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Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Environmental Affairs

**Minutes of joint meeting
held on Friday, 30 November 2012, at 9:00 am
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Members of the Panel on Home Affairs

- Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP (Chairman)
- * Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok (Deputy Chairman)
- Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
- # Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
- Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP
- Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
- Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
- * Hon Steven HO Chun-yin
- Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
- * Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
- Hon YIU Si-wing
- Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
- * Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
- Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
- ^ Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
- * Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members of the Panel on Environmental Affairs

Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon Charles Peter MOK
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Hon Dennis KWOK

Member attending : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung

Members absent : Members of the Panel on Home Affairs

Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Hon Claudia MO
Hon IP Kin-yuen

Members of the Panel on Environmental Affairs

Hon CHAN Han-pan
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

- (# Also Chairman of the Panel on Environmental Affairs)
- (^ Also Deputy Chairman of the Panel on Environmental Affairs)
- (* Also members of the Panel on Environmental Affairs)

Public Officers attending : Item II

Mr TSANG Tak-sing, GBS, JP
Secretary for Home Affairs

Mr Jonathan McKinley, JP
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (2)

Mrs Betty FUNG
Director of Leisure and Cultural Services
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr Robin LEE
Deputy Head of Civil Engineering Office (Port and Land)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Ms Christine LOH
Under Secretary for the Environment

Mr TANG Kin-fai, JP
Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)
Environmental Protection Department

Mr CHENG Hung-leung
Assistant Director/Projects and Development
Drainage Services Department

Mr CHOW Wing-kuen
Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Dr MAK Yiu-ming
Marine Conservation Officer (E)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Alice LEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (2) 2

Staff in attendance : Ms Miranda HON
Chief Council Secretary (1) 1

Mrs Mary TANG
Senior Council Secretary (1) 1

Miss Josephine SO
Senior Council Secretary (2) 2

Miss Jasmine TAM
Council Secretary (2) 2

Miss Emma CHEUNG
Legislative Assistant (2) 2

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I. Election of Chairman

Mr MA Fung-kwok, Chairman of the Panel on Home Affairs ("HA Panel"), was elected Chairman of the joint meeting.

II. Provision of a public beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po

(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)132/12-13(01), CB(1)149/12-13(01), CB(1)204/12-13(01), CB(1)215/12-13(01), CB(2)264/12-13, FS16/12-13 and CB(1)232/12-13(01))

2. With the aid of powerpoint presentation, representatives of the

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Administration briefed members on the background to the decision of building a public bathing beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po ("the Lung Mei Beach works project") as well as the Administration's responses to recent concerns raised over the project, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)215/12-13(01)).

(Post-meeting note: The softcopy of the powerpoint presentation material was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)289/12-13 on 30 November 2012.)

Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") of the Lung Mei Beach works project

3. Mr IP Kwok-him and Dr LAM Tai-fai said that to their knowledge, the Tai Po District Council ("TPDC") proposed the construction of a beach at Lung Mei in 2000 and had discussed the matter at various meetings of TPDC. The works project had also been discussed by the HA Panel of the Fourth Legislative Council ("LegCo") and supported by the Sha Tin and North District Councils. Noting the recent queries raised by some environmental concern groups over the findings of the EIA report of the Lung Mei Beach works project, which had already endorsed by the Advisory Council on the Environment ("ACE") in 2008, they asked about the details of the EIA study and whether the Administration had explained to those environmental concern groups the findings and mitigation measures to be put in place, so as to allay their concerns about the potential impact of the project on the environment. They hoped that the Administration would strive for the early implementation of the public beach at Lung Mei.

4. Expressing concern about the possible impact of the construction works on spotted seahorses that had been found recently at Lung Mei, Dr Fernando CHEUNG strongly requested the Administration to take heed of and address public concerns over the ecological value of Lung Mei.

5. Mr Gary FAN, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen and Dr Helena WONG said that many experts and environmental concern groups had criticized that the EIA report as a whole was incomplete, if not misleading or false in some areas. Given the serious doubts about the accuracy and credibility of the EIA report and information contained in the ecological surveys conducted by the consultant commissioned by the Civil Engineering and Development Department ("CEDD"), they asked whether the Administration would consider putting on hold the Lung Mei Beach works project and if not, how it would respond to the criticisms of concerns groups and relevant stakeholders.

