

**LegCo EA Panel - Special Meeting on 26 October 1998 to Discuss the SSDS EIA  
Discussions with Mainland Side on SSDS**

**Introduction**

In 1994, the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group agreed to establish an Expert Group on Sewage Strategy to discuss and agree on the best way to implement Hong Kong Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme (SSDS) so as to minimise its impact on the environment. The Expert Group was led by Mr. Chen Zuoer, the Representative of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group on the Chinese side with members from Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, National Environmental Protection Agency, State Oceanic Administration and Guangdong Provincial People's Government. The Hong Kong side was led by Secretary for Works with members from Drainage Services Department, Environmental Protection Department and Constitutional Affairs Branch.

2. A Technical Group on Sewage Disposal was also formed to advise the Expert Group on the water quality objectives, the environmental impact assessment (EIA) study and the convergence of various stages of the project and related issues. The Chinese side was led by Prof. Jing Wenying of the National Environmental Protection Agency. The Hong Kong side was led by the Director of Drainage Services with members from Planning, Environment and Lands Branch and Environmental Protection Department. The members of the Chinese side of the Sino-British JLG Expert Group and Technical Group are listed out in Annexes 1 and 2, respectively.

**Previous Discussions at the Expert Group on Sewage Strategy of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group**

3. The detailed arrangements of the SSDS EIA Study were extensively discussed between both sides during 1995. During the first 3 meetings, the two sides discussed the developments of SSDS and the environmental quality standards. At its Fourth Meeting on 20 December 1995, the Expert Group agreed on the Scope of the SSDS EIA Study and recommended that it should commence as soon as possible. In May 1996, EPD commissioned the SSDS EIA Study which was jointly undertaken by Binhai Wastewater Treatment and Disposal (Hong Kong) Consultants and Montgomery Watson Hong Kong Limited.

4. Between 1996 and 1997, the Technical Group held 3 meetings to discuss the field surveys, option evaluation criteria and methodologies used in the SSDS EIA Study as well as the main working papers submitted by the Consultants listed below.

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|----|-----------------------|--|
| a) | Inception Report      |  |
| b) | Working Paper No.1-   | Baseline Survey, Study Plan and Testing Programme              |
| c) | Discussion Note No.1- | Marine Environmental Criteria                                  |
| d) | Discussion Note No.2- | Onshore Environmental, Engineering and Socio-Economic Criteria |
| e) | Discussion Note No.3- | Development of Options   |

- f) Technical Note No.3- Assessment and Selection Criteria; Development of Options; and Evaluation Methodology

Apart from these meetings, both sides' convenors of the Technical Group had also maintained close contact to ensure a smooth progression of the Study.

5. In addition, the follow reports were sent separately to the Mainland side as background information:

- a) Working Paper No.3 - Modelling Approach, Methodology and Computing Requirements
- b) Technical Note No.1 - Pollution Flows and Loads
- c) Consultation Paper - Selection Criteria and Shortlist of Options

### **Recent Discussions with the Mainland Experts after the Return of Sovereignty**

6. Following the return of sovereignty in July 1997, discussion of sewage disposal arrangements was dropped from the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group. A new Expert Group on Sewage Disposal was set up in July 1998 to continue the discussions. The Mainland side was led by Mr. Zhang Liangdong of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office with members from the State Environmental Protection Agency (the former NEPA), the State Bureau of Oceanography (the former SOA), the Guangdong Provincial People's Government and the Zhuhai Government. The Hong Kong side was led by the Secretary of Planning, Environment and Lands Bureau with members from Drainage Services Department, Environmental Protection Department and Constitutional Affairs Bureau.

7. A Technical Group was also formed to advise the Expert Group on the technical issues and to review the reports submitted by the Consultants. The Mainland side was led by Mr. Qiao Zhiqi of the State Environmental Protection Agency with members from the State Bureau of Oceanography, Guangdong Provincial People's Government and Zhuhai Government. The Hong Kong side was led by the Director of Environmental Protection with members from the Planning, Environment and Lands Bureau and Drainage Services Department. The members of the Mainland side of both the Expert Group and Technical Group on Sewage Disposal are listed in Annexes 3 and 4, respectively.

8. At its first meeting held in August 1998, the Technical Group discussed the findings of the SSDS EIA Study including the modelling results, impacts on water quality and ecosystem and the options identified. At the meeting, the Mainland experts expressed their views on Working Paper No.2-"Option Comparison and Evaluation" and concluded that the working paper has fulfilled the requirements of the SSDS EIA Study. The line of thinking was clear, the methodology adopted was scientific and the work done by the Consultants was comprehensive. In particular,

- a) The criteria, data and information adopted were comprehensive and accurate, this includes the reference to international journal and materials, as well as past records and currently collected survey data;
- b) The option evaluation criteria adopted in the report, including the environmental, engineering economic and social factors, were complete; and

- c) The comparison of options had adopted strict procedures including the near-field and far-field modelling as well as multi-target decision-making methods. This provided a strong technical support in the evaluation and shortlisting of the options in a scientific manner.

9. Apart from the Working Paper No.2, the following reports have also been passed to the Mainland side as background information:

- a) Water Quality Modelling Results
- b) Working Paper No.5- Existing Environmental Conditions
- c) Working Paper No.7- Review of Interim Outfall Discharge
- d) Discussion Note No.7- Potential Impacts of SSDS on Cetaceans

10. On the option selection, the Mainland side considered that the option with CEPT plus disinfection and an outfall at East or West Lamma would be preferable. They recommended that the land at Lamma Quarry should be reserved for further upgrading. They also suggested that the Hong Kong Government should carry out additional surveys before the completion of SSDS Stage II to collect more information to aid the consideration of upgrading of treatment levels in future.

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