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Subject: Challenge of climate change taken into account in reclamation design - a letter to the editor of SCMP

From: PAUL CK CHU/CEDD/HKSARG - Friday 26/02/2016 19:46

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From: PAUL CK CHU/CEDD/HKSARG

To: letters@scmp.com,

Date: 26/02/2016 19:40

Subject: Challenge of climate change taken into account in reclamation design - a letter to the editor of SCMP

EDMS No.: Doc. Src. :

Dear Editor,

I refer to the article by Dr Martin Williams entitled “Extreme folly of reclamation amid rising sea levels” (February 4). I would like to provide relevant information for reference of your readers.

Hong Kong is committed to working together with the international community to combat the challenge of climate change. Among the measures, the Civil Engineering and Development Department is updating the existing design guidelines for coastal structures including reclamation works, making reference to the latest assessment reports published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to take into account the predicted sea level rise.

Reclamation is a recognised major source of land formation for coastal cities worldwide. In 2013, the Government conducted a public engagement exercise on the enhanced land supply strategy and identified the central waters between Lantau and Hong Kong Island as having a good potential for development of artificial islands for accommodating population and as a new core business district.

Against this background, the Government has proposed to carry out technical studies to determine the feasibility and suitability of the reclamation. Whilst no position has been taken on the proposal at this stage, the works departments reckon that purely on the technical ground of coastal defense against severe weather conditions, there is no reason to regard the construction of artificial islands as “folly”. The design standards and technology for reclamation works and coastal defense structures will take into consideration the probable severe weather conditions including storm surges.

Regards,
Paul C. K. Chu
Senior Engineer/Public Relations
Civil Engineering and Development Department