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6. In response, Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment), Environmental Protection Department ("AD(EA)/EPD") and Assistant Director (Country and Marine Parks), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department ("AD(CMP)/AFCD") made the following points -

- (a) the Lung Mei Beach works project had undergone years of planning before its scrutiny and approval by ACE, the Town Planning Board ("TPB"), the Chief Executive-in-Council and LegCo;
- (b) in taking forward the proposed project, the project proponent and the responsible works department, namely, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") and CEDD respectively, had complied with all relevant statutory procedures including the requirements to conduct consultations, EIA studies and research works;
- (c) EIA for the works project at Lung Mei was conducted in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) ("EIAO"). CEDD submitted to ACE the EIA report for the project in January 2008, together with a comprehensive ecological study conducted in the areas of Tolo Harbour, including Lung Mei. The findings of the ecological study revealed that Lung Mei was not a place of a particularly high ecological value in comparison with other areas studied;
- (d) taking into account the recommendations of ACE, CEDD conducted additional ecological surveys and consulted ACE again in November 2008. ACE subsequently endorsed the relevant EIA report together with additional information on ecological surveys subject to certain conditions, among which the project scale had to be reduced and the beach design revised in order to minimize the potential ecological impact;
- (e) having regard to the views and concerns received during the consultation process, the Government undertook to adopt mitigation measures during construction to minimize the impact that the project might cause to the environment;
- (f) in April 2010, the project was issued with an Environmental Permit ("EP") by the Director of Environmental Protection ("DEP");

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- (g) the Government was aware of the concerns recently expressed by the public and some environmental concern groups about the potential impact on marine ecology, including the possible impact of the construction works on spotted seahorses that had been found at Lung Mei; and
- (h) according to the annual Reef Check, organized by AFCD and Reef Check Foundation Hong Kong, a total of 103 spotted seahorses were recorded in Hong Kong waters from 2001 to 2012 in various sites including Yan Chau Tong, Hoi Ha Wan, Kat O, Sharp Island, Ninepin, Tung Ping Chau, Port Island and Bluff Island. According to AFCD's records, spotted seahorses in 2012 had mainly been found in the north eastern waters of Hong Kong, in locations such as Hoi Ha Wan and Tai Mei Tuk of Tolo Harbour. No seahorses were recorded in the ecological surveys at Lung Mei under the consultancy study commissioned by CEDD. As the habitats of spotted seahorses were generally confined to bays with seaweed and coral, it was believed that the waters of Lung Mei were not a major spawning and nursery ground for this creature. The Administration would continue to liaise with the environmental groups concerned to ensure that the issues raised in recent months were followed up and addressed.

7. In response to Mr Gary FAN's and Mr Tony TSE's enquiries as to why CEDD had not commissioned another consultant to conduct the additional ecological surveys, Deputy Head of Civil Engineering Office (Port and Land), Civil Engineering and Development Department ("DH(P&L)/CEDD") explained that the scope of EIA included conducting detailed ecological surveys. The additional ecological surveys were conducted in the process of consulting ACE on the relevant EIA report and upon the requests of ACE for provision of supplementary information and design of ecological mitigation measures. As this was a follow-up to previous studies/surveys submitted to ACE for its further consideration, the additional marine ecological surveys were conducted by the same consultant.

8. Mr Dennis KWOK asked when the Administration would respond to the issues raised in his letter dated 19 November 2012 addressed to the Secretary for the Environment ("SEN") concerning the Lung Mei Beach works project. AD(EA)/EPD replied that in view of the possible legal issues involved and the queries raised on the credibility of the EIA report endorsed by ACE in 2008, the Administration was examining the issues and seeking legal advice from the Department of Justice ("DoJ"). The Administration would therefore need more time to prepare a response.

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9. Mr Dennis KWOK specifically asked whether SEN would consider, in conjunction with DEP, exercising the powers under section 14 of EIAO to vary or amend EP for the works project under discussion and to impose additional conditions on the permit, as suggested in his letter to SEN, to ensure the formulation of further ecological protection plans for Lung Mei.

