

**Confirmed Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the  
Environment and Conservation Fund Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee  
held on 28 September 2010 at 2:30 p.m.  
in the Conference Room, 28/F., Southorn Centre, Wanchai**

**Present**

Mr. Joseph LEE, SBS, JP	(Chairman)
Prof. Jonathan WC WONG	
Prof. CHAU Kwai-cheong	
Mr. Barry MC KWONG	
Dr. Arthur PS LAU	
Dr. Kenneth MY LEUNG	
Mr. Lawrence SH CHEUNG	ENB
Mr. KW CHEUNG	AFCDD
Miss Eunice YT CHAN	EPD (Secretary)
Ms Winifred SH CHAN	EPD (Assistant Secretary)

**Absent with Apologies**

Mr. Paul KC CHAN  
Ms Agnes NG

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**Welcoming Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the eighth 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 5.7.2010 were sent to Members on 29.7.2010. The draft minutes were confirmed subject to the following amendments:

*In page 11, 35<sup>th</sup> paragraph, line 7: replace “fish taxonomy” with “freshwater fish ecology and biodiversity”. Then also in page 11, 36<sup>th</sup> paragraph, line 4: replace “fish taxonomy” with “freshwater fish ecology and biodiversity”.*

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

3. Miss Eunice CHAN reported that as a follow-up action arising from the RPVSC meeting held on 5.7.2010, , the principal investigator (PI) of the ECF Project 35/2009 “Quantification of Antibiotic Residues and Microbial Antibiotic-resistant Genes in Fish Ponds and Marine Culture Zones of Hong Kong” had discussed and agreed with AFCD on the slight variation of the sampling plan by adding four more sites to a total of eight sites; and conducting time series experiment for two sites instead of four. The PI had also confirmed to commence the project on 1.1.2011.

### Transfer of Title of Capital Items and Equipment [RPVSC Paper 21/2010-11]

4. Miss Eunice CHAN reported that the RPVSC discussed at the meeting held on 5.7.2010 on potential transfer of equipment to recipient organisations upon project completion. The Secretariat subsequently prepared a stock-taking of the equipment of completed ECF research projects as in Appendix I of the RPVSC Paper 21/2010-11. Miss CHAN briefed Members on the arrangement proposed in the paper, which had made reference to the operation of ITF where entitlement of the equipment would be transferred to the recipient organisations two years after project completion. Members agreed to the proposed arrangement and as such, the Secretariat would inform the recipient organisations of the completed projects listed in Appendix I on the transfer of equipment entitlement for which the two-year post-project completion period had been due. Members further discussed the suggestions of inviting the PI to state in the application form the estimated depreciation and re-sale value of the equipment upon project completion. In view of the practical difficulties in estimating depreciation and re-sale value of the proposed equipment at the time of submitting application, Members took the view that there was no need to revise the application form in this aspect for the time being.

5. Before proceeding to considering new applications, Miss Eunice CHAN

reminded Members that those applications applying for more than \$250,000 and received before 1.4.2010 were subject to external assessment according to the old guide to applications. Thus, Members might note that some new applications to be discussed at the meeting applying for less than \$500,000 had undergone external assessment. Dr Kenneth LEUNG enquired and the Committee confirmed that the Secretariat could invite external assessors to evaluate the support worthiness and technicality of project proposals when Members considered such technical evaluation essential in considering funding allocation. The applicants of such proposals would be notified as appropriate.

### **Agenda Item 3: New Applications**

*ECF Project 32/2009 Green Purchasing Handbook for Hong Kong-based Corporations and Organizations*

*[RPVSC Paper 22/2010-11]*

6. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the proposal by Green Council applying for a funding support of \$499,774 for an 18-month project. One of the two external assessors (EA) supported but another one not. Ms Winifred CHAN brought Members' attention to a paper entitled "Green procurement in the Asian public sector and the Hong Kong private sector" on table as requested by the PI of the project.

7. Note

8. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded not to support the project.

*ECF Project 05/2010 Beyond eco-labeling: Embedding environmental management practices in enterprises in Hong Kong*

*[RPVSC Paper 23/2010-11]*

9. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the proposal by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) applying for a funding support of \$496,920 for a 36-month project.

10. Note

11. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded not to support the project.

*ECF 13/2010 Feasibility study of using Towngas in Solid Oxide Fuel Cells for clean power generation*  
*[RPVSC Paper 24/2010-11]*

12. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the proposal by PolyU applying for a funding support of \$304,000 for a 17-month feasibility study. EMSD opined that the project appeared to be a feasibility study with research and educational value but might not have instant practical contribution at the moment.

13. Note

14. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded not to support the project.

