

*The Conservancy Association
Comments on the Proposed Accountability System
Submission to the Legislative Council on 18 May 2002*

1. The Association's concern on the proposed Accountability System has been expressed in a joint letter to the Chief Executive signed by the various Green Groups. In essence, the letter asked for a new independent Ministry to take care of the environmental agenda within the Hong Kong Government.
2. This paper presents a proposal put forward by The Conservancy Association on the functions of the new independent Ministry. We believe that the new Ministry should go far beyond the restrained role of pollution control and be responsible for both the protection of the environment (such as air quality, water quality, etc) and the conservation of ecological environment, cultural and historical heritage and other environmental resources (including fresh water, recyclable materials and energy resources).
3. Its relation with the existing departments is proposed as follows:
 - Pollution control and environmental planning (e.g. through EIA and SEA) currently undertaken by Environmental Protection Department
 - Waste management by a new Waste Management Authority that will take over the work of waste management from Environmental Protection Department and waste collection from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. It should also have an enhanced function on waste reduction.
 - Development of an energy policy and promotion of alternate energy and energy efficiency by a new Energy Department which is currently the responsibility of the Energy Efficiency Unit of EMSD.
 - Water supply and conservation by Water Services Department
 - Management of our agriculture and fisheries resources by a new Rural Resources Department that will take over the agriculture and fisheries work of AFCD
 - A new Conservation and Countryside Management Department that takes over the conservation of natural (such as ecological, geological and landscape), cultural and historical heritage (currently under the remit of different departments such as AFCD, Planning Department, AMO, CED). It should also manage our country and marine parks.
 - Greening and landscaping of Hong Kong currently undertaken by various departments
4. In view of its broadened functions, We would also propose that the new Ministry be named the Environment and Resources Bureau.