



Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society
香港海豚保育學會

May 14, 2011

Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Meeting on 17 May 2011

Dear Panel Chair,

HKDCS's Submission on Views of Ex-gratia Allowance for Trawler Owners, Voluntary Buying Out of Trawler Vessels and One-off Grants to Local Deckhands Affected by the Trawl Ban

Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society is a local charitable organization and is the only society dedicated to the conservation of whales, dolphins and porpoises of Hong Kong through scientific research and educating the public. Our society fully supports Hong Kong Government's plan for granting ex-gratia allowance for trawler owners, voluntary buying out of trawler vessels and one-off grants to local deckhands that are affected by the trawl ban. It is our strong belief that the trawl ban will be a positive step to restore our once-vibrant marine environment, and send an important message to local community and overseas that Hong Kong government is making affirmative effort to achieve sustainable use of our natural resources. The local Chinese white dolphins and finless porpoises that we have been studying in the past decade will certainly be benefited as well from the trawl ban, which will eliminate non-selective trawling activities in Hong Kong and restore our fisheries resources.

Our society is fully aware of the intricate issues of compensating the affected fishermen for the loss of their fishing right in relation to the trawl ban and other fisheries management measures. We consider that the currently proposed scheme by the Food and Health Bureau for granting ex-gratia allowance, offering voluntary buying out programme and one-off grants to fishermen, trawler owners and local deckhand that are affected by the trawl ban is reasonable and sound. The compensation measures also appropriately strike a balance between the livelihood of affected fishermen and the proper use of our public resource in Hong Kong. We believe that most Hong Kong people will support such conservation effort by the Hong Kong Government to protect our marine environment, and the current scheme will



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meet the general public interest and expectation.

Therefore, it is our sincere hope that this proposed scheme of ex-gratia allowance for trawler owners, voluntary buying out of trawler vessels and one-off grant to local deckhands affected by the trawl ban will receive approval by the Legislative Council as soon as possible, in order to effectively implement the trawl ban in Hong Kong in the very near future. This will be the first important step to revive and conserve our marine environment and the habitats of many precious marine creatures including the Chinese white dolphins and finless porpoises.

Regards,
Samuel K. Hung, Ph.D.
Chairman, Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society