*ECF Project 20/2010 Development of a Printed Circuit Board (PCB) Recycling Methodology and a Model for the Electrical and Electronics Industry in Hong Kong*  
*[RPVSC Paper 37/2010-11]*

15. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the proposal by PolyU applying for a funding support of \$500,000 for a 12-month project. EPD opined that the project would enhance recycling of WEEE but had reservation on the sustainability and economic viability of the proposed business model.

16. Note

17. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded not to support the project.

18. Dr. Arthur LAU declared interest for the following applications and withdrew himself from the Conference Room as the applications were made by the Hong Kong University of Science & Technology (HKUST).

ECF Project 34/2009 Recovery of metals and chars from bioleaching of e-waste by sorption

[RPVSC Paper 25/2010-11]

19. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal from HKUST. The PI applied for \$516,800 to develop a simple, cost-effective method of reclaiming valuable metals from e-waste in a 12-month project. EPD supported the concept of recycling of WEEE but had reservation in supporting this study if the sustainability and economic viability of the business model for the proposed technology in Hong Kong could not be demonstrated.

20. Note

21. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded not to support the project.

ECF Project 11/2010 Policy Instruments and Flexible Mechanisms in International Climate Cooperation and Implications for Hong Kong

[RPVSC Paper 26/2010-11]

22. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal. The PI applied for \$225,000 for a 36-month study on the impacts of various popular policy instruments and flexible mechanisms in international climate cooperation on the development of low-carbon technology, abatement efficiency, economic growth and social welfare in a small economy such as Hong Kong.

23. Note

24. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded not to support the project.

ECF Project 12/2010 Investigation of the distribution of bloom-forming and potentially toxic cyanobacteria in Hong Kong's freshwater habitats

[RPVSC Paper 27/2010-11]

25. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal from

HKUST applying for \$435,280 for a 18-month project to investigate the species composition and seasonal variation of cyanobacteria in local freshwater habitats.

26. Note

27. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded not to support the project.

*ECF Project 16/2010 Construction Waste Estimation and Management in Hong Kong*  
*[RPVSC Paper 28/2010-11]*

28. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal. The PI applied for \$485,240 to carry out a 24-month project to develop a construction waste estimation and management system for various types of building construction projects in Hong Kong. EPD considered the study worthy of support.

29. Note

30. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded to support the project with a total grant of \$378,680 and the total project period should be shortened to 18 months.

31. Dr. Arthur LAU rejoined the meeting. Dr. Kenneth LEUNG declared interest for the following applications and withdrew himself from the Conference Room as the applications were made by the University of Hong Kong (HKU).

*ECF Project 10/2010 Development of fluorescent biosensor for rapid detection of estrogenic substances in food*  
*[RPVSC Paper 29/2010-11]*

32. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal. The PI applied for \$466,000 to develop a rapid and sensitive detection method for estrogenic compounds in aqueous solution using a fluorescent biosensor. The Secretariat had consulted EPD and the Centre of Food Safety (CFS) on the proposal.

33. Note

34. The Chairman concluded that the project was not supported.

*ECF Project 18/2009 The Clinical Application of Biomonitoring Data in the Risk Assessment of Human Health on Environmental Chemicals*

*[RPVSC Paper 30/2010-11]*

35. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal from HKU applying for \$500,000 for a 24-month study. The Secretariat had consulted EPD and the Food & Health Bureau which was the Secretariat of the Health & Health Services Research Fund, Health Care & Promotion Fund.

36. Note

37. The Chairman concluded not to support the proposal.

*ECF Project 26/2010 Development of an Electric Air Conditioning System Tailored for Commercial Vehicles with Dedicated Operational Needs*

*[RPVSC Paper 38/2010-11]*

38. Dr. Kenneth LEUNG rejoined the meeting. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal from the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC). The PI applied for \$499,800 to carry out a 6-month study to make use of the developed automatic idle-stop control system together with a newly developed electric air conditioner, with operating algorithm for long-service duration. Miss Eunice CHAN also drew Members' attention to the PI's explanation on the relationship of the new proposal with the on-going project which was on table for Members' consideration. Members were also invited to refer to supplementary information provided by the PI in response to EPD's comments on table. EPD considered the proposal worthy of support as the project would address the practical need of the commercial vehicles.

39. Note

40. After deliberation, the Chairman concluded to support the proposal with a total grant of \$499,800.

41. As the Deputy Chairman of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and a member of the Court of the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), the Chairman declared interest and requested Mr. Lawrence CHEUNG to chair the discussion of the following projects applications namely ECF Projects 15/2010, 37/2009, 25/2009, 06/2010, 03/2010 and 08/2010 and withdrew himself from the Conference Room as the applications were made by the VTC and HKBU.

