

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Update on Education and Publicity Programmes and Initiatives

Purpose

This paper reports on the progress of the sustainable development (SD) education and publicity programmes in the past year and new initiatives under the purview of the Education and Publicity Sub-committee (EPSC).

2. Members are invited to note –
 - (a) the events under the school, business and community sectors in the past year of 2008; and
 - (b) the upcoming new initiatives that would be further discussed by the EPSC.

Events in Past Year

The Sixth Round of Sustainable Development Fund (SD Fund) Applications

3. A Sustainable Development Fund (SD Fund) of \$100 million was established in June 2003 to provide a central source of financial support for initiatives that will help raise public awareness of SD and encourage sustainable practices. EPSC oversees the operation of the Fund.
4. To date, 33 projects have been approved including seven projects in the latest (sixth) round of applications. The total grant involved is about \$29.7 million. So far, 16 projects have been completed. Project monitoring work on the progress and effectiveness is undertaken by the Secretariat with the SD Fund Monitoring Sub-groups on Projects formed by the EPSC. At least two EPSC members are invited to be the monitoring sub-group members to oversee the project effectiveness.
5. The current sixth round of the SD Fund application was launched

in June 2008. Out of a total of 38 submissions received, seven projects have been granted with the SD Fund :

- (a) SDF307 “Preparing Students to Embrace Corporate Sustainability, Bridging the Gap between High Schools and the Business Sector” by *Business Environment Council* – **\$1,784,400** over a period of 30 months.
- (b) SDF310 “Public Participation in the Sustainable City Development: Starting from the Community” by *The Centre of Architectural Research for Education, Elderly, Environment and Excellence Ltd (CARE)* – **\$1,281,800** over a period of 18 months.
- (c) SDF318 “Sustainable Seafood School Catering Programme” by *World Wide Fund for Nature of Hong Kong* – **\$1,277,680** over a period of 24 months”.
- (d) SDF321 “埔樂 步樂 - 婦女推動社區可持續發展計劃 (Striding Forward – A Tai Po Sustainable Community Project by Women)” by *Hong Kong Federation of Women’s Centres* – **\$1,628,300** over a period of 36 months.
- (e) SDF322 “社區樂活天地 (LOHAS Garden@Sai Kung Community)” by *Sai Kung District Community Centre* - **\$958,420** over a period of 24 months.
- (f) SDF299 “Education for Sustainable Development in Tertiary Education” by *Environmental Studies Programme, Lingnan University* – **\$484,190** over a period of 17 months.
- (g) SDF302 “Sustainable Development Roundtable for Central and Western District: Creating the infrastructure for Community Participation and Promoting Sustainable Development Concepts” by *Kadoorie Institute, The University of Hong Kong* – **\$491,735** over a period of 18 months.

School Sector

School Outreach Programme

6. The School Outreach Programme (SOP) is the on-going educational initiative of the Council to promote SD in the school community. The SOP takes place in the form of school talks. To help enhance creativity as

well as to raise the interest and level of participation of young people, SD stakeholder partners have been invited to deliver the talks. During each school visit, there is an introduction to and an interactive dialogue on the SD concept, using concrete examples with reference to current global and local issues to stimulate thinking. There are also discussions on how to put SD principles into practice in daily lives.

7. The SOP is currently at its 7th phase (the 2008-09 school year). To date, a total of more than 200 schools and over 58,000 students and teachers have taken part in the programme. Under the current phase commenced on 2 October 2008, a total of 61 secondary schools have signed up and around 20,600 students would attend the school talks. Nine SD stakeholder partners have been invited to deliver the SOP and they are the Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service Centre, Business Environment Council, Civic Exchange, the Conservancy Association, Friends of the Earth (Hong Kong), Life Workshop, Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centre, the Plan Partnership Organization and St. James' Settlement. The stakeholder partners are reimbursed with \$2,000 per visit to cover their out-of-pocket expenses and as a token of appreciation.

