HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
香港環境影響評估學會

# Newsletter

*Updating Hong Kong on Environmental Impact Assessment*

**Issue October 2011**

## Editorial

**When** can we have a final decision over the judicial review of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (Bridge)? This is an answer that all environmental professionals in Hong Kong have been awaiting anxiously since legal action was first initiated in November 2010. It would likely come to an end with the ruling of the Court of Appeal handed down on 27th September 2011, which allowed the Director of Environmental Protection's appeal over the High Court's ruling made in April 2011. Wouldn't you like to welcome an early construction of the Hong Kong section of this Bridge that is expected to greatly improve the connectivity of the three jurisdictions?

**What** will be the likely future for Hong Kong's aviation industry: to have or not to have an additional runway? The three-month public consultation for the *Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030* was concluded on 2 September 2011, with over 29,000 questionnaires and written feedback submissions. All feedbacks shall be reviewed by the Hong Kong's Social Sciences Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong, for a report back to the Hong Kong Airport Authority by October 2011. Did you send in your view and preference?

**Where** is Hong Kong's climate change policy heading towards? Some questions were posted by the Council for Sustainable Development after the forum discussion at its public engagement event titled "Combating Climate Change: Energy Saving and Carbon Emission Reduction in Buildings" which was held on 5th August 2011. Are you considering whether and what to suggest to the Council Secretariat on how to make Hong Kong a better place to live in? Your views are being actively sought before 4 December 2011.

**Are you wondering which** of the twenty odd transportation operator(s) will demonstrate clear leadership as the pioneer to introduce electric vehicle to stimulate more efforts to reduce street level air pollution in Hong Kong? Would you feel excited to be able to ride on the first pilot electric car irrespective whether it is a bus, mini-bus or goods van? I am definitely interested to know more about the scheme and delighted to serve as a "*guinea pig*" on "*the first ride*". How about you?

For **whom** will you vote in the upcoming District Council election? This is a personal choice...and….likewise your response to the above **4**"**W**"s!!

***David YEUNG***

## Chairman's Remarks

I am sure many of our members, as key stakeholders of the EIA process, have been watching very closely the development and associated public debates over the judicial review mounted against the decisions made by the Authority on the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge EIA. The legal dispute on this case has stalled the progress of many other project EIAs, after the handing down of the High Court decision this April.

During the past five months, the HKIEIA has been frequently approached for our views on issues related to the case. Apart from invitations to attend public forum discussions, there is a recent media request to comment on the Hong Kong EIA

system, from a professional perspective. A documentary is scheduled for release on one of the local television network in the coming Sunday (details provided below under *Upcoming Events/Activities*).

May and September provided good opportunities for professional exchanges with other international impact assessment experts: viz. via IAIA 2011 and IAIA SEA II respectively. Special debriefings will be announced shortly for sharing with interested members.

In addition, invitations for joint collaborations of various kinds are flowing in. To facilitate more effective delivery of services to members, we would urge all, especially our young members, to volunteer active participation by joining the various organizing subcommittees. With concerted efforts, we are aiming for a fruitful year ahead for the HKIEIA, especially in activities and capacity building.

***Shirley LEE***

## From the Secretary

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2011 was held on 18 May and a new Executive Committee has been set up as follows:

- Chairman: Shirley LEE
- Honorary Treasurer: Freeman CHEUNG
- Honorary Secretary: Claudine LEE
- External Secretary: David YEUNG
- External Affairs: Josh LAM
- Membership Secretary: Clara U
- Members: Henry LEUNG, Tong ZHANG, Mohamed Hansan ISA and Eva HO
- Co-opted Members: Glenn FROMMER, Felice WONG and Fai Fai YEUNG

We will continue to focus effort in assisting members with their professional development. A series of events and activities is being organized. An Events Sub-committee has been formed with the following membership to take charge of the organizing these events:

- David YEUNG
- Clara U
- Henry LEUNG
- Claudine LEE
- Eva HO
- Mohamed Hasan ISA

Due to personal reason, Anna YU, our elected ordinary member of the Executive Committee in 2010 has resigned from her position. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Anna for her great effort and contribution during her service for the Institute.

