

Letterhead of Friends of the Earth

**Friends of the Earth (Hong Kong)'s Submission
to Legco Panel on Transport**

**Shenzhen Western Corridor, Deep Bay Link
and Route 10**

14 December 2001

As a charitable organization dedicated to protecting and improving Hong Kong's environment, Friends of the Earth (FoE) submitted its views on the proposed Shenzhen Western Corridor (SWC) and the Deep Bay Link (DBL) to the Panel on Transport, Legislative Council on 5 November 2001. FOE would like to reiterate its concerns about the lack of convincing data on the proposed Route 10 about the environmental impacts of the proposed Shenzhen Western Corridor (SWC), the Deep Bay Link (DBL) and Route 10.

1. Lack of Convincing Data

FoE insists that transport planning be based on objective and scientific data and take into consideration all relevant factors. The government, however, has failed to provide convincing data on the proposed Route 10.

- There is no detailed study on the traffic flow to be generated by the SWC. Although the government provided an estimation of the traffic volume, it did not indicate in detail the direction and destination of the traffic. The proposed route 10 running from SWC to Lantau will not help ease the traffic too much if its destination is New Territories East or Kowloon peninsula. As a result, a bottleneck will be created on Tuen Mun Road eastward to Ting Kau.
- The original proposal for a second container port at Lantau has been replaced by the project of Disneyland and has therefore removed one of the major functions of Route 10 as originally proposed.
- In addition, the traffic volume generated by the yet to-be-concretized Logistic Centre is not known. The public has no

information on how much traffic will be generated and whether it can be handled by existing highway networks.

- The fee structure of the proposed Route 10 and its associated transport network comprising Route 3 and Tuen Mun Road is also unknown. The fact that a considerable number of truck drivers prefer the more time-consuming but toll-free Tai Po Road to the tolled Lion Rock Tunnel has already illustrated that economic incentive has significant impacts on drivers' behaviour. It is possible that a tolled Route 10 will defeat its function of regulating the traffic flow between SWC and Hong Kong.

The absence of the above data will inevitably cast doubt on the effectiveness of the proposed Route 10. The public obviously needs more information before it can decide if the Route is the best solution to the future transport demands of Hong Kong.

2. Environmental impact

Furthermore, FoE urges the government to assess seriously the possible environmental impacts of the proposed project on the nearby community and environment.

- Failure to relieve the traffic generated by SWC will aggravate the problem of traffic congestion on Tuen Mun Road, Yuen Long Highway and in Tuen Mun area. It will in turn create serious problems of noise and air pollutions and threaten the health of local residents.
- In addition, the construction of the proposed Route 10 in itself will also create significant traffic and pollution problems that will further worsen the conditions of Tuen Mun Road and Tuen Mun area.
- Even if the proposed Route 10 can successfully relieve the traffic between SWC and Hong Kong, the 2-3 year time-lag between 2005 (the completion of SWC) and 2007/8 (the completion of Route 10) suggests that Tuen Mun Road, Yuen Long Highway and the nearby area may still be subject to serious traffic and pollution problems.

Our Conclusion

Given all the unknowns above, FoE urges the Legislative Councilors to reconsider if there is a need for such a rush for an infrastructure project that will cost more than HK\$ 20 billion of public money. Given the current conditions of Hong Kong's economy and government finance, a more well-informed, prudent and sagacious decision is definitely necessary.

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