

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY SUB-COMMITTEE

Paper 01/04

Support Groups for the Sustainable Development Strategy: Membership and Terms of Reference

Purpose

This paper seeks members' advice on the membership and terms of reference of the Support Groups (SG) for the Sustainable Development (SD) Strategy.

Background

2. The Council for SD has endorsed the proposal of the Strategy Sub-committee (SSC) that an SG should be formed for each selected pilot area with a view to preparing "Invitation and Response" documents for public consultation. The SGs would review relevant research, gather background information and identify key issues with the input and assistance of the relevant Government bureaux and departments. They would also play a role in the process of collecting and analysing community views on the issues under their purview.

Membership

3. The SGs should have balanced representation from various stakeholder groups reflecting the three primary elements of SD, i.e., the economic, environmental and social sectors. It is important that the members of these groups should collectively possess the expertise, commitment and innovative capacity to fulfil their mission. The SGs should be inclusive but manageable, and we therefore propose that membership of each SG should be no more than twelve people, including the following –

- (a) **Two** Members of the SSC – who would be responsible for making regular reports to the SSC on the progress of the SG;

- (b) **Two** senior representatives from the Government bureau or department relevant to the selected pilot area – this would help provide access to Government information resources and expertise, as well as promoting early “buy-in” from the Government to the strategy building process; and
- (c) representatives from the following sectors: civil society including NGOs, academic, professional institutions and/or business. In appointing people from these sectors, we should have regard to the need to engage those who are knowledgeable in sustainable development principles, who have the capacity to engage in participatory processes with the community, and who have experience or expert knowledge of the relevant group’s pilot area.

The Convenors of the SGs would be drawn from the general membership, and need not necessarily be one of the SSC representatives.

Terms of Reference of the Support Groups

4. Bearing in mind the functions of the SGs described in paragraph 2 above, we propose that the SG for each pilot area should undertake the following principal functions –

- (a) identify key issues relevant to Hong Kong's long-term sustainability in the pilot area for which it is responsible;
- (b) collect background information (with reference to local and external experience) and compile an “Invitation and Response” document explaining the key issues;
- (c) present the “Invitation and Response” document to the public in such a way as to encourage discussion by stakeholders in the broader community; and
- (d) receive and collate responses from stakeholders, with a view to making proposals to the Council for Sustainable Development.

Way Forward

5. Subject to Members' views, the SDU will coordinate the formation of the SGs with a view to having the first SG meeting convene by early February 2004.

Council Secretariat
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