***Claudine LEE***

## HKIEIA Events/Activities

- ***Upcoming Events / Activities***

*RTHK interviewed our Mr. Freeman Cheung*

**RTHK Interview**: Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) is preparing a feature story for the program Hong Kong Connection and approached the HKIEIA for input from our professional angle regarding Hong Kong's EIA system. We were advised that the episode would cover the recent legal debates over the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge EIA and would also talk about other proposed infrastructures in the vicinity like the Airport Third Runway and the Tung Chung Reclamation. The programme is tentatively scheduled to be broadcasted on 23 October 2011 --

1900 hour--on TVB's Jade Channel. On 16 October, RTHK interviewed our Freeman Cheung currently an Executive Committee member and one of our Past Chairmen. Freeman, as a veteran EIA practitioner, talked about the industry's viewpoints regarding certain criticisms from green groups, as well as some achievements and setbacks of the current EIA system. Members are encouraged to watch out this interesting and topical documentary.

- ***Events / Activities Review***

***HKIE (Env Div) Annual Seminar – Green Transport for Low Carbon City (7 April)***

This seminar was probably prompted by the unprecedented frequency and scale of natural disasters that struck various nations; the call on all engineering and environmental professionals on what must be done to reduce risks associated with Climate Change: such as tackling directly what is believed to be the leading culprit--Green House Gas Emissions--with focus on local vehicular emissions as a major contributing source. Many of our members attended the event and below are extracts of summarized comments from two of them:

*"…the seminar attracted speakers from engineering consultants, public utilities companies and various transport sectors; issues covered challenges ahead to be resolved for Hong Kong to embrace green transportation; new technologies for more user-friendly charging system for electric vehicles, feasibility of running electric bus to serve the local community, exploring the feasibility of wider use of bicycles in the urban context and the need to improve existing road infra-structures to suit; Macao government's interest in developing Light Rail Transit as a low energy, "low carbon" initiative…"*

*"…although there are challenges to be overcome to facilitate adoption of green transportation in Hong Kong…it is believed that with strong government support, improved consumer education, and genuine intergovernmental collaboration, it is an achievable target for Hong Kong to become a Low Carbon City* ***in the near future****…."*

*"…the seminar is* ***considered inspiring, interesting and very successful:****…covered a wide spectrum: participants from many sectors and from different age groups; speakers from local (Hong Kong & Macao) to international--to share their knowledge on how to reduce vehicular emissions; technologies shared by different sectors (from land based rail transport sector to marine transport sector);…and* ***stimulating****...called upon every single person to contribute towards carbon reduction, and to move Hong Kong closer to becoming a low carbon emission society….."*

*"… delighted to find so many youngsters from tertiary institutes attending the seminar to get the latest information on low carbon transportation technology…"*

***Winnie CHAN & TY LAU***

***Visit to Ngong Ping 360 (30 April)***

Since our last visit in 2007, a number of new **green** initiatives have been added to the area such as: the Ngong Ping (NP) Nature Centre run by the Agriculture Fisheries and Conservation Department; the NP Fun Walk leading to the Wisdom Path and the Tea Garden; and the breath taking Crystal Cable Car Ride which enables all, including those of us who participated in the visit, to enjoy the magnificent view of the Tung Chung Bay.

*Group Photo of the Participants*

Before the half day tour, we have the pleasure of enjoying an update by Mr. Anderson CHOW, as the Assistant Manager (Safety and Environment) of NP 360, on its many environmentally-friendly features. It was followed by an educational and guided eco-tour of the NP Nature Centre during which members could enjoy and explore the cultural and natural resources at Ngong Ping.

*Group Photo of the Participants*

*Souvenir Presentation to Mr Anderson Chow the Assistant Manager (Safety & Environment) of NP360*

***Clara U***

### *CIWEM AGM Dinner (13 May)*

Members of the HKIEIA Executive Committee were officially invited to participate in CIWEM HK's Annual Dinner held after the AGM at the Hong Kong Jockey Club on 13 May 2011. It was an enjoyable evening with the President of CIWEM UK Mr. Gerard Morris delivering a speech titled: **What do we want our sustainable future to look like?** We congratulated Mr. Anthony Ma and his newly elected Executive Committee members of the CIWEM HK and we look forward to continue the good collaboration efforts between CIWEM HK and HKIEIA

*Group Photo of the Participants*

***Henry LEUNG***

### *Annual General Meeting 2011*

Thirty-eight Fellows and Members gathered at the World Trade Centre Club for our AGM. The Chairperson Shirley LEE and the Honorary Treasure Freeman CHEUNG reported respectively the Institute's accomplishments and finances for 2010-2011. Amendments to the HKIEIA Memorandum circulated were subsequently endorsed at the AGM and to take immediate effect. Clara U, David YEUNG and Mohamed Hasan ISA were elected members of the Committee for a term of 3 years. Members also agreed on the re-appointment of Louis Lai & Luk--Certified Public Accountants as the Institute's Honorary Auditor for Year 2011-12. Members and invited external guests participated in a lively discussion on the Hong Kong EIA process and its effectiveness, moderated by Glenn FROMMER. Many felt that it was a valuable event for experience sharing amongst different EIA practitioners and a refreshing change from the conventional speech from an invited guest speaker.

