

Local Vessels Advisory Committee

Pilotage Advisory Committee

High Speed Craft Consultative Committee

Port Operations Committee

**Further Updates on the Establishment of South Lantau Marine Park -
Installation of Boundary Buoys**

Purpose

Members are invited to refer to the Annex for perusal of a paper concerning the captioned matter, and submit any comments on the paper by replying to the Secretariat on or before 28 May 2021.

Marine Department
14 May 2021

**Further Updates on the Establishment of South Lantau Marine Park -
Installation of Boundary Buoys**

Purpose

1. This document aims to further update and seek members' views on the installation of boundary buoys for the proposed South Lantau Marine Park (SLMP).

Background

2. The waters around the Soko Islands in south Lantau are important habitats of the endangered Chinese White Dolphin (CWD) and Finless Porpoise (FP). For enhanced protection of precious marine mammals living in Hong Kong waters and better conservation of the marine environment, we need to designate more habitat areas in these waters as marine parks. Designation of a new marine park in the south Lantau waters is also a mandatory requirement for the smooth and timely commissioning of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMP) Phase 1 Project, which is an important infrastructure for waste management in Hong Kong.

Updates of the proposed SLMP

3. The proposed SLMP is located in the waters of south Lantau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and covers a sea area of about 2 067 hectares. The proposed SLMP includes coastal area below the high water mark except four inner bay areas of Siu A Chau and two inner bay areas of Tai A Chau as shown on the draft map. The boundary is shown on the draft map (Plan No. MP/SL) at **Appendix A**. The landward boundary will be demarcated with reference to the high water mark along the coastline of the Soko Islands. According to the Marine Parks and Marine Reserves Regulation (Cap. 476A), the speed of a vessel shall not exceed 10 knots inside marine parks. Apart from the speed limit, there is no special restriction or regulation on the entry or passing through the proposed SLMP including the core area for marine

traffic.

4. A Core Area of about 145 hectares between the Soko Islands, as shown pink hatched black on the proposed SLMP Management Plan (Plan No. MP/SL/1) at **Appendix B**, will be demarcated for further conservation of marine and fisheries resources. Fishing activities will not be permitted within the Core Area. To enhance marine and fisheries resources in the proposed SLMP, artificial reefs will be deployed to provide shelter for marine life, and fish restocking in the form of releasing fish fry or fingerling will be carried out within the Core Area to increase marine and fisheries resources, after the designation of the SLMP.

5. The Country and Marine Parks Authority has been directed under the Marine Parks Ordinance (MPO) (Cap. 476) to prepare a draft map showing the proposed South Lantau Marine Park (SLMP) for proceeding with the statutory designation process. A notice regarding the public inspection of the draft map was gazetted in December 2020 and no objection to the draft map was received during the 60-day inspection period expired on 28 February 2021. The statutory designation process is expected to be completed in 2022.

Consultation with Marine Department's Consultative Committees

6. The Marine Department's Consultative Committees namely the Local Vessels Advisory Committee (LVAC), the Pilotage Advisory Committee (PAC), the High Speed Craft Consultative Committee (HSCCC) and the Port Operations Committee (POC) were consulted on the detailed design of the proposed SLMP including the proposed boundary, management plan and fisheries enhancement measures in September 2019.

7. The Marine Traffic Impact Assessment (MTIA) has identified no engagement of busy marine traffic within the waters of the proposed SLMP. In addition to other alternative route options, the buffer zone between the boundary of the proposed marine park and the nearby Traffic Separation Schemes (TSSs) and the one between the proposed marine park and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region boundary would also be expected to provide sufficient accommodation for the nearby marine traffic.

8. The Committee members had no objection to the design plan of the proposed SLMP. Some members considered that the marine park boundary buoys deployed at the proposed waters could be considered as obstacles to vessels, particularly for larger ones, which would need to maintain a safe distance when passing them. In case of drifting and malfunction of any boundary buoy, it might be dangerous for surface navigation of vessels including high speed crafts.

Proposed Locations of Boundary Buoys

9. To address the concerns related to marine traffic safety, the number of proposed boundary buoys will be minimised. AFCD has reviewed the deployment plan of boundary buoys for the proposed SLMP with a view to balancing the need for effective management and law enforcement of the marine park while addressing the concerns related to marine traffic safety .

10. Clear demarcation is essential for the effective management and law enforcement of marine parks. The existing marine parks in Hong Kong are marked on navigation charts and demarcated by boundary buoys with lights such that different marine users can identify these areas easily. As the local fishing vessels are largely sampans without electronic chart equipment on board and the mobile network coverage in south Lantau waters is weak, fisheries representatives have urged for physical buoys to let them recognize the boundary of the marine park and facilitate permitted fishing activities in marine parks. Having physical buoys may also facilitate law enforcement in evidence collection at sea.

