



Membership and Accredited Monitoring Professionals

The Institute has currently a total of 158 members including 21 Fellows, 113 Corporate Members and 24 Associate & Student Members.

AMP members are again reminded to make your annual AMP membership renewal immediately to Clara U.

HKIEIA Finances

The Treasurer reports that as of February 2005, the cash at bank is HK\$717,844.26.

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on 24 May 2005, 6:00pm at the Kowloon Club. A guest speaker will be joining us for the evening from the Sustainable Development Unit. Please attend or send your proxies in support.

Collapse – How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive

Jared Diamond, 2005 Penguin Books, ISBN 0-713-99286-7.

If you enjoyed Jared Diamond's previous book *Guns, Germs and Steel*, you may find this one better. At the outset Jared proposes a simple five point hypothesis as to why societies fail or survive: inadvertent environmental damage, climate change, hostile neighbors, decreased support from friendly neighbors and the society's response to the threats. He then uses examples of a number of societies from Haiti to New Guinea and Iceland to the Pacific Islands to support his views. Once substantiated, he uses that hypothesis to focus on the twelve major problems facing our society today. These fall into four main areas: loss of natural resources, a ceiling (on capacity of energy, freshwater and surface area), problems generated by our lifestyle (including release of toxins and green house gases) and lastly the impact of the growth of human population. Diamond concludes that if we and our global society are to survive we must foster long-term planning and re-consider our core values as a society.

His book is exceptionally well written and the prose and arguments easier to follow than *Guns, Germs and Steel*. I found his views very persuasive and believe this book to be one of the few well argued challenges to Bjorn Lomborg's book *The Skeptical Environmentalist*. Diamond's final analysis urges us to vote, decide with our purchases, support religious groups and work in our local environments supporting local causes. Anyone interested in sustainability should read this book. Enjoy it.

Glenn Frommer

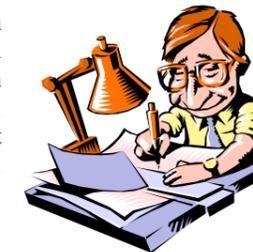


Editorial

This Newsletter reports on activities that we have not had an opportunity to report on previously. We look at some of our site visits, the development of the EIA process in China and the continued training here in Hong Kong.

It is hard to believe, but we are already planning our next Annual General Meeting in May. This year has seen a flurry of activity with site visits being supplemented by seminars all under the theme of getting back to basics. There has been an ongoing and rich environment for continuing professional development for all of you.

The Executive Committee is looking for members to enrich further their professional experience and join us in moving the Institute forward. Take advantage of the next AGM and become more active. You will not regret it.



Dr. Glenn Frommer

Chairman's Remarks

The 1st China International Forum on EIA was well attended with a strong delegation from Hong Kong. This has further strengthened our ties with our counterparts in China and, in particular, the Appraisal Centre for Environmental Engineering (see attached photo). We will further develop our relationship and explore how EIA practitioners from Hong Kong can conduct EIA in China.

I would also like to encourage our members to make use of the free registration to attend the IAIA Conference in June 2005. I am sure you will find the experience of meeting world leading EIA experts in Boston very enjoyable. For details of the conference, please visit IAIA's website www.iaia.org.

It has been another eventful year and the Institute is coming up to its 10th Anniversary in 2006. I would

like to invite members to express your views and suggestions on how we commemorate our 10th Anniversary. Please send in your suggestions via e-mail to freeman.cheung@erm.com or make use of our website to express your views.

Last but not least, we will need to elect new committee members due to the retirement of our serving committee members. Please nominate candidates and provide your continuous support at the upcoming AGM.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the AGM on 24 May 2005.



Freeman Cheung

HKIEIA Activities

ENHANCING THE EIA MECHANISM

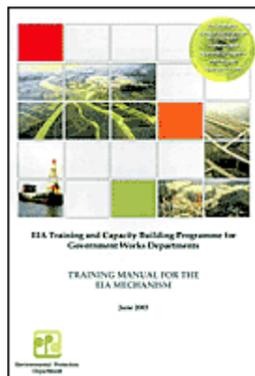
A seminar on "Ways to enhance understanding of the EIA Mechanism among Government Works Engineers" was given by Ms Clara U, the Environmental Protection Officer from Environmental Protection Department to members of HKIEIA on 29 July 2004.

In accordance with one of the initiatives in 2001 Policy Objectives, EPD drew up an "EIA Training and Capacity Building Programme" for relevant government departments in July 2002 aiming to enhance their understanding of the EIA Process. Clara introduced the purpose, objectives and results of the EIA Training and Capacity Building Programme for government departments followed by sharing with members her observations on how government works



engineers in general sees an EIA. She then explained EPD's initiatives and approaches to enhance dialogues and mutual understanding among works engineers through learning the basic principles of the EIA process and agreeing on the fundamentals. She reaffirmed the basic principles of "Avoidance- Minimization- Mitigation" should be put in place in the EIA Process and that EIA should be used proactively to solicit views and solve problems.

