



長春社 since 1968

The Conservancy Association

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Vision and Mission of the Council for Sustainable Development

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The Conservancy Association has been a long-time champion for sustainable development. In 1972, CA sent a one-man delegation to the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment. In 1992, CA sent an eight-person delegation to the Earth Summit in 1992 and still was the only local representation.

Over more than ten years, awareness of the need for not only economic growth but also a balanced and sustainable development has been increased. Last year, CA was pleased to see that Hong Kong government had sent its 8-person delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (commonly known as WSSD) held in Johannesburg, whilst CA also led a 37-people Non-Governmental-Organization team with members from various sectors. Civil society has been filling the vacuum of sustainable development leadership over last few decades. CA believes that there is such urgency for the government to play its key role. The set-up of Council for Sustainable Development should no doubt steer the government's role in achieving sustainable development.

CA welcomes the establishment of Council for Sustainable Development (CSD), though it was delivered three years after it was announced. We have placed very high expectation towards this long-awaited Council. As stated in CA's paper "Asia's World City and a Model of Sustainable Development Hong Kong Can Do It!" published in 2002, Hong Kong should not limit its part as an economic model of China. Bearing in mind that "trade" is only part of the "new global order" - of People, Planet and Prosperity, it should have a more global vision that it should aspire to become an Asia's world city and a model of sustainable development.

Sustainable Development Strategy

Concerning the mission of the Council for Sustainable Development, we would like to highlight that with the experiences from WSSD and many other countries and cities which have already progressed to different extent of susdev, Hong Kong should set formulating a sustainable development strategy as an immediate task which should be supplemented by an action plan with concrete targets and timetable. Over the last 35- year history, CA has been preparing a number of papers submitted to the government which could provide the framework for the strategy.

Having said that, however, the key to success lies not in any grand plan drawn up by the government but in the “partnership”, a key concept advocated in WSSD, of different sectors.

Local Agenda 21 (LA 21)

CA therefore suggests that the Council for Sustainable Development should push for the development of a community-based Hong Kong Local Agenda 21. In 1993, after the earth Summit, CA published a green group’s “Local Agenda 21 for Hong Kong”. Though it had generated some discussion about Hong Kong’s sustainable development, Hong Kong has yet developed such a Local Agenda 21 (LA 21). Over last decade, 6416 local governments in 113 countries have already engaged themselves in LA 21. In Hong Kong, CA suggests that District Councils can be a possible key partner to formulate and implement LA 21.

Sustainable Development Bill

CA advocates the idea of a Sustainable Development Bill to enshrine the principle of sustainable development in the legal system. This idea should be discussed by the CSD. The intention of such Bill is to provide the overall legal basis for sustainable development, similar to the Environmental Management Act of South Africa.

Sustainability Assessment (SA)

CA strongly suggests that CSD should also take up the role to oversee the sustainability assessments. Currently Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) is responsible to study the sustainability assessments prepared by bureaux and departments and prepare comments to the Executive Council and Policy Committee. CA finds that an independent committee to oversee the SAs will enhance the credibility and transparency of the whole process.

Cross-bureau role

Finally CA believes that SDC should be the place where important cross-bureau development issues that impact on the environment should be settled, i.e. energy, transport, conservation (not just nature conservation). In the past we had plenty of failures due to lack of coordination of bureaux and departments. We hope that the SDC will take up the overseeing role and lead the administration to a sustainable development road.

Note: All CA’s sustainable development papers can be found at www.conservancy.org.hk/campaign