***Claudine LEE***

### *IAIA11 Annual Conference*

The 31st Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) was held in Puebla, Mexico's fourth largest city and a UNESCO World Heritage site. Six delegates from Hong Kong attended the conference end May/early June, comprising fellows and members of the HKIEIA: Prof. KC LAM, Dr CN NG, Henry LEUNG, Josh LAM and Danica FT CHAN (HKIEIA sponsored student member), as well as Prof. David CHEN from the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

*Delegates from Hong Kong, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Nankai University, China, after the Opening Plenary*

This year, the conference theme was *"Impact Assessment and Responsible Development for Infrastructure, Business and Industry"*. Over 600 participants from all over the world gathered to exchange experience and learn from each other on ways to conduct local, regional and global action to promote the responsible development of infrastructure, business and industry.

Theme Forums were arranged, including Biodiversity, Corporate Stewardship & Risk Management, EIA systems & Regulations, Impact Assessment & SEA, and their influences in decision making, planning and implementation of sustainable development of industrial and infrastructure projects were illustrated.

*Q&A in the SEA and Climate Change Session*

*A "China Night" for Hong Kong and Mainland China delegates was organized to get together in a Mexico heritage building*

A debriefing with HKIEIA members on IAIA11 will be arranged later this year. The next IAIA conference will be on *"Energy Future: The Role of Impact Assessment"*, in Porto, Portugal end May/early June 2012.

***Henry LEUNG & Josh LAM***

### *IAIA SEA Prague II 2011 (21 to 23 September)*

The Second Special Conference on Strategic Environmental Assessment with theme title: ***"SEA Implementation and Practice: Making an Impact?"*** was held in Prague, Czech Republic this September. It was organized by IAIA in cooperation with the European Commission-DG Environment and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; and co-hosted by Integra

Consulting and the Czech University of Life Sciences.

I attended as the HKIEIA representative and the only delegate from Hong Kong China. Representatives from countries around the Pacific Rim included China, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Taiwan, India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal and Australia. Over 240 participants joined to exchange, reflect and revisit the state of SEA practice internationally and in the European Union in particular, in anticipation of the 60+ world leaders meeting in June 2012 to review progress toward sustainable development, as part of the Rio+ process. The conference has been designed as a stock taking and agenda setting event to point to new directions.

*Plenary session on 23 September 2011 with Barry Saddler delivering the closing speech for IAIA Prague II*

Some core issues explored include:

- What needs to be done to accelerate environmental integration into strategic level decision making through the application of SEA?
- How to apply SEA to increase influence over the selection and implementation of environmentally-better alternatives?
- Does SEA address threats of cumulative and large scale environmental effects such as loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, resources depletion and climate change?
- Does SEA facilitate a transition to a green economy, especially at a time when most member states within the European Union are facing serious economic crisis on a national front?
- Does SEA facilitate constructive public participation and stakeholder dialogue?
- How can SEA be made more interactive and with true value-added?

*Bird's eye view of the picturesque Prague, capital city of the Czech Republic*

*View overlooking the medieval town which is home to the State Castle and Chateau at Cesky Krumlov-a UNESCO Site of Cutural Heritage south of Prague city*

Aside from the opening plenary session, there were many interesting concurrent sessions covering 11 themes, with sharing of discussions outcomes at the final plenary session. A debriefing to HKIEIA

members will be arranged shortly, with prior notification to all members.

***Shirley LEE***

## HKIEIA Membership

The Institute has currently a total of 287 members, including 22 Fellows, 200 Corporate Members, 55 Associate Members, 7 Student Members and 3 Honorary Members.

Members are reminded to make your annual membership renewal together with the completed CPD record immediately to Clara U.

***Clara U***

## HKIEIA Finances

Thanks to our members who have paid their subscriptions in a timely manner to maintain a healthy balance of HK$898,251 in our Bank Accounts at the end of September 2010. For those who have not paid their dues, please send the cheques to the Hon Treasurer.

***Freeman CHEUNG***