10. Under Secretary for the Environment ("USEN") replied that other than Mr Dennis KWOK's letter, the Administration had also received submissions from a number of concern groups suggesting alternative proposals, including the replacement of the bathing beach at Lung Mei with an "eco-pool", suspension or cancellation of the relevant EP. As these proposals involved complicated and important technical and legal issues, the Administration would need some time to carefully consider the legal implications of the issues before coming up with a response.

11. Mr Albert CHAN stressed that the crux of the problem lay in the credibility of the EIA report endorsed by ACE in 2008. In his view, the Administration should conduct a new EIA, so as to ascertain more accurately the ecological value of Lung Mei and the extent of damage to be caused by the construction works to the ecological environment. The new EIA report should be submitted to ACE and the authorities concerned for fresh consideration and decision.

12. Secretary for Home Affairs ("SHA"), USEN and AD(EA)/EPD reiterated that the consultations, studies and research works on the Lung Mei Beach works project were conducted according to established procedures. With the endorsement of the relevant EIA report by ACE in 2008, the Government would proceed with the works project as planned. While there were calls in recent months from some environmental concern groups for the suspension or cancellation of the relevant EP, the policy bureaux and departments concerned would continue their dialogue with these groups to address their concerns.

13. In reply to Ms Cyd HO's and Mr Christopher CHUNG's enquiries about the ecological value of Lung Mei, DH(P&L)/CEDD and AD(CMP)/AFCD said that to assess the ecological status of the habitat of Lung Mei, the Administration had conducted a comprehensive ecological study in 2008 in the areas of Tolo Harbour, including Lung Mei. In the process of consulting ACE on the relevant EIA report, a number of additional ecological surveys were conducted, including active searches and quantitative surveys into the type and number of organisms living in areas around Tolo Harbour, which covered Ting Kok East, Shuen Wan, Wu Chau, Yung Shue O North and Lai Chi Chong. The findings revealed that the three fish species of conservation importance in Lung Mei were also found in the other five sites.

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Furthermore, the total number of species in Lung Mei was not high among the places studied and no benthic organisms were found spawning around Lung Mei. The EIA report thus concluded that Lung Mei was not a place of high ecological value in comparison with the places studied.

14. Mr Christopher CHUNG considered that the development of a 200-metre long Lung Mei Beach along the three-km long Ting Kok coastline was a way of conservation for Lung Mei. According to his understanding, the construction of the Plover Cove Reservoir in Tai Po had turned the natural beach at Lung Mei before the 1940's into a muddy swamp.

15. Marine Conservation Officer (E), AFCD ("MCO/AFCD") responded that during the construction of the Plover Cove Reservoir, there had been dumping of dredged sediment/materials in the surrounding waters of Lung Mei. The habitat of organisms or marine animal originally living by the shore of Lung Mei might have changed as a result.

16. Mr Tony TSE noted the criticisms of some environmental concern groups that there was a deliberate omission of important information in the EIA report on the existence of several marine species, which were rarely found in Hong Kong, along the intertidal zone of Lung Mei as well as the number of such species found in the intertidal zone, which in their view might affect the conclusion of the assessment. He enquired whether this was the case.

17. USEN responded that as some concern groups had indicated that they would apply for judicial review of the EIA report, the Administration, as advised by DoJ, could not disclose further details at this stage so as to avoid prejudicing the Government's position in any subsequent legal proceedings.

18. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed worries that the Lung Mei Beach works project would be delayed if the relevant EIA report was challenged by judicial review in which case considerable amount of public resources would be involved. He asked how the Administration would resolve the problem to ensure the early implementation of the public beach project at Lung Mei.

