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28 May 2001

Ms Queenie Yu
Clerk to Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms Yu,

**LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
List of follow-up actions**

I refer to your letter dated 10 May 2001. The Secretary for Planning and Lands has referred to us the item related to the Study on Sustainable Development for the 21st Century and asked us to reply to you direct.

At the joint meeting of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works and the Panel on Environmental Affairs held on 9 February 2001, the Administration undertook to consider the need to include in its submissions of proposals to the Legislative Council a paragraph on sustainability implications.

As explained in the paper on the Sustainable Development for the 21st Century submitted for the Joint Panels meeting on 9 February 2001, bureaux and departments will be required to include in their submissions to the Chief Secretary's Committee (CSC) or the Executive Council (ExCo), as the case may be, a statement on sustainability evaluation. The requirement will be mandatory for strategic initiatives or major programmes which, as a general rule, will likely bring about significant or prolonged implications to our economic, social and/or

environmental conditions on a territory wide scale. In most cases, major proposals for the CSC are followed by ExCo submissions, which are subject to the confidentiality rule. Nevertheless, there is a standard arrangement for preparing and issuing briefs to LegCo Members to keep Members informed of the details as in the ExCo submissions. Hence Members will be keep abreast of the sustainability statement associated with each major initiative or programme that has been the subject of an ExCo submission.

Such arrangement would cover the bulk of the Administration's proposed strategic initiatives or programmes as bureaux and departments would need to confirm policy approval to their proposals in the first instance before these may proceed further. In other cases where a submission to the CSC is followed directly by consultation with the LegCo, we will remind bureaux and departments to also include in their papers a statement on sustainability evaluation as appropriate.

We should also point out that a sustainability impact assessment would be useful and should be required only for those strategic initiatives or major programmes that would have territory wide or persistent impacts on the three core elements of sustainable development, i.e. social, economic and environmental aspects. For example, a sustainability evaluation may not result in meaning reports or readings for minor works projects or district proposals that have a local or short-term impact only.

As we will report progress to the Panel in July, we would also take the opportunity to explain to Members our detailed proposals for the sustainability evaluation system.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Dora H M FU)
for Director of Administration

c.c. Secretary for Planning and Lands (Attn. Mr Daniel CHENG)