SD School Award Programme

8. In August 2007, the former EPSC launched a new SD School Award Programme (the Award Programme) with the objectives to introduce the concept of SD to students; raise students' awareness of the importance of SD; encourage the application of the SD concept in their daily lives and to spread the message to their families and the local community; and to create a SD network at the community level and build capacity for interested parties to organise and participate in public engagement processes or other SD-related events in future.

9. Under the Award Programme, Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards will be presented to qualified participating schools to recognise their efforts in promoting and practising the SD concept. The assessment criteria are :

- *Bronze Award* – to participate in 3 or more events/activities sponsored by the Council or the SD Fund, or relevant activities organised by the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education, with a total attendance of 400 student counts or more;
- *Silver Award* – to initiate a campaign which promotes the concept of SD and encourages such practices among students in the school,

in addition to meeting the qualifications for a Bronze Award;

- *Gold Award* – to initiate a campaign to involve parents, local residents, institutions and/or organisations with a view to promoting SD awareness and practices at the local community level, in addition to meeting the qualifications for a Silver Award.

10. The first round of the Award Programme has been completed at the end of December 2008 with 33 award-winning schools (11 schools for the Gold Award, 12 for Silver and 10 for Bronze). It is estimated that around 32,000 students, teachers, parents and members of the community have been involved in the Award Programme. A Prize Presentation Ceremony, officiated by Dr. Kitty Poon Kit, Under Secretary for the Environment, was held on 21 February 2009 at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine Jockey Club Building, Wong Chuk Hang. Around 600 guests, including principals, teachers, students and parents and the community stakeholders who have participated in the Award Programme attended. Video clips highlighting the school projects and the Prize Presentation Ceremony with guests' interviews will be uploaded to the SDD's website.

Community Sector

Community Outreach Programme

11. With a view to enhancing the work in promoting public awareness of SD and encouraging them to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives, the Council agreed that the SOP should be extended to the district level as the Council's on-going initiative to promote sustainability in local communities.

12. The Community Outreach Programme (COP) has taken place in districts where SD Fund community-based projects have been organised. The relevant fund recipient and District Council (DC) would be invited to jointly host an outreach event, usually in the form of an introductory talk, interactive sharing session to exchange experiences in implementing programmes to promote SD and highlight the impact brought by the SD Fund projects to the local community, and followed by a demonstration session of project activity e.g. community or eco-tour. To date, five events have been organised since 2006. They were held in the Wan Chai District, the Southern District, the Northern District, the Yau Tsim Mong District and the last event in Tai Po District in March 2008. Participants of these events included DC members, NGO representatives, local community groups, teacher, students and local

residents.

Focus Group Study on Public Perception of the SD Concept

13. In order to acquire a better understanding of the public perception of SD as a first step, the former EPSC agreed that a market research company should be commissioned to collect public views on SD and their degree of consensus towards the concept. In November 2008, a focus group study was conducted by a professional firm for this purpose.

14. The study consisted of five focus group sessions conducted for students (age 16 to 24), youths (age 25 to 34), adults (age 35 to 44), the middle-aged (age 45-54) and the elderly (age 55+). There were 10 respondents of the same age group with an evenly split of male and female involved in the discussion. There was a fair mix of backgrounds among the respondents, including variations in education level, work status etc.

15. The key findings of the study are as follows :

- (a) While most respondents had heard of sustainable development, their understanding of the concept was superficial. Many had confused SD with the Continuing Education Fund (持續進修基金) as their Chinese names were similar.
- (b) None of the respondent had good grasp of the SD concept being related to a balance of three elements. They mostly associated SD with environmental protection, renewable energy, cultural preservation and wall effect of buildings.
- (c) The respondents considered that the television and radio were the most effective channels of promoting SD. The other suggested mean included the internet, Roadshow (on bus) and education at school.

16. Based on the above findings, Council would continue to do more in future to educate the general public the SD concept and clarify the confusion they have on SD.

