

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2508/03-04
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/EA/1

Panel on Environmental Affairs

**Minutes of special meeting held on
Wednesday, 7 July 2004, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon CHOY So-yuk (Chairman)
Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming, SC, JP
Hon WONG Yung-kan, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS, JP
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Dr Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP
Hon LAU Ping-cheung, SBS
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
- Public officers attending** : Environment, Transport and Works Bureau

Mr Keith KWOK, JP
Permanent Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment)

Ms Doris CHEUNG
Deputy Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment) 1

Mr Raistlin LAU
Principal Assistant Secretary for Environment, Transport
and Works (Environment) 1

Environmental Protection Department

Mr Benny WONG
Assistant Director (Waste and Wastewater)

Drainage Services Department

Mr W W CHUI
Chief Engineer (HATS)

Former International Review Panel

Dr Albert KOENIG
Member

Attendance by invitation : Friends of the Earth (HK)

Mrs Mei NG
Director

Conservancy Association

Ms Lister CHEUNG
Chief Executive

World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong

Mr Clarus CHU
Assistant Conservation Officer

Hong Kong Marine Conservation Society

Dr John WONG
Chairman

Clerk in attendance : Miss Becky YU
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

Staff in attendance : Mrs Mary TANG
Senior Council Secretary (1)2

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant 4

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I. Way forward for the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS) Stage 2/Findings of the trials and studies relating to HATS Stage 2

The Chairman welcomed the green groups to the meeting and invited them to give their views.

Meeting with Friends of the Earth (HK)

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 2278/03-04(01) — Submission from Friends of the Earth (HK) (FoE) (English version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2318/03-04(01) — Administration's response to LC Paper No. CB(1) 2278/03-04(01))

2. Mrs Mei NG expressed disappointment at the consultation arrangements. She pointed out that the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE), being Government's think-tank on matters relating to the environment, had not been consulted on the way forward for HATS Stage 2. The local and international experts who were appointed to review the treatment options were also not invited to give views on the way forward. The Consultation Document on HATS Stage 2 had neither made reference to the contractual disputes relating to the former Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme (SSDS) nor the cost associated with sludge management. It was only upon FOE's query that the Administration subsequently revealed that the high cost was associated with sludge disposal and incineration. She questioned why the need for additional incineration facilities had not been set out in the Consultation Document. She further expressed dissatisfaction at the late reply from the Administration to FOE's submission dated 28 June 2004 which was received minutes before she left for the meeting today.

3. Referring to the proposed treatment options, Mrs NG expressed concern about the effect of chlorination for disinfection on the marine environment. She said that if chlorination could be used without causing unacceptable environmental damage, it should have been applied in the first place such that the pollution of Tsuen Wan beaches could have been prevented. Despite the Administration's assertion that the operational risk could be adequately contained through good practices, provisions of standby units and spare parts etc, she questioned the efficacy of these measures and the costs incurred. She was also concerned about the pollution associated with the incineration of large amounts of sludge, which was expected to quadruplicate to about 2 400 tonnes per day when HATS Stage 2B was fully commissioned. Given the high quantities of ferric chloride and chlorine in the sludge, she queried whether incineration should be the only option. She then sought explanation on the dissolution of the International Review Panel (IRP) in December 2003 and questioned if this had anything to do with the conflict of opinions among the different members. She asked if consideration could be given to the re-appointment of IRP so that it could contribute to the environmental impact assessments (EIA) and feasibility studies on HATS Stage 2.

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Meeting with Conservancy Association

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 2318/03-04(02) — Submission from Conservancy Association (CA) (English version only))

4. Ms Lister CHEUNG took members through CA's submission by highlighting its views on the level of treatment, centralized treatment, design flow, phasing, institutional changes, and public participation in decision-making.

Meeting with World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 2318/03-04(03) — Submission from World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong (WWF) (English version only))

5. Mr Clarus CHU said that while WWF supported the polluter-pays principle, it believed that the ultimate goals would be for the community to reduce the production of sewage and to preserve freshwater resources, particularly having regard to the competition of scarce freshwater resources as a result of rapid development of cities in the Guangdong Province. He also cautioned that the lack of a definite timeframe in the Consultation Document for the construction of biological treatment plant in HATS Stage 2B would bring into question Government's commitment in further improving the water quality of the Harbour. Without a definite timetable, HATS would be no different from the former SSDS except for a shorter outfall. Therefore, WWF would urge Government to swiftly set a timetable for HATS Stage 2B.