*ECF Project 15/2010 “Green is the New Cool” Forum and Master Classes: Designing for a Low Carbon Life in a Creative, Actionable and Affordable Way [RPVSC Paper 16/2010-11]*

42. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the project proposal from the Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI) under the VTC. The PI applied for \$1,035,042 to carry out a series of programme aiming at promoting a behavioural change in Hong Kong towards a lower carbon consumption life through sustainable design and innovation. There would be a one-day forum followed by two master classes for professionals and tertiary students and an applied research study on sustainable design and innovation. Miss CHAN drew Members’ attention that the total budget sought was higher than the funding ceiling of \$500,000 in the funding guidelines. Nonetheless, it was noted that the PI had undertaken to contribute \$768,554 to the project. Furthermore, the project was more than an academic conference in an expert field, but aimed to adopt an inter-disciplinary approach to raise general awareness towards sustainable design. Members would have the discretion to consider whether the project was worth waiving the funding ceiling.

43. Note

44. After deliberation, the Meeting concluded to support the proposal with a total grant of \$500,000.

45. Prof Jonathan WONG declared interest for the following projects applications, namely ECF Projects 37/2009, 25/2009, 06/2010, 03/2010 and 08/2010, and withdrew himself from the Conference Room as the applications were made by

the HKBU.

*ECF Project 37/2009 Integrated Pond Fish Farming using Food Wastes: for Quality Fish Production and Habitat Conservation*

[RPVSC Paper 32/2010-11]

46. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members that the Committee discussed the proposal at the meeting held on 5 July 2010 and considered it worthy of support in principle. The PI was then invited to elaborate on the methodology and implementation of the project objectives, to set up a management committee, to review the cost-benefit analysis and to trim down the overall budget. Prof MH WONG and Dr. SS CHUNG of HKBU were invited to join the meeting to present the proposal and answer Members' questions.

47. <sup>Note</sup>

48. Prof MH WONG and Dr. SS CHUNG left the meeting after answering Members' questions.

49. After deliberation, Members concluded to support the project proposal with a total grant of \$1,900,900. Members also agreed to send representatives to attend meetings of the project management committee so as to monitor the progress of the project.

*ECF Project 25/2009 Artificial Sweetener as an Emerging Contaminant: Its occurrence and transformation products in Hong Kong waters*

[RPVSC Paper 33/2010-11]

50. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the 24-month proposal applying for \$493,960. EPD and the two EAs supported the proposal because the project deliverables would provide baseline data on the targeted sweeteners and their degraded products in sewage treatment plants (STPs) and local waters. The project would increase the public awareness of the presence and potential persistence of artificial sweeteners as emerging contaminants in aquatic environment.

51. Note

52. After deliberation, Members concluded to support the project proposal with a total grant of \$409,710 and the project period would be shortened to 18 months. The number of sampling work in STPs should be increased from 5 to 10 per site visit.

*ECF Project 06/2010 Investigation on occurrence of triclosan in wastewater and the possibility of its degradation to 2,8-dichlorinated-p-dioxin*

*[RPVSC Paper 34/2010-11]*

53. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the 18-month proposal applying for \$405,680 to study the fate of triclosan and its major degradation products during the wastewater treatment and to investigate the possible formation of dioxins or dioxin-related compounds including 2,8-dichlorinated-p-dioxin. Both EPD and DSD supported the proposal.

54. Note

55. After deliberation, Members concluded to support the project with a total grant of \$405,680 and the PI was suggested to consider adopting the composite sampling method.

*ECF Project 03/2010 A selective oligonucleotide-based luminescent switch-on probe for the detection of nanomolar mercury (II) ion in aqueous solution*

*[RPVSC Paper 35/2010-11]*

56. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the 12-month proposal applying for \$416,000 to develop a rapid and sensitive detection method for mercury (II) ion in aqueous solution based on DNA oligonucleotide and luminescent transition metal complexes.

57. Note

58. After discussion, Members concluded to further discuss the project proposal at coming meetings after the Secretariat had invited two external assessments on the proposal. The applicant would be informed of the Members' decision accordingly.

*ECF Project 08/2010 Investigation of occurrence of polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) and methyl-mercury (methyl-Hg) in the sediments of storage reservoirs in the Pearl River Delta*

*[RPVSC Paper 36/2010-11]*

59. Miss Eunice CHAN briefed Members on the proposal applying for \$355,120 to investigate the occurrence of hydrophobic organic contaminants in the sediments of storage reservoirs along the Dongjiang River, and to assess human health risks associated with the contamination. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) was consulted and indicated reservation in supporting the proposal.

60. <sup>Note</sup>

61. Members concluded not to support the project.

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

62. As the current term of the Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee would expire on 15.10.2010, the Chairman and Mr. Lawrence CHEUNG thanked all members for their contribution in the past two years.

63. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:40 pm.

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

**January 2011**

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.”