

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY SUB-COMMITTEE

Paper 03/04

Support Groups for a Sustainable Development Strategy: Functions and Operation

Purpose

This paper outlines for Members' discussion ways in which the Support Groups (SGs) on the Pilot Areas for the sustainable development (SD) strategy might work in practice to draw up "Invitation and Response" (IR) documents and engage the public in the process of identifying objectives for sustainable development in the respective areas.

Background

2. Having considered proposals put forward by the Strategy Sub-committee (SSC), the Council for SD has advised that an SG should be formed for each of the following Pilot Areas: "Solid Waste Management", "Renewable Energy" and "Urban Planning Priorities" to help take forward the formulation of the SD strategy for Hong Kong. Broadly, the role of the SGs will be to review relevant research, gather background information and identify key issues relating to sustainability on their respective areas, in order to prepare IR documents for discussion by the wider community. The groups would also collect and analyse views on the relevant issues, with a view to putting a consolidated submission to the Council for SD on the appropriate way forward.

Membership of Support Groups

3. The SSC has advised that the SGs should consist largely of stakeholders who have expertise, experience and the capacity to consider the economic, environmental and social impact of policies in the Pilot Areas. The Sustainable Development Unit (SDU), after consulting the Chair, SSC, has invited the stakeholders listed at **Annex A** to sit on the SGs for the respective Pilot Areas.

Role of the SGs

4. The SSC considered the draft terms of reference of the SGs at its last meeting on 8 January. These are at **Annex B** for Members' reference. Briefly, it is proposed that the SGs assist the SSC by preparing the IR documents and designing and taking part in a programme for engaging the community in the discussion of the issues set out in the documents.

Preparation of IR documents

5. It is intended that the IR documents present background information and introduce options and scenarios for sustainable policies and practices in each of the Pilot Areas.

6. As a way of "standardising" the IR documents, the SSC has considered a draft template for the SGs to work to. This is at **Annex C**. The SDU will help the SGs research local and international experience and best practice regarding the key issues under the Pilot Areas, and will help to identify possible solutions and scenarios that might contribute to a more sustainable approach in the respective Pilot Areas. Members of the SSC and the SGs will be expected to provide direct input into the content of the IR documents by providing reference sources for the SDU's research, advising on the viability of potential scenarios and vetting the accuracy and objectivity of the documents. In the process of preparing the IR documents, the SGs might invite other stakeholders to advise on and provide input into the documents.

7. To ensure that as wide a cross-section of the community as possible is able to engage in the discussion on SD in the Pilot Areas concerned, the SGs will need to ensure that the IR documents are drafted in a way that can be clearly understood by the general public.

Designing a programme of community engagement

8. As individual Pilot Areas might require a different consultation approach, the SSC has advised that the SGs should have the flexibility to design specific programmes of engagement for their own areas. The groups might consider organising different types of event to gauge the views of various sectors, according to the levels of complexity of the proposals and the likely degree of interest in the issue under discussion.

9. In taking forward their consultation programmes, the SGs might consider the following approaches –

- (a) “passive” consultation – whereby the groups could release the IR documents into the public arena and invite views and comments on the issues discussed therein. This would require only limited resources, and would enable stakeholder groups to set up their own forums for discussion of the documents;
- (b) the “town hall briefing” approach – under which the SGs could hold public seminars to brief attendees on the issues described in the IR documents, and invite direct feedback from the audience. This approach would allow for “real-time” interactive consultation between SG members and stakeholders; and
- (c) “proactive” engagement – whereby the SGs could organise facilitated workshops to engage either the general public or selected stakeholders in an organised dialogue on the key issues in the Pilot Areas.

The SGs would be direct participants in the engagement process and would regularly review comments and views from stakeholders on the IR documents and other related issues. While the groups might put forward certain proposals or positions, they should not seek simply to “sell” a pre-determined position or stance, but rather should encourage rational and open dialogue with members of the community.

Operation of the SGs

10. The SDU will provide research and secretarial support to the SGs, which would meet according to the wishes of members. The Unit will be strengthened by the addition of full-time staff dedicated to supporting the work of the SGs, from March 2004. Where necessary, the short-term engagement of professionals in the fields of public relations or facilitation may be considered. Government bureaux and departments will be expected to provide the SGs with input either as members of the groups, or on *ad hoc* basis upon invitation by the SG.

Time-table

11. The SSC considered the tentative working timetable at **Annex D** at its meeting on 8 January 2004. Members advised that sufficient time should be given to the public consultation exercise in order to establish the credibility of the engagement process.

12. The SDU will review the tentative timeline with each of the SGs once they have started work. Initially, we expect that the public consultation exercise might last well into the summer season, leaving the last quarter of the year for the drafting of the SD strategy documents.