Between November 2002 and April 2004, the EIA Training and Capacity Building Programme delivered some 38 tailor-made workshops for more than 1000 professionals including 550 engineers from the government works departments. The workshops were well received by the government departments. Some departments also found that there were apparent mindset changes of colleagues to more positively embrace environmental considerations and getting more hand-on in managing the EIA process



The EIA Training Manual

Clara also presented to members the EIA Training Manual for Government Works Departments published by EPD. The Manual is developed based on the materials and experiences gathered throughout the workshops of the EIA Training and Capacity Building Programme to provide project proponents, especially the engineers from works departments, with knowledge, guidance, technical information and skill sets of conducting an effective EIA. The EIA training manual and information about the EIA Training and Capacity Building Programme is available in our EPD website

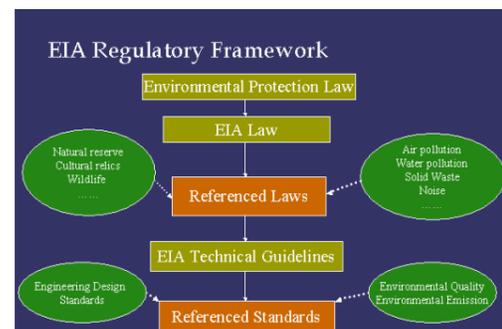
http://www.epd.gov.hk/eia/eiao_support/english/index.html.

EIA PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS IN MAINLAND CHINA

On 31 August 2004, Dr. Michael Liang and Mr David Harper of ERM have given our members an overview of the EIA process and requirements in Mainland China.

Dr. Liang has introduced the EIA regulatory framework in China for EIA Law, Referenced Law, EIA Technical Guidance and Reference Standards for those strategic and project levels. He has further elaborated the requirement for processing of various applications throughout the development of a proposed project starting from the initiation of the project, feasibility study, Government approval and finally the implementation of the project. He has also compared the different administration procedures for EIA at national, provincial and municipal levels.

Mr Harper has illustrated how these requirements can be implemented using an EIA project on the gas pipeline project in China that was undertaken by ERM. The development of this EIA involved environmental, social and health impact assessments. The project has assessed the impacts arising from the construction and operation of the gas pipeline to the surrounding biodiversity, cultural heritage and geology. The reinstatement techniques and resettlement and compensation were also discussed.



REAL TIME MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL AQUATIC SYSTEMS ON 25 JANUARY 2005

Professor Jorg Imberger of the Centre of Water Research of the University of Western Australia presented in the seminar a new methodology to quantify the performance of the physical and ecological systems using the Index of Functional Sustainability (ISF). ISF is a function of perception on economical, environmental and social issues established by survey and existing data. This methodology may be coupled with real time measurements of water properties in a natural system by an Aquatic Real Time Management System (ARMS). ARMS automatically initiates, at regular intervals, simulation runs of pre-specified scenarios computing the associated ISF ready for interrogation at a manager's convenience. This suite of new instruments and software combined with the ISF collectively offer a totally new way managing natural water bodies. The application of this new methodology was demonstrated using a number of operating examples including web based real time models for Burragorang Lake in West Australia and Lake Como in Italy, and a computer simulation for Hong Kong Waters. The audiences exhibited great interest of applying this new methodology in assessing water quality for future EIA projects in Hong Kong.



COOPERATION WITH GUANGDONG TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY IN THE PEARL RIVER DELTA REGION ON 23 FEBRUARY 2005

To improve the air quality of the whole PRD Region, the Environmental Protection Department of Hong Kong and the Environmental Protection Bureau of Guangdong Province conducted a joint study on regional air quality during 1999-2002. After the study was completed, the Hong Kong SAR Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government reached a consensus in April 2002 to reduce by 2010 the regional emissions of SO₂, NO_x, RSP and VOCs by 40%, 20%, 55% and 55% respectively, using 1997 as the base year. In December 2003, the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan was developed by the two governments and the Pearl River Delta Air Quality Management and Monitoring Special Panel was also set up to follow up on the tasks under the Management Plan. Mr MOK Wai-chuen and Dr Shermann Fong of the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau indicated that the plan for 2004 had been implemented satisfactorily and presented to the participants the action plan for 2005. There were some discussions of the practicality of achieving these aggressive targets during the seminar. However, there was a unanimous expectation that both Guangdong and Hong Kong could work together closely to improve the regional air quality for protecting public health and achieving sustainable development.