Meeting with Hong Kong Marine Conservation Society

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 2389/03-04(01) — Submission from Hong Kong Marine Conservation Society (HKMCS) (English version only))

6. Dr John WONG said that HKMCS had been following the subject since the former SSDS was proposed in 1989 and had exchanged views with IRP on the treatment options. He acknowledged the Administration's efforts in improving the water quality of the Harbour which was evidenced by the increase in diversity of marine organisms after the implementation of HATS Stage 1. It was expected that the situation would be further improved with the implementation of Stage 2. While indicating support for the more cost-effective centralized treatment option at Stonecutters Island, he suggested that treatment by biofilters combined with artificial reef involving the use of mollusks could be adopted to remove the remaining 10% suspended solids. Such treatment method had already been proven in Marine Parks and fish culture zones of the Hong Kong eastern waters where the Biological Oxygen Demand was found to have increased while the level of *E Coli* had decreased. He hoped that the Administration would consider applying biofilters in the vicinity of Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works (SCISTW) as this would be less expensive than the treatment options in Stage 2A and would obviate the need for chlorination. As for sludge management, he said that incineration could be a possible option since incinerators with zero emission were now available. To avoid the

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recurrence of contractual disputes under Stage 1, consideration could be given to awarding lump sum contracts. With the upgraded treatment of effluent, he would look forward to the restoration of fisheries and the resumption of the annual cross-harbour swimming races which had been suspended since the 1970s.

Meeting with the Administration

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| (LC Paper No. CB(1) 2215/03-04(05) | — Updated background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat |
| LC Paper No. CB(1) 2215/03-04(06) | — Way Forward for the HATS Stage 2 |
| LC Paper No. CB(1) 2215/03-04(07) | — Findings of Trials and Studies Relating to the HATS Stage 2 |
| LC Paper No. CB(1) 2215/03-04(08) | — Consultation document for the HATS Stage 2 |
| LC Paper No. CB(1) 2278/03-04(02) | — Power-point presentation materials provided by the Administration (Chinese version only) |
| LC Paper No. CB(1) 2318/03-04(04) | — List of follow-up actions arising from the discussion at the meeting on 28 June 2004 |
| LC Paper No. CB(1) 2318/03-04(05) | — Administration's response to LC Paper No. CB(1) 2318/03-04(04) |
| LC Paper No. CB(1) 2323/03-04(01) | — Reply from Prof Rudolf WU, member of the former International Review Panel) |

7. The Permanent Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) (PSETW(E)) apologized for the late response to the submissions from the green groups, adding that time was needed to prepare a more in-depth reply to the many issues raised. On consultation arrangements, he said that ACE, together with other relevant parties, were provided with a copy of the Consultation Document when it was released for public consultation on 21 June 2004. The Chairman of ACE was consulted on the need for a special meeting to discuss the subject who agreed that this could be included in the agenda for the ACE meeting to be held in July 2004. An information paper on "Review of project implementation issues of the HATS Stage 1" which set out the progress of contractual arbitration on the Stage 1 works as well as the recommended improvement measures was presented to the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works at its meeting on 29 June 2004. The Review concluded that the delay in Stage 1 works was due to forfeiture of original contracts and unforeseen ground conditions and was not related to flaws in structural design or implementation. After considering members' request at the last meeting on 28 June 2004, the Administration agreed to extend the consultation period for Stage 2 by one month from 20 October to 20 November 2004.

