



世界自然基金會  
香港分會

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## Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs

Meeting on 28 March 2014

### WWF opposes the Government's proposal of building an "integrated waste management facility" at Shek Kwu Chau

WWF opposes the Government's proposal to construct an "integrated waste management facility" at Shek Kwu Chau. Our reasons are as follows:

#### **Shek Kwu Chau and its surround waters are of high conservation value**

The island of Shek Kwu Chau is the home of a number of rare species of conservation concern, including the White-bellied Sea Eagle (National Protection Class II), and its surrounding waters is also a core habitat for the finless porpoise. It is the view of WWF that the most updated scientific data provides strong support for Shek Kwu Chau and its surrounding waters to the south being designated as a Marine Park, rather than as an industrial facility for waste treatment, for the protection of the finless porpoise, which is listed as "Vulnerable" on International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List and "Endangered" in the China Species Red List, same as the Chinese white dolphin.

#### **Shek Kwu Chau should not have been selected as a suitable site**

Although the project proponent noted that a site search exercise was conducted in 2008 under the study Site Search for Integrated Waste Management Facilities in Hong Kong for Municipal Solid Waste and the study findings were briefed to various parties, including ACE, according to the ACE paper 9/2008, the information presented to ACE members downplayed the ecological importance of the Shek Kwu Chau waters.

With reference to para. 27 of the Site Selection Report in the Annex of the ACE paper, it was stated that "*the nearby marine area is a fish spawning and nursery ground. Chinese white dolphin and finless porpoise have been sighted, though the area is not their core habitat.*" However, with reference to the AFCD marine mammal monitoring report (2009-2010) and the EIA, both reveal that some of the highest concentrations of porpoise in Hong Kong were observed at the southwest of Shek Kwu Chau, and the offshore waters at the southwest portion of the survey area. It was apparent that the conservation importance of the marine area of Shek

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Kwu Chau for finless porpoise has not been fully considered during the evaluation of the shortlisted sites, even though environmental considerations should be one of the major criteria. WWF considers the project proponent should strictly follow the EIA Basic Principle to avoid and prevent adverse environmental consequences of the proposed project (Principle Two: Avoidance, Pre-emption and Prevention of Adverse Environmental Consequences)<sup>1</sup> and that Shek Kwu Chau should not be considered as a suitable site for the construction of the IWMF.

With reference to the proposed broad land-use pattern under the Recommended Development Strategy for South West New Territories by the Planning Department in 2001 (Figure 1), Shek Kwu Chau has been proposed as Conservation Area (Landscape Protection Area/Coastal Protection Area). As the island is home to a number of rare species of conservation concern, WWF considers Shek Kwu Chau should be protected by conservation zonings or as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). As the site has been proposed for natural environment conservation<sup>2</sup> and is consistent with the overall settings of the nearby Lantau South Country Park and waters, we consider that the IWMF development would be incompatible with the proposed land use and the surrounding environment.

#### **A sustainable approach to manage waste**

WWF supports a holistic approach to manage waste in Hong Kong following the principle of sustainable development. Currently, efforts by the Hong Kong Government to reduce waste generation at source, recycle and change wasteful behavioral are clearly insufficient as indicated by Hong Kong's waste generation per capita, which remains one of the highest in the world, and clearly not sustainable. Hong Kong is a small city with not only a high ecological footprint but also heavy generation of waste. Without comprehensive and where necessary, mandatory waste management policies to tackle waste from both source and disposal, the burgeoning waste will degrade our natural landscape and impact our quality of life, as demonstrated by the proposed use of part of the Clear Water Bay Country Park as landfill.

With regards to waste management, WWF does not oppose in principle the use of incineration as one of the options for waste disposal. However, incineration should only be considered when all other reasonable (including mandatory) options have been employed.

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, Cap.499 Guidance Note No.1/2010

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 5 of the Final Report of the South West New Territories Development Strategy Review (SWNT DSR) - A Summary of the Broad Land Uses Recommended by SWNT DSR