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Environmental impacts arising from the proposed construction of a Liquefied Natural Gas Receiving Terminal by the CLP Holdings at Sokos Island

Submission to the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs

It would be wrong for Exxon/CLP to be permitted to build an LNG terminal on the Soko Islands, for reasons including:

- The Soko Islands form a cluster of highly attractive, unspoiled islands: there are few such island clusters in Hong Kong, and even along the China coast it is surely hard to find such an unspoiled mini archipelago. The islands have ecological and scenic value, and potential for nature tourism (with tourists from Hong Kong, mainland China, and overseas). They should be regarded as precious, including within a regional context, and could benefit Hong Kong in far more ways than simply being used for a LNG terminal: tourism and fisheries being among the potential benefits.
- The terminal will be an eyesore. It will massively detract from the Sokos' attractiveness to people, and wildlife. The terminal will pump out substantial amounts of chilled, [chlorinated] water, which will annually kill marine life including thousands or hundreds of thousands of fish: negatively impacting biodiversity, as well as local fisheries.
- Burning gas rather than coal will not make a massive impact on Hong Kong's air quality. It is possible to burn even coal far more cleanly than at present. Hence, it is a "red herring" to suggest – as CLP/Exxon have done – that we must rush ahead with the project if we are to improve our air quality. The LNG terminal will harm the Sokos, yet – without other more important measures – we will not benefit from better air in Hong Kong.
- Yes, burning gas can be part of a mix of measures that can help reduce our severe air pollution. There are, however, other sources: such as by piping the gas from nearby China; or by transforming LNG to gas on board specially designed vessels – an option chosen in the UK, where plans for an LNG terminal at Teesside were abandoned.

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