

**Confirmed Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the  
Environment and Conservation Fund Committee  
held on 31 March 2006 at 9:30 a.m.**

**Present**

Prof. LUNG Ping-ye, David, S.B.S., J.P.	(Chairman)
Prof. CHAN Chi-ming	
The Hon CHOY So-yuk, J.P.	
Ms LAU Ka-shi	
Mr. Joseph LEE, B.B.S., J.P.	
Mr. MAN Mo-leung	
Dr. TSO WONG Man-yin, B.B.S.	
Mr. Eric CHAN	AD(CV), EPD
Mr. Benjamin YUNG	PEO(CD), EMB
Mr. CHAN Ping-kwong, Richard	Sr Nature Conservation Officer, AFCD
Miss Christina CHONG	SAO(CVD)2, EPD, (Member/Secretary)
Ms Winifred CHAN	SEO(CVD&G), EPD (Assistant Secretary)

**Absent with Apologies**

Mr. LAU Chi-kit, Edwin

**In Attendance**

Ms Sandy CHEUNG	SAO(CR), EPD
Mr. Alphonso HUNG	S(CR), EPD

**Opening Remarks:**

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the fifth meeting. He introduced Mr. YUNG Po-shu, Benjamin, of the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) who attended the meeting for the first time. He also introduced Ms Sandy CHEUNG and Mr. Alphonso HUNG who attended the meeting to brief members on the budget of the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) for 2006-07 and the work of the Waste Recovery Projects Vetting Subcommittee (WRPVSC) and the Environmental Education and Community Action (EE&CA) Projects Vetting Subcommittee.

## **Agenda Item 1: Confirmation on Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 October 2005**

2. The draft minutes of the last meeting held on 6.10.2005 were sent to members on 8.12.2005. The meeting confirmed the draft minutes without any proposed amendment.

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

### Para. 5 Financial position of the ECF

3. Miss Christina CHONG reported that the Administration had identified a saving of \$35 million from the EPD's operating expenses in 2005-06 for injection into the ECF. The Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Environmental Affairs was consulted and supported the proposal in January 2006. The LegCo Finance Committee then approved the injection in February 2006. As at 31.3.2006, the uncommitted fund balance was \$67 million. Details were given in ECF Paper 36/2005 for Members' information.

### Para. 12 TPEA's Proposal: A Pilot Scheme of Management Agreement on the Private Land with High Conservation Value at Fung Yuen Valley in Tai Po

4. Miss Christina CHONG reported that Members expressed concern at the last meeting about the Town Planning Board's zoning of the "Comprehensive Development Area" (CDA) on the Fung Yuen Valley which was just next to the site of the pilot management agreement project by the Tai Po Environmental Association (TPEA). The Approved Tai Po Outline Zoning Plan specified that the zoning was intended to discontinue the existing undesirable open storage and car-repairing workshop use. The CDA was intended to comprise two portions, one portion for low-density residential use and the other for agricultural use. It was also stipulated in the Tai Po Outline Zoning Plan that an applicant for permission for development of the CDA should prepare a Master Layout Plan for approval of the Town Planning Board. The Master Layout Plan should include the programmes of development, an environmental assessment report, a drainage and sewage impact assessment report, a transport impact assessment report and other information required by the Town Planning Board.

**Agenda Item 3: Financial Position of the ECF  
(ECF Paper 36/2005)**

5. Miss Christina CHONG briefed Members on the latest financial position of the ECF as summarized in the ECF Paper 36/2005. The paper summarized the number of applications and the amount of fund approved by the ECF Committee and various subcommittees from April 2005 to March 2006. As at 31.3.2006, the balance of ECF in bank was \$91 million and the uncommitted balance was \$67 million. In reply to the questions by two Members, Miss CHONG reported that the funds were kept as time deposits in four different banks. Mr. Eric CHAN supplemented that the Administration would monitor the fund balance carefully to ensure that sufficient funding could be provided for the approved projects and activities.

