



**Hong Kong Women Professionals & Entrepreneurs Association (HKWPEA)  
Public Affairs Committee**

**Response Paper to the Promotion of Sustainable Consumption of Biological  
Resources**

**14<sup>th</sup> November, 2016**

**Background:**

The Hong Kong Women Professionals and Entrepreneurs Association (HKWPEA, our “Association”) is a non-profit organization established in September 1996 by a group of local women professionals and entrepreneurs. We are a group of women professionals, business executives and entrepreneurs who have come together with the following objectives: to develop a strong support network, to create practical and innovative learning and business opportunities for themselves and for others, to promote high professional standards. As we are based in Hong Kong, the Association also has the vision and mission to reach out and try to establish relationship with counterparts in Mainland China and abroad. As part of the Hong Kong community, we are also committed to gather comments and feedbacks from our members through the Public Affairs Committee to provide timely response to the consultation papers of the HKSAR Government on various policy issues.

**Response to the Promotion of Sustainable Consumption of Biological Resources**

Hong Kong is now the second largest per capita consumer of seafood in Asia and the seventh largest in the world. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 505, 553 tons of seafood was consumed in Hong Kong in 2011, an average of 71.2 kgs of seafood per person in that year. It was about 3.8 times higher than the global average and doubles the per capita consumption in mainland China. HKWPEA is supportive of raising public awareness towards sustaining biological resources, especially marine resources, through rational consumption.

Nowadays, there are many public concerns about overfishing. Many business sectors in Hong Kong such as hotels, restaurants, catering groups, and retailers are looking for sustainable seafood for the end users. Sales volumes of sustainable seafood have increased substantially and more suppliers are providing an increasing number of sustainable seafood options throughout Hong Kong.

Seafood from certified sustainable fisheries can be sold with the ecolabel so that everyone can make an informed decision to buy seafood from a sustainable source. This choice rewards sustainable fisheries. It also incentivizes others to become more sustainable. Such Ecolabels include Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) for sustainable wild-caught seafood. Agricultural Stewardship Council (ASC), Global Gap, Best Agricultural Practice (BAP), and Friend of the Sea are some of the Ecolabels for sustainable farmed seafood. Only well managed fisheries that ensure long term sustainability of fish stocks and keep ecosystems healthy can meet this standard.

Local certification bodies are surely encouraged in Hong Kong. As certification is really the key success factor for promoting sustainable biological resources, we would like to emphasize the lead taken by the Government. There must be a fair mechanism and process in ensuring the professionalism and high standard of the certification. The Government should make an action plan, set target to adopt certification systems for areas most relevant to consumption patterns in Hong Kong, i.e. seafood, timber, birds, etc. There are different organisations already in Hong Kong doing lot of ground work and their experience is most valuable. It is critical to have open communication with these expertise to understand the challenges they face in promoting sustainable biological resources in Hong Kong, hence, the gap of promotion means can be closed more efficiently and effectively.

The Seafood Guide is a good tool to raise public awareness and to help consumers make sustainable seafood choices in Hong Kong. Seafood assessments for both wild-caught seafood and farmed seafood are conducted by third parties with recognized experience and expertise in seafood sustainability assessment. If the government can take the lead to provide a seafood guide for the public, it can increase the awareness of seafood sustainability to the industry and the public. More engagement, promotion, awareness-raising on sustainable seafood will certainly help building up stronger momentum in the sustainable seafood movement in Hong Kong.

Education of the public is the most efficient activity for developing best practices in environmental conservation. Sustainability should be introduced at school, T.V.,

radios, internet to raise awareness about sustainable seafood among the public and the business sector. Targets and systematic approach should be set up to unroll education programs not only in schools, but also for major hotel chains, restaurants chains or groups, the import and export association, etc. Practices should be established to conduct periodic inspection of hotels, restaurants, retails that provide banquets or sell sustainable biological resources, so as to encourage good practices and ensure maintenance of good standard on an ongoing basis.