

**Environmental Research, Technology Demonstration and  
Conference Projects Funding Scheme**

**Review and Updates of the Priority Research Themes**

**Purpose**

This paper invites Members to review the current priority research themes for the Environmental Research, Technology Demonstration and Conference (RTDC) Projects funding scheme, and update the list for adoption from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2016.

**Background**

2. The Research Projects Vetting Sub-committee (RPVSC) of the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) is responsible for assessing funding applications for RTDC projects on topics related to environmental protection and conservation. Since April 2010, the RTDC Projects funding scheme has adopted a set of priority themes which were reviewed and updated at intervals of two years, so as to focus resources to build knowledge and talents on areas of priority. The priority themes aim to be indicative of research themes the merits of which have been affirmed by RPVSC, drawing reference from Government policy priorities. Hence, in reviewing the priority themes, RPVSC would make reference to the suggestions of the Environment Bureau (ENB) Environmental Protection Department (EPD). Applications for RTDC projects outside the scope of priority research themes would still be considered on individual merits.

**Review of Priority Research Themes**

3. The current set of priority themes, as listed below, has been adopted since 1 April 2012 -

- (a) Climate Change - Adaptation and Mitigation
  - [energy efficiency, energy audit and use of low carbon energy; green transport technologies such as electric vehicle; carbon emissions measurement, reporting and benchmarking; ecosystem and wildlife adaptation]

**RPVSC Paper 44/2013-2014**  
**For Discussion**

- (b) Waste recycling, such as technology in handling food waste in urban setting
- (c) Ecological and Geo Conservation
  - [Terrestrial, freshwater and marine biodiversity and habitat conservation; Geopark-related science popularisation methods]

*[Note: The above priority themes aim to be indicative and applications for research projects outside the scope of priority research themes would still be considered on individual merits.]*

4. Among the applications received since 1 April 2012, 81% fell under priority research themes. The setting of priority research themes has provided the applicants with a clearer indication in preparing research applications.

5. As the current set of themes have been adopted for nearly two years, the RPVSC Secretariat has consulted relevant policy divisions within ENB and EPD on proposed updates for research themes that are in line with policy priorities. Their suggested updating is set out at Annex for Members' consideration.

### **Advice sought**

6. Members are invited to consider whether the proposed updates for the priority research themes at Annex should be endorsed. Subject to Members' decision, the Secretariat would arrange to promulgate the updated set of priority themes through the ECF website and notifications to key stakeholders.

**Secretariat, Research Projects Vetting Subcommittee  
November 2013**

**Proposed Priority Research Themes  
(from 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2016)**  
**[with some potential research topics for illustrative purposes]**

**Modifications marked in blue**

- (a) Climate Change - Adaptation and Mitigation  
[energy efficiency, energy audit and use of low carbon energy ; green transport technologies such as electric vehicle ; carbon emissions measurement, reporting and benchmarking ; ecosystem and wildlife adaptation]
- (b) Waste recycling, such as technology in handling food waste in urban setting; **studies on successful government support for recycling.**
- (c) Biodiversity Studies and Conservation and Geo Conservation  
[Taxonomic studies of native species, ecological monitoring studies, impacts of and control on invasive alien species, biology and ecology of native species, ecosystem services, vulnerability of biodiversity to climate change, Geopark-related science popularisation methods]
- (d) Air quality, such as air quality and public health; air quality and economic studies; regional air quality in HK-PRD; air quality and transportation (roadside and marine included).

[Note: The above priority themes aim to be indicative and applications for research projects outside the scope of priority research themes would still be considered on individual merits.]