



## **Marine Ecology Enhancement Fund Management Committee (MEEF-MC) Assessment Guidelines**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 These guidelines have been developed to provide guidance to the MEEF-MC for the assessment of applications under the Marine Ecology Enhancement Fund (MEEF), to ensure a consistent approach is adopted by individual assessors and reduce the risk of improper assessment for the allocation of funds. These guidelines apply to the assessor involved in the assessment of any application. A member will be assigned as an assessor of an application by the Secretariat with reference to the member's expertise/specialist knowledge and upon consideration of any declared interest of the member in the *Declaration of Interest Form for MEEF Applications*. Names of assessor(s), information about the application and other information should not be disclosed.

### **2. Procedure**

- 2.1 All necessary documents will be delivered to the assigned assessor by post or through email (according to the assessor's preference) through the Secretariat. A short summary of the applications will also be provided by the Secretariat for easy reference. If under any circumstances, the assessor is unable to assess the assigned application within the required timeframe, he/she should notify the Secretariat within three (3) business days through email after receiving an application for assessment. If the assessor needs any clarification and/or additional details in relation to an application, the requests should be made through the Secretariat within five (5) business days after receiving an application for assessment. The assessor should complete the assessment within thirty (30) business days or the date specified by the Secretariat, whichever is earlier.

### **3. Assessment Criteria**

- 3.1 The MEEF has been established for the purpose of conserving marine life (particularly Chinese White Dolphins) within the Hong Kong waters and the Pearl River estuary waters for the benefit of the general public in Hong Kong by:
- (i) enhancing the carrying capacity of relevant marine parks and marine habitats in Hong Kong;
  - (ii) promoting dolphin friendly activities;
  - (iii) promoting the recovery of fisheries resources; and





- (iv) promoting scientific research (provided that the results are disseminated to the public) for the overall benefit of marine mammals, particularly Chinese White Dolphins.

3.2 The funding themes of MEEF have been reviewed and elaborated according to the approved Marine Ecology Conservation Plan (MECP), and subsequent discussion in the MEEFMC meetings. The MEEF aims to achieve its conservation goals by supporting initiatives in the following four themes:

- (i) Conservation & Enhancement of Marine Life and Habitat Theme
- (ii) Scientific Research & Studies Theme
- (iii) Education on Marine Environment & Sustainability Theme
- (iv) Cultural Heritage & Eco-tourism Theme

Please refer to the MECP for more details.

3.3 The duration of each project shall not exceed 20 months. Projects with a proposed duration longer than 20 months will not be approved. (*Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Question 2 refer*)

3.4 The following questions should be considered during the assessment of an application:

**(1) Which location is the project focused in? (Please assess based on the main theme of the application) (Score = 1 to 3) (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Question 4 refer)**

- (i) The project focuses on habitats or species/environmental education or eco-tourism in North Lantau or western waters of Hong Kong / the PRE. (Score = 3)
- (ii) The project partially focuses on habitats or species/environmental education or eco-tourism in North Lantau or western waters of Hong Kong/the PRE. (Score = 2)
- (iii) The project focuses on habitats or species/environmental education or eco-tourism in Hong Kong (excluding North Lantau or western waters of Hong Kong / the PRE). (Score = 1)

**(2) Are there any planned benefits from the project, in particular, whether the project would contribute to enhancement, conservation and/or management improvement of marine ecology? (Score = 0 to 3) (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Questions 4, 10 and 11 refer)**





- (i) The project is expected to bring notable benefits to habitat conservation and enhancement/understanding of marine ecology and provide advice for the management of marine parks and the surrounding environment/promote environmental education and eco-tourism. (Score = 3)
- (ii) The project is expected to bring moderate benefits to habitat conservation and enhancement/understanding of marine ecology and provide advice for the management of marine parks and the surrounding environment/promote environmental education and eco-tourism. (Score = 2)
- (iii) The project is expected to bring minor benefits to habitat conservation and enhancement/understanding of marine ecology and provide advice for the management of marine parks and the surrounding environment/promote environmental education and eco-tourism. (Score = 1)
- (iv) The project is not expected to bring any benefits to habitat conservation and enhancement/understanding of marine ecology and provide advice for the management of marine parks and the surrounding environment/promote environmental education and eco-tourism. (Score = 0)

**(3) Do the key members of the project team have sufficient experience and ability in the field of the proposed project? (Score = 0 to 3) (Note: Application Form - Section B, Questions 7, 8, 15 and 16 refer)**

- (i) The key members of project team have relevant qualification with 10 years or more working experience in the subject area. (Score = 3)
- (ii) The key members of project team have relevant qualification with 5 - 10 years of working experience in the subject area. (Score = 2)
- (iii) The key members of the project team have relevant qualification with less than 5 years in the subject area. (Score = 1)
- (iv) The key members of project team have no relevant experience in the field of the subject area. (Score = 0)

**(4) Does the project have clear and achievable goals? (Score = 0 to 3) (Note: Application Form - Section B, Questions 5, 9 – 11 refer)**

- (i) The planning and goal setting are excellent with clear, specific and measureable goals. (Score = 3)
- (ii) The planning and goal setting are reasonable, but some of the goals may be ambiguous. (Score = 2)
- (iii) There are some deficiencies in the planning and goal setting, and the goals are ambiguous. (Score = 1)





(iv) Major deficiencies in the planning and goal setting are identified. (Score = 0)

**(5) Does the project have a technically sound methodology? (Score = 0 to 3)** (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Questions 9, 10, 11 and 17 refer)