19. SHA responded that -

- (a) the Lung Mei Beach project was a planned leisure services project of the former Municipal Councils proposed by TPDC. In 2000, TPDC formally proposed to the Administration the development of a public bathing beach at Lung Mei. In January 2005, the project was included in a list of projects recommended for priority implementation in the then Chief Executive's Policy

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Address. Since then, TPDC had strongly and repeatedly requested the early construction of the beach for the enjoyment of local residents and visitors;

- (b) the project had received cross-party support in TPDC, and had also been supported by the Sha Tin and North District Councils. It had gone through years of planning and consultation before the scrutiny and approval by ACE, TPB, the Chief Executive-in-Council and LegCo;
- (c) regarding the recent controversies over related environmental protection issues, the Government noted the concerns of green groups. In line with the principle of "people-based governance" and in response to the views expressed by the green groups and various individuals, the relevant departments had rigorously reviewed the vetting process for the Lung Mei Beach project, and had repeatedly discussed the relevant views including those concerning the ecology and water quality of Lung Mei; and
- (d) the Government believed that development and conservation could go hand-in-hand and achieve a win-win solution. In this connection, it had proposed the initiatives to preserve the ecological environment of the Ting Kok coastline whilst going ahead with the Lung Mei Beach project.

Need for developing a bathing beach at Lung Mei

20. Mr WU Chi-wai questioned the need for developing an artificial bathing beach in Tai Po through sand filling along the shoreline of Lung Mei. He said that the local demand for a public beach facility allowing people to swim and also to sunbathe could be met through other means. He considered that the existing coastline of Lung Mei had already made the area a leisure place suitable for swimming and sunbathing.

21. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services advised that the land at Lung Mei was not large enough for the development of a public swimming pool of a reasonable size as well as the necessary parking and ancillary facilities. To ensure the safety of beach users, it was necessary to carry out sand filling works on the shoreline of Lung Mei to turn the rocky swamp into a proper bathing beach. She stressed that the Lung Mei Beach project was launched in response to the recommendation of TPDC to meet the needs of local residents. At its meeting on 1 November 2012, TPDC had considered alternatives proposed by some concern groups, including the proposal to develop an "eco-pool". The proposal, however, did not receive support from members of

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TPDC. TPDC reaffirmed its request for a public beach at Lung Mei rather than an "eco-pool".

22. In response to Mr WU Chi-wai's enquiry about the Administration's stance over ecological conservation, SHA advised that the Government believed that development and conservation could go hand-in-hand. Construction of the Lung Mei Beach and the simultaneous launch of the Ting Kok Coastal Conservation Plan to enhance conservation of the coastline was a win-win solution to meet local demands and promote community development, whilst also protecting the ecology of this area in the long term.

23. Mr YIU Si-wing expressed support for the construction of a public beach at Lung Mei to meet the needs of residents of the New Territories East region. He pointed out that Tai Mei Tuk had long been a popular venue for cycling and water sports. The future beach would complement existing tourist spots/amenity facilities in the area and provide more recreational options for both residents and visitors. Noting that other developments, including a resort hotel, were also planned in the vicinity, he expressed concern about the potential ecological and environmental impacts of developing a beach at Lung Mei. He urged the Administration to take forward the project with good planning.

24. Assistant Director/Projects and Development, Drainage Services Department and DH(P&L)/CEDD responded that -

- (a) to improve the water quality at Lung Mei, the Administration was providing sewerage system for dwellings in Lung Mei and its vicinity, including the four villages of Lo Tsz Tin, Lung Mei, Wong Chuk Tsuen and Tai Mei Tuk, and the works would largely be completed in 2013; and
- (b) an independent environmental checker would be engaged to check, review, verify and validate the overall environmental performance of the project, including the implementation of all the environmental protection and mitigation measures. The relevant departments would conduct surveillance and assessment in the peripheral areas during and after the implementation of the project.

Water quality of Lung Mei

25. Dr Kenneth CHAN was concerned whether the construction of a beach would lead to an increase in the levels of heavy metals and other contaminants in the waters of Lung Mei. He enquired about the measures to

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be taken by the Administration to ensure that the water quality could meet the safety requirements and would not pose danger to beach users.

26. Dr Fernando CHEUNG noted from media reports and studies conducted by a scholar of the University of Hong Kong that the present water quality of Lung Mei was poor and unsuitable for swimming. He and Ms Cyd HO were concerned about the measures to be adopted by the Administration to ensure that the water quality of Lung Mei would be improved and reach a state suitable for swimming. Sharing a similar concern, Mr CHAN Chi-chuen queried whether the poor water quality of the future beach would make it unsuitable for swimming, necessitating the closure of the beach most of the time after its opening in 2015.