**Agenda Item 4: Report of the Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee from  
April 2005 to March 2006  
(ECF Paper 37/2005)**

6. Miss Christina CHONG briefed Members on the work of the Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee (RPVSC) which was summarized in ECF Paper 37/2005. During the reporting period from April 2005 to March 2006, the RPVSC held 4 meetings and considered 16 applications the results of which were summarized below:

Projects approved	8
Projects supported and recommended to ECF Committee for consideration	1
Projects rejected	5
Projects to be further considered	1
Projects withdrawn	1
Total	16

7. Miss Christina CHONG reported that the total amount of fund approved for the eight projects was \$2,138,444.50 in which three projects were jointly funded by the Woo Wheelock Green Fund with a grant of \$325,001.00. She added that a research project recommended by the RPVSC for the Committee's consideration would be discussed under Agenda item 7.

8. In response to Mr. Benjamin YUNG's comments, the Chairman agreed that the RPVSC should be invited to take into account the number of project proposals submitted/carried out by the same principal investigator when considering

the applications as there would be implications on the workload of the principal investigator.

9. In response to a Member's enquiry on the ECF Project 6/2004, Miss Christina CHONG reported that the RPVSC had gone over the progress of the project and agreed to the proposed change of PI. The RPVSC also decided that in processing future applications, the PI should be asked to confirm that he would oversee the project during the whole project period.

**Agenda Item 5: Report of the Waste Recovery Projects Vetting Subcommittee from April 2005 to March 2006 (ECF Paper 38/2005)**

10. Mr. Alphonso HUNG briefed Members on the work of the WRPVSC which was summarized in the ECF Paper 38/2005. Members noted the results/progress of the 38 applications of community waste recovery projects and 19 applications of the newly launched Source Separation of Domestic Waste Scheme processed by the WRPVSC for the period from April 2005 to March 2006. The results were summarized as follows:

Projects approved	23
Projects rejected	16
Projects approved with conditions	1
Projects withdrawn	11
Projects deferred	4
Projects referred to other subcommittees	2
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Total	57

11. Mr. Alphonso HUNG reported that the total amount of fund approved for the 5 waste recovery projects and 18 Source Separation of Waste Projects were \$1,094,021.33 and \$574,522.95 respectively. He added that the WRPVSC had reviewed the guidelines for vetting applications on new projects and extension of existing projects; and revised the current level of support for expenses of some of the expenditure items. Members noted the details and decision of the WRPVSC as put down in the ECF Paper 38/2005.

12. Two Members enquired about the relatively high withdrawal and rejection rate of the waste recovery projects. Mr. Alphonso HUNG explained that most applications involved the setting up of on-street collection points for collecting recyclables which required the approval from the Lands Department. As the Lands Department would no longer grant approval for such on-street collection points due to complaints of obstruction, some applicant organisations had decided to withdraw

their applications. Rejections were due to applicant organisations' failure to meet the vetting criteria of the WRPVSC, in particular the requirements of cost-effectiveness and sustainability of the projects.

13. A Member supplemented that the WRPVSC had vetted the applications in a rather strict manner. While many of the applications were proposed extension of existing projects, the WRPVSC did not support some of these applications in view of the unsatisfactory performance of their previous projects. The applicants were encouraged to expand the types of recyclables to be recovered in their extension projects or to improve the sustainability and cost effectiveness of the extension projects.

**Agenda Item 6: Report of Environmental Education and Community Action Projects Vetting Subcommittee from April 2005 to March 2006 (ECF Paper 39/2005)**

14. Mr. Alphonso HUNG briefed Members on the work of the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee which was summarized in the ECF Paper 39/2005. Members noted that a total of 61 applications were processed by the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee during the period from April 2005 to March 2006. The results were summarized as follows:

Projects approved	34
Projects deferred	8
Projects rejected	12
Projects withdrawn	4
Projects to be processed	3
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Total	61

15. Mr. Alphonso Hung reported that the total amount of fund approved for 34 projects was \$583,711.30. Members also noted that the EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee had reviewed the funding criteria for EE&CA projects as detailed in ECF Paper 39/2005. The new funding criteria aimed to encourage the organizations of more long-term education and community action programmes rather than one-off exercises. The level of funding support for the EE&CA projects was also revised to allow recipient organizations more flexibility to manoeuvre the approved grants within each expenditure category. The EE&CA Projects Vetting Subcommittee also organized an experience sharing session with 180 representatives from 136 non-government organisations and schools on 2.11.2005.