11. Based on the findings of the MTIA, the majority of vessel movements within the proposed SLMP are made by small vessels (e.g. local fishing vessels) and these vessels can maneuver and maintain a safe distance from marine park boundary buoys easily. It is also identified that the proposed SLMP is set within a relatively quiet water space.

12. To address the concerns of some Committee members, the number of boundary buoys has been reduced from 12 (for the 10-pointed polygon plus two buoys at mid-points of southern and western boundary as shown in **Appendix C**) to 7 (as shown in **Appendix D**). A total of 5 originally planned physical boundary buoys near the navigation channels have now been removed. The

boundary buoys are proposed to be laid at strategic locations for the demarcation of the boundary of the proposed SLMP. They have avoided the nearby Traffic Separation Schemes to the north and southwest of the marine park. In other marine parks, in general, a boundary buoy would be placed at each corner and additional buoys may also be located along the boundary to indicate the marine park area.

Way Forward

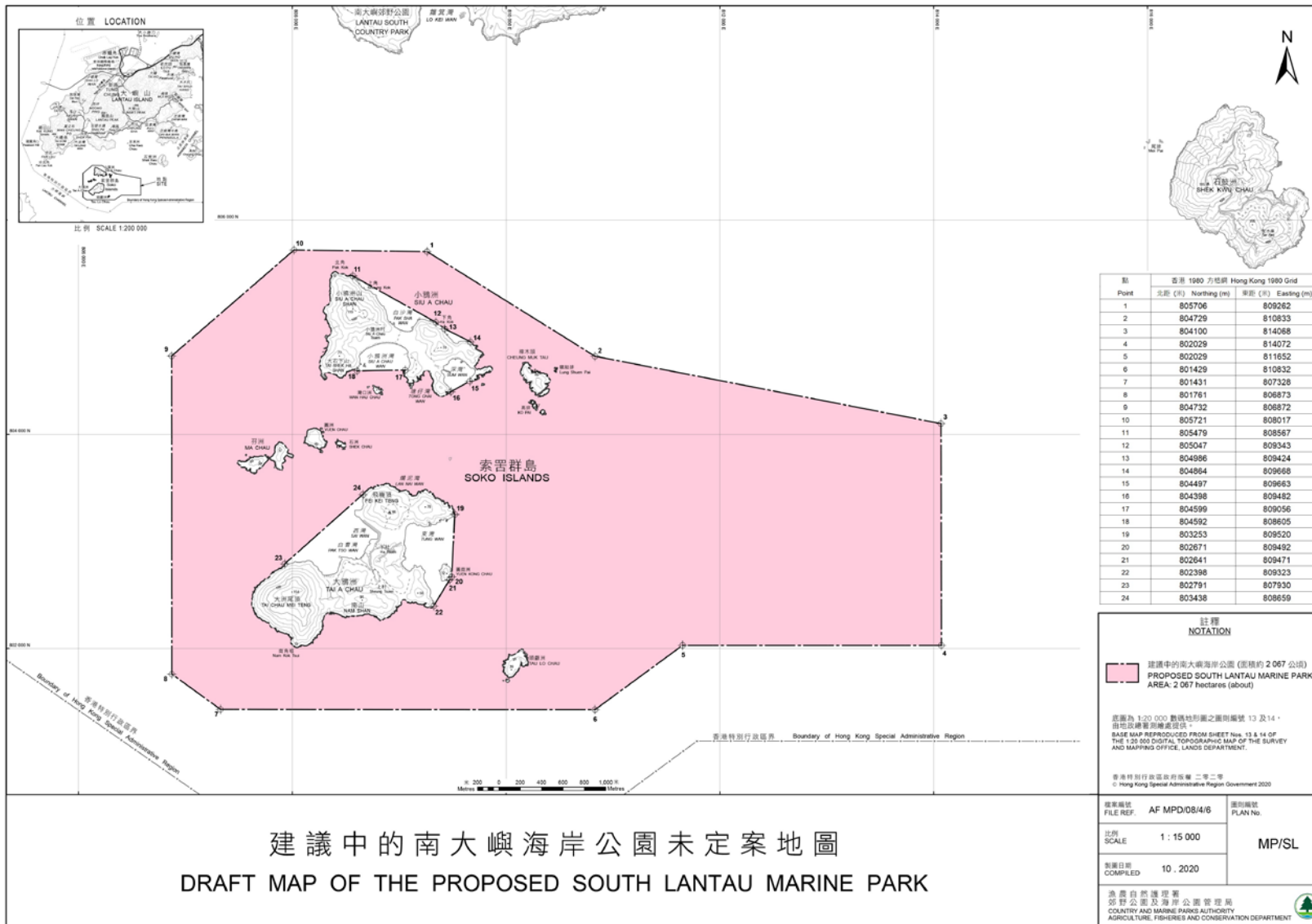
13. AFCD will liaise with the MD for the installation of the boundary buoys for the proposed SLMP.