(i) The project has a sound methodology to enable the goals and objectives of the project to be achieved. (Score = 3)

(ii) The methodology is reasonable, but some of the goals and objectives of the project may not be achieved. (Score = 2)

(iii) Some deficiencies of the methodology are identified, and most of the goals and objectives of the project may not be achieved. (Score =1)

(iv) Major deficiencies are identified in the methodology to achieve the goals and objectives of the project. (Score = 0)

**(6) Does the project have a reasonable timeframe and work plan? (Score = 0 to 3)** (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Questions 2 and 9 refer)

(i) The timeframe and work plan are clear and reasonable and there will unlikely be any obstacles causing delays in the project. (Score = 3)

(ii) The timeframe and work plan are satisfactory and the project team is expected to have limited obstacles causing delays in the project. (Score = 2)

(iii) There are some deficiencies in the timeframe and work plan and it is expected there would be delays in the project. (Score =1)

(iv) Major deficiencies are identified in the timeframe and work plan and major delay is anticipated. (Score = 0)

**(7) Does the application allocate sufficient manpower and resources for the size of the project? (Score = 0 to 3)** (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Questions 7, 8, 9, 12 and 14 refer)

(i) The manpower and resources planned for the project is sufficient and reasonable. (Score = 3)

(ii) The manpower and resources planned for the project is satisfactory. (Score = 2)

(iii) There are some deficiencies identified in the manpower and resources planned for the project. (Score =1)

(iv) Major deficiencies in the arrangement of manpower and resources are identified. (Score = 0)





- (8) **Does the project have a realistic budget? (Score = 0 to 3)** (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Questions 8, 12 – 14 refer)
- (i) The budgeting is realistic and reasonable, and the project is expected to have sufficient funds for project execution. (Score = 3)
  - (ii) The budgeting is satisfactory, and the project team is expected to have sufficient fund available for project execution. (Score = 2)
  - (iii) There are some deficiencies in the budgeting, and the project may be expected to be out of budget or overpriced. (Score = 1)
  - (iv) Major shortfall of the budget is identified. (Score = 0)
- (9) **Has a similar project been conducted before? (Score = 0 to 3)** (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Questions 6, 14 - 16 refer)
- (i) No similar project has been conducted in Hong Kong/PRE before and it is considered beneficial/important to carry out the project. (Score = 3)
  - (ii) Similar projects have been conducted in Hong Kong/PRE, but it is considered beneficial/important to carry out the project. (Score = 2)
  - (iii) Similar projects have been conducted in Hong Kong/PRE, but it is considered less beneficial/less important to carry out the project. (Score = 1)
  - (iv) Similar projects have been conducted in Hong Kong/PRE, and it is considered unnecessary to carry out the project. (Score = 0)
- (10) **Where the project is of an educational or a knowledge sharing nature, how would the project team plan to share the project outcomes and knowledge with the target audience? Will the proposed plan likely to be able to reach the target audience? (Score = 0 to 3)** (Note: **Application Form** - Section B, Question 17 refers)
- (i) There is a plan in the application which clearly states how to share the project outcomes and knowledge with sufficient details. The plan is appropriate for the project nature and is likely to be able to reach the target audience and convey the key message effectively. (Score = 3)
  - (ii) There is a plan in the application which clearly states how to share the project outcomes and knowledge with sufficient details. The plan is appropriate for the project nature but it is doubtful if it could reach the target audience and convey the key message effectively. (Score = 2)
  - (iii) There is a plan in the application which vaguely states how to share the project outcomes and knowledge with little details. The plan may not be





appropriate for the project nature and may not be able to reach the target audience or convey the key message effectively. (Score = 1)

- (iv) No plan is included in the application, or if a plan is included, there are major deficiencies on how the project outcomes and knowledge will be shared. The plan is inappropriate for the project nature and is unlikely to be able to reach the target audience or convey the key message. (Score = 0)

**(11) Considering the above assessment items, do you agree that the application should receive MEEF funding?**

- (i) The project objectives can strongly enhance the marine environment for the benefit of marine ecology; the MEEF should consider approving this application. (please select “Strongly agree”)
- (ii) The project objectives can fairly enhance the marine environment for the benefit of marine ecology. (please select “Agree”)
- (iii) The project objectives can fairly enhance the marine environment for the benefit of marine ecology, but there might be some potential risk that the project cannot be fully implemented. (please select “Neutral”)
- (iv) The project objectives can fairly enhance the marine environment for the benefit of marine ecology, but there might be high potential risk that the project cannot be fully implemented. (please select “Disagree”)
- (v) The project objectives can barely enhance the marine environment for the benefit of marine ecology, and there might be high potential risk that the project cannot be fully implemented. (please select “Strongly disagree”)

3.5 The application should be scored according to the assessment guidelines. The scores and comments for applications should be marked in the *Application Assessment Form*, with 0 as the lowest score (except Question 1 above) and 3 as the highest score for each assessment criteria. The maximum score is 30 points. In respect of each question, if the assessor decides to award a score of 0 or 3, the assessor should justify his/her award by filling in the comments in the *Application Assessment Form*. In addition, the assessor shall provide overall comments on each application in the *Application Assessment Form*. Each application has to score 1 or above in each of the assessment questions per assessment form in order to be further considered in the discussion of funding priorities. If a score of 0 is given in any of the assessment questions for an application, the application will be disqualified and will not be further considered in the discussion of funding priorities.

