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One Million Words Asia Literacy Organization  
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mpoon

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**Good afternoon, I am Doctor Robert Lockyer, with AquaMeridian Conservation and Education Foundation, and a member of the IUCN's Commission on Education and Communication.**

**As a Lamma resident I personally feel that the government should be commended for its wildlife protection act that it introduced in 1999. However, the local water sports environment has changed over the past 20 years and we are now seeing more high speed pleasure craft, and motorized vessels using the area on weekends and public holidays during the summer months.**

**Just last July I observed up to 30 pleasure craft, jet-skies, banana boats and even people water-skiing, as well as a group of 50 people holding a cricket game on the beach, during what should be the middle of the closed season.**

**Being an avid diver, boat operator, and adventurer, I enjoy water sports myself, so I am far from being against people enjoying the outdoors but it should be noted that many of these pleasure craft have sound systems playing loud music, that has been recorded in excess of 80dB, which is about the same volume as an emergency siren that is used to clear traffic in our the busy city streets.**

Over the past years, we have recorded commercial vessels net fishing in Sham Wan, and even today, as we are all seated here, there is a fleet of purse fishing boats that are legally trawling this bay. Sadly Marine Police and AFCD officers are powerless to stop this type of fishing within the bay during the sea-turtle nesting period as the current level of protection does not prohibit this within the area at any time.

It is worth noting that in this area alone there are communities of locally-rare hard coral, and at least 73 marine fish species recorded, including 23 locally-rare species and the IUCN listed endangered Threadfin Porgy, not to mention the finless porpoises, whale sharks, seahorses and even a humpback whale have been previously documented in this area.

Since the 2012 trawler ban fish numbers, in this area have been on a healthy rise, as can be attested to by local fishermen, however sadly the numbers of stranded and deceased sea turtles and marine cetaceans have also risen to almost double what they were only a few years ago.

The current WPA legislation protects the dry Sandy Beach but does not protect the shallow waters, so effectively what we are saying is we are protecting their bedroom but we are not protecting the living space. To personalize that it would be like us protecting our bedroom but not our lounge room, kitchen or the remainder of our house.

Therefore it is vitally important that this committees support the expansion of the protection area by :-

1. Extending the area of protection not only to include the dry sandy beach above the high water mark (HWM) but additionally the sandy beach below the HWM, the rocky shoreline, and the shallow waters up to a 10 m depth.
2. Designate the bay as an No Anchor Zone year round.
3. Restrict fishing activities to non-commercial fishing.
4. Implement a ban on all forms of net fishing with in the entire bay.
5. Extend and enforce the 5kn speed limit to be 24 hours a day

**from midnight 31st May until midnight 31st October inclusive.**

**6. Engage the local community as permitted wardens for the monitoring and observation of beach conditions, including cleanliness and removal of obstacles and entanglements.**