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8. The Deputy Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works (Environment)1 (DSETW(E)1) added that despite the contractual problems with HATS Stage 1, the Administration was able to complete SCISTW which had been operating effectively. With the removal of 80% of suspended solids, 70% of organic pollutants, and 50% of *E Coli* from the sewage generated, there were marked improvements in the water quality of the Harbour and SCISTW was recognized as one of the most effective sewage treatment works of its kind. Given that the trials and studies recommended by IRP had been completed, the Administration now proceeded to consult the public on the way forward for HATS Stage 2. It would collate the views gathered during the next five months and report to Members on the outcome of consultation. She added that the Consultation Document was meant to provide concise key information on the way forward. Detailed reports with comprehensive information on the results of the HATS trials and studies had been uploaded onto the Clean Harbour Website at <http://www.cleanharbour.gov.hk> for public information. Members of the public were also welcomed to approach the Administration for further details on the way forward for HATS Stage 2. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works (Environment)1 (PASETW(E)1) supplemented that during the next few months of public consultation, the Administration would be holding a series of fora and technical briefing sessions with a view to explaining and exchanging views on the results of the trials and studies and the way forward. It was hoped that academics and green groups would actively participate in these discussions and contribute their views on the subject.

9. The Chairman was disappointed that despite members' request at the last meeting for extension of the consultation period to allow more time for newly elected Members to familiarize with the subject and formulate their views, the Administration had only agreed to extend the period from 20 October to 20 November 2004. She considered it necessary for the Panel to follow up the subject at its first meeting in the new term of the Legislative Council (LegCo). Mr Martin LEE also agreed to the need to further extend the consultation period.

General discussion

10. On *timeframe for implementing HATS Stage 2B*, PSETW(E) advised that the Administration had given thoughts to implement Stages 2A and 2B in one go or by phases. As implementation of the two stages simultaneously would involve a huge financial commitment, additional land requirements and extensive studies, and having regard to the Director of Audit's concern about the deteriorating water quality of Tsuen Wan beaches, it was recommended that a phased approach should be adopted so that early improvements to the water quality could be made possible by Stage 2A. Nonetheless, during the implementation of Stage 2A, planning work for Stage 2B, such as EIAs, site investigations and land reservation as well as the use of biofilters as suggested by HKMCS to obviate the reliance on disinfection, would be carried out in parallel. It was envisaged that, with the implementation of Stage 2A, the water quality could be improved to such an extent which would allow for the reopening of Tsuen Wan beaches and resumption of the annual cross-harbour swimming races by 2008-09.

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11. The Chairman sought clarification from HKMCS on whether the the use of biofilters had been tested and its the scale of application. Dr John WONG/HKMCS said that he had participated in a study on biofilters carried out by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in 1992 at the fish culture zone in Kau Sai Chau. The findings indicated that biofilters had the effect of cleansing the water by increasing the levels of dissolved oxygen and reducing the level of *E Coli* and suspended solids. As a result, the fish culture zone was much cleaner than the surrounding waters and was inhabited by a wider variety of marine organisms. The waters around SCISTW would be ideal for trying out biofilters because the water flow was slower in the Western Harbour. The mollusks to be used as biofilters could be concentrated in an isolated region which would not interfere with navigation. The cost was minimal as the mollusk population would grow and multiply quickly. The biofilters could be tried out independently before the implementation of Stage 2A as they would also help in improving the water quality of the beaches in Tsuen Wan. The extent of improvements made to the quality of water would depend on the scale of application of biofilters. The Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Waste and Wastewater) (ADEP(WW)) said that so far, the studies on the sewage treatment options were based on treatment before discharge and not after discharge as recommended by HKMCS. Notwithstanding, reference would be made to the findings and studies undertaken by AFCD on biofilters.

12. On *treatment options*, PSETW(E) said that although the Administration had a clear preference for centralized treatment of all sewage at SCISTW under option A, the Consultation Document had set out the details of the remaining three options together with an evaluation on the performance of different options for public reference. As regard the concern about chlorination on the marine environment, PSETW(E) said that this could be dealt with through a process of dechlorination. Besides, the effect of residual ferric chloride from Chemically Enhanced Primary Treatment (CEPT) was minimal given that only a small amount was used. At present, the sludge generated from CEPT was disposed of at landfills. Feasibility studies would be undertaken on sludge management in the long term.

13. The Chairman expressed concern that the problem of thickening of the seabed as a result of deposition of coagulants arising from the use of ferric chloride in CEPT would be further aggravated by chlorination. ADEP(WW) explained that, judging from overseas experience, it would be unlikely that the use of ferric chloride would affect the seabed given the small amount used. Studies had also indicated that the level of iron in the surrounding waters was relatively low while the level of chloride had remained steady on account of the salinity of seawater.

