

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY SUB-COMMITTEE

Digest of meeting held on 29 April 2003

- Chairman** : Dr Edgar Cheng
- Members** : Ms Choy So-yuk
Professor Lam Kin-che
Ir Otto Poon
Ms Anne Copeland Chiu
: Professor Peter Hills
Mr Albert Lai
Dr Joseph Lian
Mr Ng Shui-lai
- Apologies** : Dr Lily Chiang
Mr Tik Chi-yuen
Dr Sarah Liao, Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
- In attendance** : Mr Keith Kwok, Acting Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Works) (PSETW(W)Ag.)
Ms Chang King-yiu, Deputy Director of Administration (DD of Adm)
Mr Eric K Lee, Senior Administrative Officer (SD) 2
- Secretary** : Mr Jonathan McKinley, Assistant Director of Administration (SD) 2

Item 1 – Opening Remarks by the Chairman

The **Chairman** explained that mandate of this Sub-committee was to oversee the public participation process in formulating a sustainable development strategy for Hong Kong. The Sub-committee would work closely with stakeholders in various sectors of society in helping to put together the strategy. He said that an initial key task was to develop a process that could involve relevant stakeholders at an early stage.

Item 2 – Terms of Reference of the Sub-committee (SSC Paper 01/03)

The **Chairman** said the proposed terms of reference reflected the mandate of supporting the Council's work in "advising on the preparation of a sustainable development strategy for Hong Kong that will integrate economic, social and environmental perspectives".

Members agreed that the "consultation" programme should not simply be a "top-down" communication process. Rather, a "bottom-up" approach would be appropriate in the

context of developing a sustainable development strategy. The **Chairman** agreed that the process for formulating the strategy should be based on the principle of wide community participation. The Sub-committee agreed to adopt the proposed terms of reference, subject to replacing the word “consultation” by the words: “public participation”.

As regards the issue of whether the strategy would help shape government policies, the **Chairman** said that the main objective would be to set out a broad framework regarding the sustainable future for Hong Kong. The strategy would focus on the overall vision and key considerations for achieving long-term sustainability rather than on detailed implementation of specific policies. Members noted that some policies would cut across several bureaux and departments and certain aspects of the strategy might require integration of different policies. It would be more appropriate for the strategy to concentrate on the long-term vision and key priority areas, with indicators to measure progress of implementation, rather than to be overly concerned with specific implementation details.

Item 3 – “Susdev 21” and Principles for the Drawing up of a Sustainable Development Strategy (Paper 02/03)

The **Chairman** said that the Susdev 21 study had provided useful background information for the Sub-committee in considering how best to identify the priority areas that the sustainable development strategy could address. He emphasized that the broad principles outlined in the paper were for reference only.

Members noted that the Sub-committee should focus on long-term sustainability issues and avoid allowing current, high profile incidents to put undue influence on the process of identifying the priority areas for the strategy.

Sub-committee Members advised that it would be appropriate to assess how the strategy might contribute to the sustainable future of the PRD region generally, as well as Hong Kong’s contribution in the wider international context.

Members agreed, that the SDU should revise the paper taking Members’ views into account prepare a new submission for discussion at the Sub-committee’s next meeting.

Item 4 – Key Steps in Formulating a Sustainable Development Strategy (Paper 03/03)

The **Chairman** said that the future sustainable development strategy should be developed through a participatory, inclusive and transparent process and invited Members to focus on Annex B of the paper, which set out a notional strategy framework.

Members considered that a clear and easily understood document was needed, based on which stakeholders could deliberate and provide informed comments and views. This should make reference to work done by non-government organizations over the past ten

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years, as well as the Susdev 21 study. The Sub-committee should map out a work plan drawing on this experience. Members agreed that an effective mechanism to monitor and review the implementation of the strategy should form an integral part of a successful strategy.

In the light of Members' views, the **Chairman** proposed and the Sub-committee agreed that the SDU should revise the paper as discussed and report back to the Sub-committee at its next meeting. In the meantime, the **Chairman** invited Members to forward any additional views and comments to the SDU, with particular regard to the strategic vision, strategic objectives and targets for the purpose of refining the paper.

Council Secretariat
May 2003