \$421,020 by deducting the amount of overseas expenses.

Agenda Item 3: New Applications

ECF Project 08/2007 Environmental education on river remediation and ecological restoration : A case study on Shing Mun River and Lam Tsuen River

[ECF Paper 03/2008-09]

13. Mr. Francis Wong briefed Members on the proposal and the assessments given by EPD and AFCD. The objectives of the proposal were to quantify the sediment concentrations; to investigate the fish and benthic macroinvertebrate community structures in relation to different sediment quality; and to educate the public about the importance of conservation and restoration. EPD had suggested the PI to locate the environmental sampling points in the proximity of existing EPD water quality monitoring stations. On the advice of AFCD, the PI had revised the site of study from Yuen Long Creek to Lam Tsuen River.

14. Mr. Francis Wong revealed that the PI had also submitted an application to Research Grants Council (RGC). Members were requested to note the similarities and differences of the two applications as shown in the comparison table provided by the PI.

15. Note

16. Note

17. Dr. Alain Lam concluded that more information should be provided by the PI to facilitate further discussion at the next meeting, and requested Dr. Kenneth Leung to advise the Secretariat on the specific information to be asked from the PI.

ECF Project 10/2007 Recycling of CRT glass from discarded computer monitor and TV sets

[ECF Paper 04/2008-09]

18. The Chairman took the lead of the discussion of the project and Prof. Jonathan Wong rejoined the meeting. Mr. Francis Wong briefed Members on the proposal and the assessments given by EPD and two external assessors as summarized in Paper 04/2008-09. EPD considered the proposal was worthy of support in view of the expected increase in CRT TVs to be discarded in the next few years due to the introduction of digital broadcast. The proposed concrete CRT glass product could block x-ray radiation, which could be applied in the construction of partition walls at hospitals and laboratories, and to be used as tiles for basements and ground floors for reducing radon emissions from granite. The PI had taken the advice of EPD to shorten the project period from 24 to 18 months by adding an additional research assistant resulting in an 11% increase in total budget. External Assessor 1 opined that the proposal had satisfied the criteria of value-for-money and good quality. External Assessor 2 also considered the proposal worth supporting as it would serve as an alternative to promote the utilization of scrap CRT glass.

19. Note

20. The Chairman concluded that the PI should revise the proposal by providing project details section by section in the prescribed application form; listing out the breakdown of the general expenses requested; and advising the possible way forward of the project such as technology transfer plan and suggestions on how the proposed CRT concrete mixes could be turned into a commercially viable product.

ECF Project 11/2007 Developing a fully automated Close-Proximity vehicle for measuring tyre/road noise

[ECF Paper 05/2008-09]

21. Mr. Francis Wong briefed Members on the proposal and the assessments given by EPD, Highways Department (HyD) and two external assessors as summarized in Paper 05/2008-09. The project aimed to develop a full automated close-proximity (CPX) tyre/road noise measuring vehicle which could perform efficient noise measuring, especially in the local narrow road configurations in Hong Kong. Members were requested to refer to Paper 05/2008-09 for detailed

objectives of the project. Both EPD and HyD supported the project as it would facilitate the assessment of noise performance of road surfaces in Hong Kong. The HyD considered that the proposed vehicle appeared to be a significant improvement over the trailer, and would offer an internationally accepted assessment method in addition to the roadside traffic noise measurement method currently adopted in Hong Kong. Upon EPD and External Assessor 1's advice, the PI revised the project details and design of the CPX vehicle. The project period had been revised to 21 months so as to cover the estimated workload for design and building. Both EPD and External Assessor 1 were satisfied with the revised proposal. External Assessor 2 supported the project as it should prove very usefully in tackling tyre/road surface noise and consequently assisting in the reduction of road traffic noise nuisance in Hong Kong.

22. Note

23. After discussion, the Chairman requested Mr. Lawrence Cheung to confirm with the relevant parties of EPD and HyD on their long term plan in using the data from this project and the application in the design and maintenance of the road surfacing materials.

ECF Project 1/2008 Current Status and Direction for Green Purchasing in Hong Kong

[ECF Paper 06/2008-09]

24. Mr. Francis Wong briefed Members on the proposal and the assessments given by EPD. The project aimed to find out the current status of green purchasing in the business sector in Hong Kong. Through supplemental research and consideration of comparable green procurement efforts and accomplishments by local large corporations and other jurisdictions, a series of recommendations on how to proceed with strengthening and advancing green procurement would be formulated. EPD considered that the project had practical use. Upon EPD's advice, the project proponent had revised the project to focus more on the private sector to avoid duplication with the consultancy study on green purchasing practices commissioned by the government. The survey on green procurement practices adopted by the private sector and other places would be worthy of support as it would provide useful information to the government and also

enhance the awareness of the private sector on green procurement practices. Mr. Thierry Chan, a representative of the project team was invited to the meeting to answer Members' queries about the proposal.

25. Note

26. Note

27. The Secretariat would invite the PI to provide further information for further discussion at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Date of Next Meeting

28. The Secretariat would inform Members of the date of the next meeting in due course.

29. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Secretariat, ECF Research Projects Vetting Sub-committee

July 2008

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."