

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Education and Publicity Sub-Committee

Paper 04/05

Sustainable Development Fund – Potential Priority Areas for Consideration in the Third Round of SDF Applications

Purpose

This paper invites Members' views on potential priority areas for the third round of Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) applications, which is due to be launched towards the end of June.

Proposal

2. Members are invited –
 - (a) to consider and advise on the potential priority areas for the third round of SDF applications suggested in paragraphs 10 to 12 below; and
 - (b) to note the proposed arrangements for the third round of applications to the SDF outlined in paragraph 13 below.

Background

Potential Priority Areas for SDF Projects

3. At the last EPSC meeting, Members agreed in principle that in the third round of SDF applications, consideration should be given to inviting applications for projects with a particular focus. In particular, Members suggested encouraging projects that would -

- (a) target capacity building through consolidating networks and resources to promote sustainable development;
 - (b) foster collaboration between various sectors, especially business and social and community groups; and
 - (c) replicate successful district-based project models (such as those in Wan Chai and Southern) in other districts of Hong Kong.
4. At the Council meeting on 18 April 2005, Members further suggested that the SDF could be used to support projects geared towards the following themes -
- (a) promotion of the sustainable development strategy;
 - (b) publicity activities; and
 - (c) sustainability related studies, e.g., sustainability reporting.

Considerations

Projects targeted at capacity building and cross-sectoral collaboration

5. Both capacity building and cross-sectoral collaboration involve the building of networks and the sharing of resources. While these are important elements of any programme to promote sustainable development, care must be taken to ensure that projects that focus on these elements set clear and substantive project goals. One way to do this might be to raise awareness of specific issues related to the SD Strategy through collaboration between concerned sectors, and to promote participation in activities related to the further development of the Strategy.

Replication of successful project models

6. In the first two rounds of the SDF applications, ten projects were approved. Of these ten, even the project (Project S+E+E magazine) with the shortest

funding period (12 months) has yet to be completed. Pending the completion and review of these projects, it may be premature to conclude that we currently have *successful* project models to follow. Members may wish to consider whether the selection of successful models should be conducted only after an evaluation of the effectiveness of substantially complete SDF projects has taken place.

Promotion of the Sustainable Development (SD) Strategy

7. The first SD Strategy deals with three Pilot Areas - solid waste management, renewable energy and urban living space - that are relevant to Hong Kong's long-term sustainability. In order to help promote the implementation of the SD Strategy in the community, Members may wish to consider whether projects that focus on these three Pilot Areas, and, at the same time, can reach and benefit the local community, should be encouraged in the next round of applications. The considerations in paragraph 5 above are also relevant here.

Publicity Activities

8. The SDF already supports projects that aim to enhance awareness of sustainable development principles and encourage people to put these into practice. Publicity activities that meet these SDF objectives, including those with a community outreach nature, could continue to be encouraged in the third round of applications.

Sustainability Reporting

9. Members have previously discussed how a sustainability reporting initiative might be an effective tool for benchmarking Hong Kong's sustainability and raising public awareness. In view of the potential complexity of this type of project, Members may wish to consider whether such a project should be considered in a separate round of SDF applications, with its own specific scope and requirements. A fuller discussion of issues related to the development of a sustainability reporting initiative under the auspices of the Council for SD is set out in EPSC paper 05/05.

Recommendations and Further Action

10. In view of the above considerations, we **recommend** that Members consider giving priority in the third round of SDF applications to -

- (a) Projects which focus on capacity building and collaboration across various sectors, with particular reference to raising awareness of the first SD Strategy and participation in activities that would contribute to implementation and further development of the strategy; and
- (b) Projects involving publicity activities that meet the SDF objectives, in particular those with an element of community outreach.

11. For the sustainability reporting initiative, we **recommend** that this be the subject of a special invitation for SDF applications, subject to Members' views following discussion of EPSC paper 05/05.

12. As regards earmarking part of the SDF to support the replication of successful project models from previous rounds that have proved effective in promoting education and awareness on sustainability, we **recommend** that this be done following the substantial completion and evaluation of these projects.

13. Subject to Members' views, we plan to organise a public forum to launch the third round of applications to the SDF and to publicise further the priority areas for application by including such information in related press materials and the relevant section of the SDF web page. We would also consider the need to make consequential revisions to the application guidelines.

Council Secretariat

May 2005