27. Mr Steven HO also raised concern about the impact of the proposed development in Lung Mei on the marine ecology and fisheries resources in the surrounding waters.

28. In response, DH(P&L)/CEDD advised that the EIA report of the Lung Mei project included an assessment on whether or not the construction of a beach would lead to an increase in the levels of heavy metals and other contaminants, including tributyltin. Samples from different locations in the beach area had been collected and elutriate tests carried out. The results indicated that dredged sediment at the proposed project site should not cause unacceptable levels of contaminant release to the surrounding waters. As regards the marine ecological mitigation work, CEDD had undertaken to implement mitigation measures during construction with a view to minimizing the impact on the marine ecology. To this end, an independent environmental checker would be engaged to regularly monitor and audit the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures. The relevant departments, i.e. EDP and AFCD, would also conduct surveillance and assessment in the peripheral areas during and after the implementation of the project.

29. AD(EA)/EPD reiterated that to improve the water quality at Lung Mei, the Administration was providing a new sewerage network in Lung Mei and its vicinity, including the four villages of Lo Tsz Tin, Lung Mei, Wong Chuk Tsuen and Tai Mei Tuk, to collect sewage at these villages and deliver it to the Tai Po Sewage Treatment Works for treatment before discharge. It was anticipated that the above sewerage and drainage works would largely be completed in 2013. As the number of dwellings connected to public sewers increased, the water quality of Lung Mei had shown noticeable improvement, from Grade 4 (Poor) in mid-2012 to Grade 2 (Fair) in recent weeks. The EIA report of the Lung Mei beach project adopted a conservative estimate that the water quality of the beach would reach the standard suitable for swimming if

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about 60% of the dwellings in the area were connected to the new public sewers before the opening of the beach. The latest information suggested that at least 80% of the village houses would be connected to the sewerage network before the opening of the beach. The Administration was confident that upon the opening of the Lung Mei Beach in 2015, the water quality would achieve the required standard for swimming.

30. Noting that the future artificial beach at Lung Mei was protected by topographical features against strong tidal current and wavy waters, Ms Cyd HO was worried that such protection might have impact on the beach water quality.

31. In response, DH(P&L)/CEDD explained that the construction of two groynes at the ends of the beach would only make Lung Mei less prone to extreme and direct wave attack. As the groynes would run perpendicular to the shore, they would not completely block sea waves and affect the water quality of the beach.

(Members agreed to extend the meeting by 15 minutes.)

Ecological management

32. In response to Dr Helena WONG's concerns about the translocation of marine animals of conservation importance and its resultant damage to the ecological environment, DH(P&L)/CEDD and MCO/AFCD advised that -

- (a) Ting Kok East was confirmed as a suitable reception site, mainly because Lung Mei and Ting Kok East were both within Tolo Harbour and had very similar marine ecological characteristics. As Ting Kok East was several times larger than Lung Mei, it was considered capable of accommodating the marine species to be translocated from Lung Mei;
- (b) CEDD had drawn up guidelines and standards for the translocation work. Before the translocation, different species would be assigned to designated areas within the reception site. This would help the species adapt to the new environment and enable subsequent ecological monitoring;
- (c) apart from the three fish species of conservation importance, echinoderms found in the intertidal zone, i.e. star fish, sea urchins and sea cucumbers, would also be translocated to the reception site; and

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- (d) the translocation of marine animals was scheduled to start at the end of 2012. The relevant works while would only be carried out at low tides should be conducted under the supervision of a qualified fish specialist who would inspect the "cleared" areas to avoid trapping any of the three species of conservation importance.

Other issues discussed

33. Dr Kenneth CHAN noted that it was CEDD which commissioned a consultancy study in 2008 on the ecological value of Lung Mei and handled objections lodged by the public during the statutory consultation stage of the works project. Expressing concern over the possible role conflict, he sought information about the Administration's handling of the objections received.