14. Responding to the Chairman's concern that the use of sodium bisulphite in dechlorination would result in the reduction of dissolved oxygen in the receiving waters and would adversely affect the marine environment, Dr Albert KOENIG said that he was not informed of the chlorination process which was proposed after the dissolution of the Monitoring Group. Besides, the Consultation Document had only made reference to "disinfection" and the word "chlorination" had not been mentioned.

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He however pointed out that it was very unusual to use chlorination for such a large amount of sewage and he was not aware of any treatment plants in the world which had adopted this type of treatment. Although laboratory testing might be able to reveal the effect of chlorination on bacteria, it would be difficult to tell how the water would behave in nature, particularly when the potential growth of bacteria could be affected by the levels of organic oxygen demanding matter which were good food for bacteria. As the amount of chlorine to be added was not known, he could not comment on its effect. He further pointed out that while chlorine was used in water treatment, it was not common to use chlorine in wastewater treatment since at least 50 tonnes of chlorine would have to be applied per day to treat such a large amount of sewage. If the intention was to keep beaches open for bathing, then there might not be a need to apply chlorine for treatment the whole year round. Moreover, the chlorination facilities would be of no use if it was later decided that biological treatment was necessary.

15. The Chairman also drew members' attention to the submission from Professor Rudolf WU (LC Paper No. CB(1) 2323/03-04(01)) which stated that "the environmental risk of using chlorine as the disinfectant must be carefully assessed and quantified beforehand". In this connection, she queried why the Administration was confident that chlorination would not adversely affect the marine environment. ADEP(WW) said that the proposed use of disinfectant in the treatment process was meant to protect the Tsuen Wan beaches and to improve the water quality of the Harbour to an extent which would allow for the resumption of annual cross-harbour swimming races. As large-scale disinfection was a complicated process, this would have to be implemented with great care. Chlorination was only one of the many feasible disinfection options and the Administration had yet to make a final decision subject to the outcome of further feasibility studies and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs) to be conducted taking into account Hong Kong's unique environmental conditions. In the event that chlorination were to be adopted, the amount of sodium bisulphite to be used in the dechlorination process would have to be carefully adjusted based on the accurate measurements of residual chlorine in the treated effluent in order not to affect the level of dissolved oxygen in the receiving waters. The Administration was confident that it could be able to adjust the level of chlorination and dechlorination to achieve optimal results.

16. Apart from unforeseen ground conditions which caused problems to Stage 1 works, Mr WONG Yung-kan was also concerned about the impact of disinfection and discharge of effluent on the marine environment, particularly the cumulative effects on the marine ecology. He further pointed out that the reclamation works at harbour front might also affect the hydraulic movements as well as the depth of water at the Harbour, as in the case of the Tolo Harbour. In response, PSETW(E) said that measures would be taken to reduce the risks associated with unforeseen ground conditions, and that dechlorination would be applied to neutralize the effects of chlorination. ADEP(WW) added that EIA studies on Stage 2 had taken into account the impact on marine environment arising from changes in shoreline, details of which were available at the Clean Harbour Website.

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17. Ms Lister CHEUNG/CA expressed concern about the risks associated with the failure of the treatment process. In the absence of storage facilities for the sewage, treatment would have to be bypassed in the event of plant failure. As a result, the untreated sewage would have to be discharged into the Harbour, resulting in adverse impact on the marine environment. She considered it necessary for the Administration to explain more clearly about the impact of centralized treatment on the receiving waters given the high pollution load. The decision on centralized or decentralized treatment would hinge on whether and how long the ecology would recover after untreated sewage was discharged into the receiving waters. Through the chair, ADEP(WW) advised that operational risk assessment was conducted on the four different treatment options. For centralized treatment on such a large scale, there would be a series of facilities operating in parallel. A number of standby facilities would also be made available to cater for any breakdown. There were a total of three pumping stations to convey the sewage to SCISTW and only in the unlikely event that all three had broken down would treatment be bypassed. As the amount of sewage to be treated at SCISTW was expected to increase from 1.4 million tonnes to 2.8 million tonnes as a result of population growth, there was a need to proceed with Stage 2A as soon as practicable to provide the additional facilities for enhanced treatment. The impact of treatment on the surrounding environment had been carefully assessed with the use of computer models and the results had been set out in the report on the trials and studies on HATS Stage 2.