## **Agenda Item 7: New Applications Recommended by the RPVSC**

Project 3/2005 Species identification, ecology and biological control of apple snails in Hong Kong  
(ECF Paper 40/2005)

16. Miss Christina CHONG briefed Members on the proposal submitted by the Hong Kong Baptist University. The proposal had been assessed by AFCD and two external expert assessors and all of them considered it worthy of support. The RPVSC had considered the application during its meeting on 9.12.2005 and recommended the ECF Committee to support the proposal, except that the funding request of \$8,000.00 for the conference expenses was not supported. The objectives of the proposal were to conduct an up-to-date and comprehensive survey of apple snails to determine the number of species present in Hong Kong, their distribution and environmental characteristics; to study the population dynamics of apple snails in different types of habitats; to determine their preference for local vegetables and natural hydrophytes, and the association between food preference and feeding rate, growth and reproduction; to assess the effects of apple snails on other freshwater gastropods; and to explore the use of a biological method in apple snail control. The meeting approved the grant of \$426,280.00 to the project.

## **Agenda Item 8: Budget for the Environmental Campaign Committee for 2006/07 (ECF Paper 41/2005)**

17. Ms Sandy CHEUNG briefed Members on the proposed ECC campaigns and activities to be implemented in 2006/07. The ECC had agreed to adopt the following general directions on ECC programmes for the next two years –

- (a) continue to launch activities in support of the policy priorities of the EPD;
- (b) continue to partner with and build up the capacity of schools, green groups, community groups, etc. in promoting waste reduction and energy saving;
- (c) foster stronger partnership with the business sector and explore collaboration opportunities where appropriate;
- (d) implement programmes which involve wide community participation and emphasize on turning environmental awareness into actions;

- (e) maximize publicity effect via the mass media such as TV, radio, roadshow and newspapers;
- (f) establish a closer collaboration with District Councils in promoting environmental protection;
- (g) render greater assistance to small and medium enterprises in implementing environmental management; and
- (h) provide more opportunities for students to practice green behaviour with a view to helping them build up environmental leadership.

18. Based on the above directions, ECC will carry out the main activities or programmes in 2006-07 as follows –

- (a) World Environment Day 2006 (WED);
- (b) Hong Kong Environmental Protection Festival 2006 (EPF);
- (c) Hong Kong Green School Awards (HKGSA) 2006-07;
- (d) Hong Kong Eco-Business Award 2006;
- (e) Partnership and Capacity Building Scheme; and
- (f) Joint Environmental Programmes with District Councils and Green Groups.

19. Ms Sandy CHEUNG further explained the manpower requirement for the ECC workplan. The ECC Secretariat comprised three project teams, namely, the Community Liaison Team, Schools Liaison Team and Business Partnership Team. Same as in 2005/06, it was proposed to employ 13 Project Co-ordinators (PCs) of university qualifications to join the ECC Secretariat's project teams for implementing and managing the ECC programmes. The total budget for the 13 PCs for 2006/07 was \$ 2,184,000.00.

20. The Chairman concluded that the meeting approved the funding of \$8.81 million to the ECC for organizing their activities in 2006/07.

### **Agenda Item 9: Date of Next Meeting**

21. Members noted that the next regular meeting of the Committee was proposed to be held in June 2006. The Secretariat would check out the availability of Members and confirm the meeting date nearer the time.

## **Agenda Item 10: Any Other Business**

22. Miss Christina CHONG informed Members that a letter from Dr. Josie Close, the project proponent of the ECF Project 4/2005, was tabled for Members' information. The Chairman declared interest on the issue as the project proponent came from the same department and university of which he was the academic staff. A Member, Chairman of the RPVSC, stated that the RPVSC had processed the proposal without delay. Though the external expert assessors supported the proposal, the RPVSC considered that only part of the proposal was worthy of support. Another Member also pointed out that the RPVSC had examined the proposal carefully. RPVSC would consider each proposal on its own merit, taking into account the views of the external assessors.

23. Miss Christina CHONG further reported that the RPVSC meeting held on 10.2.2006 agreed the revised arrangement on appointment of independent evaluator for research projects receiving grant over \$150,000.00. Following the ICAC's study on the administration of the ECF 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.

24. Miss Christina CHONG reported and Members noted that the Secretariat would examine enhancement of the content of the ECF website and registration of independent website address for the ECF.

25. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:50 a.m.

Secretariat, ECF Committee  
July 2006