34. DH(P&L)/CEDD responded that -

- (a) EIAO required the project proponent, i.e. LCSD in the present case, to conduct an EIA to assess the potential environmental impact of developing a beach at Lung Mei. CEDD, as the works department responsible for the design and construction of the works project, thus commissioned a consultancy to conduct a thorough EIA of the project;
- (b) following the gazettal of the related sewerage, road and reclamation works under the relevant ordinances, the statutory consultation stage of the works project commenced. During the consultation period, the Government continued to collect valuable opinions from residents, brief relevant stakeholders on the content and amendments of the legal notices published in the Gazette, and handle objections lodged by the public according to the statutory procedures; and
- (c) during the objection period, a total of 23 objections had been received. Subsequent to the Administration's provision of detailed explanations, responses to public concerns and the revision made to the project scale, 12 objectors had withdrawn their objections to the works project. As regards those objections unresolved or not withdrawn, they had been duly reflected in the documents submitted to the authorities concerned for consideration and decision.

35. Dr CHIANG Lai-wan expressed concern about the impact of the project on the traffic condition of Ting Kok Road, especially during holidays

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when a large number of visitors would use the road for access to the amenity facilities in Tai Mei Tuk and nearby areas.

36. DH(P&L)/CEDD advised that based on the traffic impact assessment undertaken for the project, Ting Kok Road should be able to cope with the additional traffic resulting from the development of the beach at Lung Mei. Besides, the proposed works area south of Ting Kok Road would provide adequate space for the widening of Ting Kok Road and construction of the proposed car park. While appropriate temporary traffic arrangements would be implemented during the construction stage, the Transport Department would continue to monitor the traffic situation after the completion of the project and if necessary, review the traffic arrangements in the area.

37. In response to concern raised by Dr CHIANG Lai-wan about sand loss at Lung Mei, DH(P&L)/CEDD said that factors such as currents, tidal flow, waves and geographic location could cause sand loss at both natural and artificial beaches. The loss of sand at beaches exposing to open sea waves might be more evident after typhoons. Lung Mei while enjoyed the protection offered by topographical features was less prone to extreme wave attack. Moreover, with the construction of two groynes at the ends of the beach, significant sand loss was not expected.

Way forward

38. Dr Fernando CHEUNG and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen said that given the controversies over the proposed development of a public beach at Lung Mei, it was necessary to hold a further joint meeting to receive views from deputations on the subject.

39. Echoing their views, Ms Cyd HO suggested that experts and environmental concern groups should be invited to attend the proposed further meeting to give views on the relevant EIA report. She said that the proposed further meeting could be held jointly by the two Panels or either by the HA Panel or the Panel on Environmental Affairs ("EA Panel").

40. On Ms HO's suggestion, Mr Albert CHAN said that the Chairman as well as interested members of ACE should also be invited to attend the meeting, so that they could respond to queries raised by experts and environmental concern groups over the findings of the EIA report. Mr Gary FAN expressed support for the proposal to hold a further joint meeting to receive views from deputations and to invite representatives of ACE to attend the meeting to respond to deputations' views on the relevant EIA report.

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41. Mr IP Kwok-him said that while he did not have strong view on the suggestion of holding a further meeting to receive views of deputations on the subject, the proposed further meeting should only be held on the understanding that the construction works of the public beach at Lung Mei would not be delayed. Dr LAM Tai-fai said that he did not consider it necessary to hold a further joint meeting for the suggested purposes.

42. The Chairman said that as members had different views on the need to hold a further joint meeting and the matter could not be dealt with within the original appointed meeting time and within the 15 minutes of the period of extension of meeting, he would seek the views of the members of the two Panels on whether a further joint meeting should be held by circulation of paper. Upon receipt of members' returns, he would liaise with Ms Cyd HO, Chairman of the EA Panel, on the way forward.

(Post-meeting note: Members of the HA and EA Panels had been consulted on the need to hold a further joint meeting to receive views from deputations on the subject of provision of a public beach at Lung Mei and informed of the outcome of the consultation vide LC Paper Nos. CB(2)294/12-13 and CB(2)324/12-13 issued respectively on 4 and 7 December 2012.)

43. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11:20 am.