18. Dr David CHU enquired if a mechanism was put in place to adjust the timing of the discharge to tie in with the flow of tide to ensure maximum dispersal effects, and if so, whether storage facilities were available. Given the large amount of sewage generated by over six million people per day, ADEP(WW) said that it would not be possible to provide storage for treated effluent for timely release to the Harbour. For the past two years, computer models had been used to simulate tidal movements under different conditions and studies had been carried out to ensure that the effluent discharged at any time of the day would not cause unacceptable damages to the marine environment.

19. On *sludge management*, the Chairman was disappointed that the Consultation Document had failed to provide information in this aspect despite that the Administration had spent almost four years in deciding on the way forward for HATS Stage 2 and in preparing the consultation. Given that sea water was used for flushing in Hong Kong, she was concerned about the pollution associated with dioxin generated as a result of incineration of a large amount of sludge with a high chloride content. She enquired if the Administration had made reference to overseas experience, which according to her understanding was rare as most countries used fresh water for flushing, and if so, whether this was set out in the report on trials and studies of HATS Stage 2. ADEP(WW) said that in devising the strategy on sludge treatment, a number of options, including incineration and dehydration, had been considered. The fact that the sludge generated would have a high chloride content as a result of the use of seawater for flushing had been taken into account. Unlike organic chloride which would produce dioxin when incinerated, inorganic chloride from sewage treatment

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process would unlikely produce dioxin when incinerated. It was worth to note that even if dioxin was generated in the process, the latest advancement in incineration technology was able to have it removed. Therefore, the use of incineration for sludge treatment was considered acceptable and sustainable from the environmental point of view. As sludge treatment would be required regardless of the type of sewage treatment, this was not set out in the Consultation Document. He assured members that there would be further public consultation after a long-term strategy on sludge treatment had been worked out.

20. Ms Lister CHEUNG/CA opined that it seemed that the Administration had decided that the sludge generated from the treatment process would either be incinerated or disposed of at landfills. However, the present Chemical Waste Treatment Centre at Tsing Yi did not have the capacity to deal with such a large amount of sludge and there had been no plans for a purpose-built incinerator for the treatment of sludge. Neither would there be enough landfill space to allow for the disposal of sludge as the expansion of landfills was not meant to cater for such a purpose. In fact, sludge generated from the treatment process was not included in the solid waste management policy. Through the chair, PASETW(E)1 said that feasibility studies would be conducted on sludge management and the option of incineration would be actively considered.

21. On *costs*, Mr LAU Kong-wah held the view that public acceptance of HATS Stage 2 would very much hinge on the cost incurred. While the construction cost and operating cost for Stage 1 amounted to \$8.3 billion and \$0.3 billion respectively, it appeared that Stage 1 was essential to improve the water quality of the Harbour. However, it seemed that this was not the case for Stage 2 since according to the Consultation Document, the completion of Stage 2 would result in, among others, the re-opening of Tsuen Wan beaches and the resumption of annual cross-harbour races. Given that the re-opening of beaches could be achieved through disinfection without going through the Stage 2 process, it was unlikely that the public would be willing to pay the high construction cost of \$20 billion and operating cost of \$1.4 billion for Stage 2 for the sake of resumption of annual cross-harbour swimming races. Besides, the current sewage charge would have to be increased by at least four-folds if Stage 2 were to be implemented.

22. PSETW(E) clarified that HATS Stage 1 only provided treatment to 75% of the sewage, the remaining sewage generated from the northern and western sides of Hong Kong was discharged virtually untreated into the harbour for the moment. As such, Stage 2A was urgently required to provide the additional facilities to convey all sewage to SCISTW for chemical treatment and disinfection. As regards costs, PSETW(E) said that since Stage 2 would take a long time to complete, an increase in sewage charges arising from the construction of Stage 2 would not be an imminent matter for the near future. It was worth noting that in accordance with the polluter pays principle, Government should not be subsidizing polluters. Notwithstanding, a separate consultation exercise on sewage charges would be carried out in due course. Mr LAU Kong-wah stressed the need for the public to be apprised of the cost

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implications of the treatment options and the resultant increase in sewage charges which had not been set out in the Consultation Document. He therefore requested that such information be provided during the consultation period so that the newly elected Members could be able to follow up the issue in the new LegCo session.