Council Secretariat
February 2004

**Support Group on Solid Waste Management
Membership (*Subject to Confirmation)**

Convenor	: Mr Albert Lai	Strategy Sub-committee
Member	: Mr Chandran Nair*	Strategy Sub-committee
	Mr Chua Hoi-wai*	Hong Kong Council for Social Services
	Professor Sunny Kwong*	Department of Economics The Chinese University of Hong Kong
	Mr Billy Leung*	Fook Woo Group
	Dr Man Chi-sum	Green Power
	Professor Poon Chi-sun	Department of Civil & Structural Engineering The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
	Mr James Tam	Swire Sita Waste Services Ltd
	Mr Plato Yip	CK Life Science International Inc.
	Miss Winnie Ho	Environment, Transport & Works Bureau
	Dr Ellen Chan	Environmental Protection Department

Annex A (Cont'd)**Support Group on Renewable Energy
Membership (*Subject to Confirmation)**

Convenor	: Ir Otto Poon	Strategy Sub-committee
Member	: Mrs Anne Copeland Chiu	Strategy Sub-committee
	Manab Chakraborty	Kadoorie Farm & Botanical Garden
	Professor K C Chan	School of Business & Management The Hong Kong University of Science & Technology
	Mr Gary Chang	The Hong Kong Electric Co Ltd
	Professor Ho Kin-chung	The Open University of Hong Kong
	Dr Gail Kendall	CLP Research Institute
	Mr Andy Ku*	Shell (Hong Kong) Ltd
	Mr James Kwan*	The Hongkong & China Gas Ltd
	Dr Ng Cho-nam	Conservancy Association
	Mrs Mei Ng*	Friends of the Earth
	Mr Raistlin Lau	Environmental, Transport & Works Bureau
	Mr Ho Kwong-wai	Electrical & Mechanical Services Department
	Representative*	Economic Development & Labour Bureau

Annex A (Cont'd)**Support Group on Urban Planning Priorities
Membership (*Subject to Confirmation)**

Convenor	: Professor Peter Hills	Strategy Sub-committee
Member	: Mr Tik Chi-yuen	Strategy Sub-committee
	Dr Chan Wai-kwan*	Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce
	Professor Anthony Cooray	School of Law City University of Hong Kong
	Professor Timothy Hau*	School of Economic & Finance The University of Hong Kong
	Mr Michael Lai	St James' Settlement
	Mr Andrew Lam*	Urban Renewal Authority
	Dr K S Lo	Great Eagle's Group
	Ms Iris Tam	Hong Kong Institute of Planners
	Mr Lew Young*	World Wildlife Fund (Hong Kong)
	Representative*	Housing, Planning & Lands Bureau
	Representative*	Planning Department

**Support Group for a Sustainable Development Strategy
Draft Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference of the Support Group on [Pilot Area] are to assist the Strategy Sub-committee (SSC) to –

- (a) identify key issues relevant to Hong Kong's long-term sustainability in the Pilot Area, with appropriate reference to international experience and best practice;
- (b) collect relevant background information (with reference to local and international experience) and compile an "Invitation and Response" (IR) document in accordance with the attached template;
- (c) design and implement an engagement process for public discussion of the IR document and related issues;
- (d) present the IR document to the public and encourage and facilitate interactive discussion by stakeholders with a view to building consensus among major groups; and
- (e) receive and collate responses from stakeholders, with a view to making proposals to the Council for SD.

Invitation and Response Document on [Pilot Area] Proposed Template

Baseline information

The section would set out data regarding the situation in Hong Kong with respect to [Pilot Area], including ongoing proposals for action. Such information could also help with setting benchmarks for measuring the effectiveness of proposed measures. Where appropriate, relevant information drawn from other administrations would be presented in this section.

Challenges in addressing [Pilot Area]

The section would briefly describe key challenges to Hong Kong's long-term sustainable development posed by the situation in the pilot area. Appropriate reference would be made in particular to specific social, environmental and economic issues.

Potential sustainability goals to be achieved in addressing [Pilot Area]

The section would suggest possible options drawing on overseas experience and practices and their effect on the sustainable development of Hong Kong – however it would NOT recommend absolute goals to be achieved. The section would also set out possible pros and cons of the suggested options, and would make specific reference to potential implications for social equity, quality of the natural environment and economic development.

Possible ways of achieving the key goals

Following from above, again, rather than recommend specific measures to be adopted, the document would outline options, together with the relevant pros and cons for achieving key goals, with reference to the overall sustainability “picture” and potential constraints. The section would evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of each option in the broader sustainability context, and would also evaluate likely constraints involved in implementing these locally.

Milestone Dates for the Support Groups

8 January 2004	Meeting of the Strategy Sub-committee (SSC) To consider recommendations on the formation of Support Groups (SGs) and the “Invitation and Response” (IR) documents
January	Formation of SGs
February – March	SGs to work on the IR documents and the engagement programmes, and prepare for public consultation
22 March 2004	Meeting of Council for Sustainable Development (Council) SSC to report to Council on the work of the SGs
April – May	Public consultation exercise (including workshops, seminars and “town-hall” meetings)
14 June 2004	Meeting of Council SSC to report to Council on early consultation findings and seek Council’s advice on how to proceed with the drafting of the SD strategy
June – August	Preparation of draft SD strategy document
13 September 2004	Meeting of Council SSC to submit draft SD strategy document for Council’s advice
Sep – Nov	Revision and preparation of the draft SD strategy document
December 2004	Publication of SD strategy document subject to Council’s endorsement