New Initiatives

School Sector

New SD School Award Programme

17. In view of the good response on the first round of the Award Programme from the schools and its effectiveness in promoting SD, the former EPSC decided that the Council should continue to run the Award Programme. The second round of the Award Programme was launched on 20 January 2009 with invitations to all secondary schools to participate. Based on experience from the first round, some modifications were made to the details of the award scheme, i.e. expanding the types of activities for participation to include events sponsored by the Council or SD Fund, or organised by other non-government organisations specialising in SD; allowance of reimbursement on certain types of expenditure; and a new prize on “Devotion to Promotion of Sustainable Development Honors Award” for the school which is qualified for the Gold Award for three consecutive years in order to recognise its efforts and contribution to the promotion of SD.

Business Sector

SD Conference 2009

18. In order to engage the business sector, the Council has planned to organise a half-day SD Conference, tentatively titled “Sustainable Business for Our Sustainable Future”, with the aim to share the good SD practices in the business sector, provide a platform for building up networks, register Government’s interests in the promotion of SD and enhance the interests of the business sector in SD in general. We plan to invite the four local chambers of commerce and industries (i.e. the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Hong Kong Industries, the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce), the Business Environment Council and Hong Kong Council of Social Services to be the supporting organisations.

19. The SD Conference is tentatively scheduled for end December 2009/early 2010 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. We target to have about 300 participants from Government bureaux and departments, large corporations and SMEs, NGOs and professional groups in Hong Kong. The list of speakers is being finalised and Members will be informed of the progress.

Community Sector

Community Outreach Activities

20. Following up on the five events under the COP, we plan to organise three more community outreach events in the coming year when the relevant SD Fund projects are becoming mature. They will include community projects in rural Tsuen Wan, South Kwai Chung and Tuen Mun/Yuen Long. The new EPSC will also consider ways to co-operate with District Councils and local NGOs to promote SD at district level.

Wall Painting Design Competition

21. A wall painting design competition was initially scheduled for launching by September this year. Selected winning entries of the competition would be painted on the two parapet walls alongside the entrance plaza of the new Chai Wan Centre for Youth Development (the Centre) and a prize giving ceremony would be held to tie in with the official opening of the Centre.

22. The completion of the Centre has been postponed due to delay in construction. As advised by the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), the Centre will be opened within this year but the exact time is to be confirmed. In order to achieve a timely co-ordination with the grand opening of the Centre for positive impact on the publicity of the design competition and hence the SD messages to be delivered, the wall painting design competition would be launched in September/October 2009. Its prize presentation ceremony is tentatively scheduled for early February 2010. We will continue to liaise with the HAB on the progress of the development of the Centre and will keep Members posted of the latest development.

Online Resource Centre for SD

23. The online resource centre was launched on 31 January 2005. It forms part of the SDD website, providing easily accessible information and reference relating to SD and information on local and international developments in the field of SD to the general public.

24. The current content and major focus of the online resource centre are :

- (a) Educational Materials of Sustainable Development
- (b) Sustainable Development at Local Community

- (c) Strategies and Development of Sustainable Development
- (d) Sustainability Assessment Mechanism
- (e) UN Agenda 21
- (f) Sustainable Development Fund
- (g) Sustainable Development in Practices
- (h) Sustainable Development School Award Programme

25. Former EPSC Members agreed that the website will be revamped based on the information of the existing online resource centre. It is the objective that the website should become more interactive and interesting, as well as facilitating with easier cross-referencing.

26. A proposal on the revamping of the website has been circulated to the former EPSC in February 2009 and Members agreed to the proposal in carrying out the revamp exercise by phrases. The first phrase should aim to stock-take and suitably categorise all the available SD information and add some new features to enhance the interactivity and attractiveness to visitors. The second phrase of enhancement will be subject to review after completion of the first phrase and the response received. Opinion from representative target visitors, including DC members, NGOs, CSR managers of corporations, students, will be collected at the appropriate stage of the revamping exercise.

Media Promotion of SD

27. In view of the findings from the Focus Group Study that the general public understanding of the SD is weak, the former EPSC Members agreed that the promotion of SD on the media could more effectively attract public attention and illustrate the practice of the SD concept supported with daily life examples. Details of the media promotion exercise will be discussed with the new EPSC to be formed.

Council Secretariat
April 2009