

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY SUB-COMMITTEE

Paper 10/04

Collection of feedback on IR Document

Introduction

This paper consults Members on a proposed mechanism to collate feedback from the community during the public involvement stage on the issues raised in the Council's first "Invitation and Response" (IR) document, *Sustainable Development: Making Choices for Our Future*.

Feedback Channels

2. To encourage people from all walks of life to respond to the IR document, the Council, in partnership with partner organisations, would host a range of events and programme to provide sufficient channels for feedback during the 4-month public involvement period. These include :
 - i. *Sustainable Development (SD) Strategy Website* – seeking to reach out the wide community, the website is being promoted by TV and radio announcement, posters and has been linked to the websites of our partners and other organisations. It is the most popular channel since the launch of the IR document. As of 31 August, there were a

total of 85 discussion “threads” on the online discussion forum, with a total of 354 messages posted.

- ii. *Written responses* – a few respondents choose to mail in or email their comments, or contribute press articles to the newspapers: these include technical proposals, general comments and detailed analysis of the issues raised.
- iii. *Forums and Workshops* – a series of Pilot Area (PA) forums and workshops will be organised to provide a platform for local communities, business, professional, academic, NGOs and other stakeholders to meet to build consensus and to resolve conflicts, where possible. With a view to engaging the community into active discussion on sustainable development and the Pilot Areas, invitations to these events will be extended to all interested groups as well as the local groups. The PA forums on each of the PA are organized from late August to mid-September, and the series of workshops will be organized at various districts from late September to November.

Proposed Mechanism

3. To preserve credibility of the engagement process, it is essential that the feedbacks are and are seen to be reflected fairly and pertinently. In this connection, we propose the following arrangements for consolidating feedbacks from various channels.

1. Full coverage of response

4. Some respondents have raised a concern as to whether certain type(s) of response (e.g. email response) would be taken into account. In addressing this, a tentative outline of the report has been drafted and appended at **Annex A**, showing the types of response to be covered in the report.

II. Involving partners

5. Members earlier commented that it would be a major challenge to effectively consolidate the diverse comments received throughout the public involvement stage. Noting this concern and with a view to forge common ownership of the engagement process, we propose that partner organizations should be invited to review and independently verify the summaries of feedback together with the Support Group concerned.

6. As for the more interactive feedback channels, such as forums and workshops, Support Groups and partners will be invited to be the observer(s) at these events to gather first-hand responses from the members of the public. Observers would also be asked to comment and verify the relevant reports in due course.

II. Rolling Report

7. To keep Members abreast of the continuous response from the community and to avoid the bottleneck at the end of the process, we propose that rolling summaries of the responses received from the website and other channels be regularly prepared for Members reference. For the website, the Secretariat would prepare summaries of every 100 responses on individual Pilot Areas at the

online discussion forum. The Support Group concerned will then be invited to consider and endorse the summaries as factual accounts of the views expressed. For instance, the discussion responses on Renewable Energy (RE) have already reached the first hundred in August 2004 and a summary prepared is being considered by the RE Support Group. A copy of the draft summary is at **Annex B** for Members' reference.

IV. Maintaining Transparency

8. To maintain high degree of transparency, feedback summaries endorsed by the relevant parties will be posted on the SD Strategy website. Moreover, the report will contain a compendium publicising all the written responses received.

Advice sought

9. Members are invited to comment on the proposed mechanism to collect feedback on the IR document, as detailed in paragraphs 4 to 8 above. Subject to Members' views, the SDU will follow up with the Support Groups and partner organizations, in accordance with the agreed mechanism.

Council Secretariat

September 2004