

**Project 3/2005 – Species identification, ecology and biological control of  
apple snails in Hong Kong**

**Purpose**

This paper seeks Members' advice on funding the captioned application for ECF submitted by the Hong Kong Baptist University.

**Background**

2. The funding requested by this project is \$434,280.00 for the staff cost of employing Research Assistants and undergraduate helpers (\$371,280.00), and other general expenses on chemicals and consumables, rental of vehicles for field trips, attending international conference and publications (\$63,000.00). The project is expected to last for 24 months.

3. This project aims to:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) study the population dynamics of apple snails in different types of habitats;
- (iii) determine their preference for local vegetables and natural hydrophytes, and the association between food preference and feeding rate, growth and reproduction;
- (iv) assess the effects of apple snails on other freshwater gastropods; and
- (v) explore the use of a biological method in apple snail control.

4. The proposal had been examined by the Agriculture, Fisheries & Conservation Department (AFCD) and two overseas expert assessors. All of them supported the project as it would provide more information of invasive apple snails in Hong Kong. The ECF Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee (RPVSC) discussed the proposal at its meeting on 9.12.2005 and considered it worthy of support in principle but requested further clarification from the PI on the budget of \$8000 for conference expenses. Members of the RPVSC subsequently supported the proposal by circulation with an approved budget of \$426,280.00 after deducting the amount of \$8,000.00 for the expenses of attending international conference in accordance with the "Guide to Application

for the Fund”.

**Advice sought**

5. Members are invited to advise whether the application for ECF should be approved with a grant of \$426,280.00 as detailed in paragraphs 2 to 4 above.

Secretariat, Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee  
March 2006