23. On *re-appointment of IRP*, Mr LAU Kong-wah said that as a member of the Public Accounts Committee, he was aware of the many criticisms made by the Director of Audit on the lack of professionalism and maladministration in the implementation of Stage 1 works. By way of illustration, the Administration had failed to conduct EIA on the surrounding waters. As a result, the Tsuen Wan beaches were heavily polluted and had to be closed. With the investment of \$20 billion for Stage 2, every care should be taken to prevent the recurrence of similar problems encountered in Stage 1. Therefore, Members would need to be apprised of the progress of works and be alerted on possible failures. Since no definite answer had been given in Administration's reply to FOE's concern about the monitoring of the progress of HATS Stage 2, he requested for the re-appointment of IRP to oversee HATS Stage 2 and to provide progress reports to LegCo on a regular basis. Dr David CHU concurred that the work of the HATS Monitoring Group had not been completed and its services should be retained. The Chairman shared the need for a new IRP comprising both green groups and experts to oversee the consultation and implementation of projects.

24. PSETW(E) said that although Stage 1 was delayed for a period of four and a half years (three of which related to contractual disputes while the remainder to technical problems), the lessons learnt would be of use in implementing Stage 2. As both IRP and the HATS Monitoring Group had completed their tasks of advising and evaluating the treatment options and the direction of the trials and studies of HATS Stage 2 respectively, the re-appointment of IRP was no longer necessary. The Administration would closely monitor the implementation of Stage 2 and provide progress reports to Members regularly. However, as these progress reports were of a technical nature, they would unlikely be of public interest.

25. In response to the Chairman, Dr Albert KOENIG said that the appointment of the former IRP was not extended beyond April 2001 while the HATS Monitoring Group was disbanded in December 2003. As the report on the findings of the trials and studies was completed in June 2004, some of the information contained in the report were not known to the Monitoring Group. As regards the need for re-appointment of IRP, Dr KOENIG said that this would depend on its terms of reference. IRP would not be of much use if it did not have the power to make changes. For a project of the scale of HATS Stage 2, it would be necessary to have input from the public. According to the Administration's timetable, Stage 2A would be completed in 2013 if everything went well. Subject to water quality monitoring results and population build-up, Stage 2B was expected to be implemented in 2018 for completion in 2025 and it would be way too long for results to be monitored by him or IRP.

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26. PASETW(E)1 explained that IRP was appointed in 2000 to review the then SSDS. It had put forward four treatment options and recommended the Government to study their technical and financial feasibility in detail. The Administration accepted the recommendations and applied to the Finance Committee for funding of \$73.6 million to conduct trial and studies on the options accordingly. With the completion of task, IRP was dissolved in April 2001. A HATS Monitoring Group comprising the three local experts of IRP, namely Professor Rudolf WU, Dr Albert KOENIG and Dr Leonard CHENG, was then formed to advise Government on the direction of the trials and studies. Thanks to the contribution from the Monitoring Group, the trials and studies were implemented smoothly. The services of HATS Monitoring Group were maintained until December 2003 when most of the trials and studies were completed. It was originally intended that consultation would commence around March 2004 but owing to the need to prepare for publicity materials and programme, the Consultation Document was finally released in June 2004. However, the recommendations contained in the Consultation Document were basically the same as those submitted to the Monitoring Group in December 2003, except for minor changes to enhance the level of treatment. The Chairman requested and the Administration agreed to provide for members' reference the minutes of meetings of the HATS Monitoring Group.

(Post meeting note: Copies of the minutes of meeting of the HATS Monitoring Group were circulated vide LC Paper No. CB(1) 2460/03-04 on 2 August 2004.)

II. Any other business

27. Since this was the last Panel meeting in the current LegCo term, the Chairman thanked members of the Panel, the Administration and green groups for their efforts in promoting environmental protection in the past and called for their continued support in the future.

28. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:55 pm.