Advice Sought

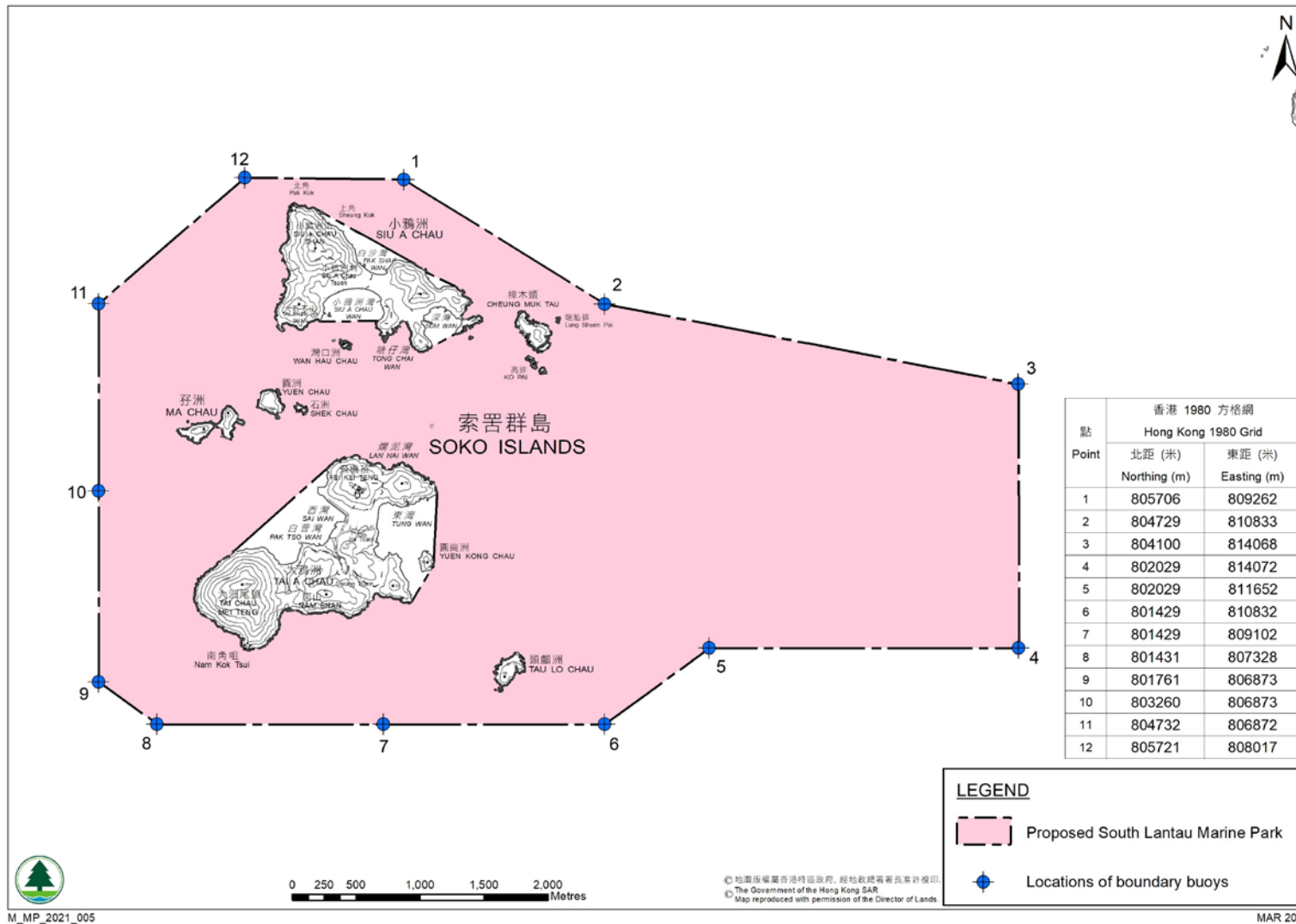
14. Members are invited to provide your comments, if any, on the number and positions of boundary buoys for the proposed SLMP. In case of any enquiry on the related matters, please contact Dr. CHAN Kwok Kuen, Ivan of AFCD by phone at [3468 3057](tel:34683057), or by email: ivan_kk_chan@afcd.gov.hk.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Environmental Protection Department

May 2021

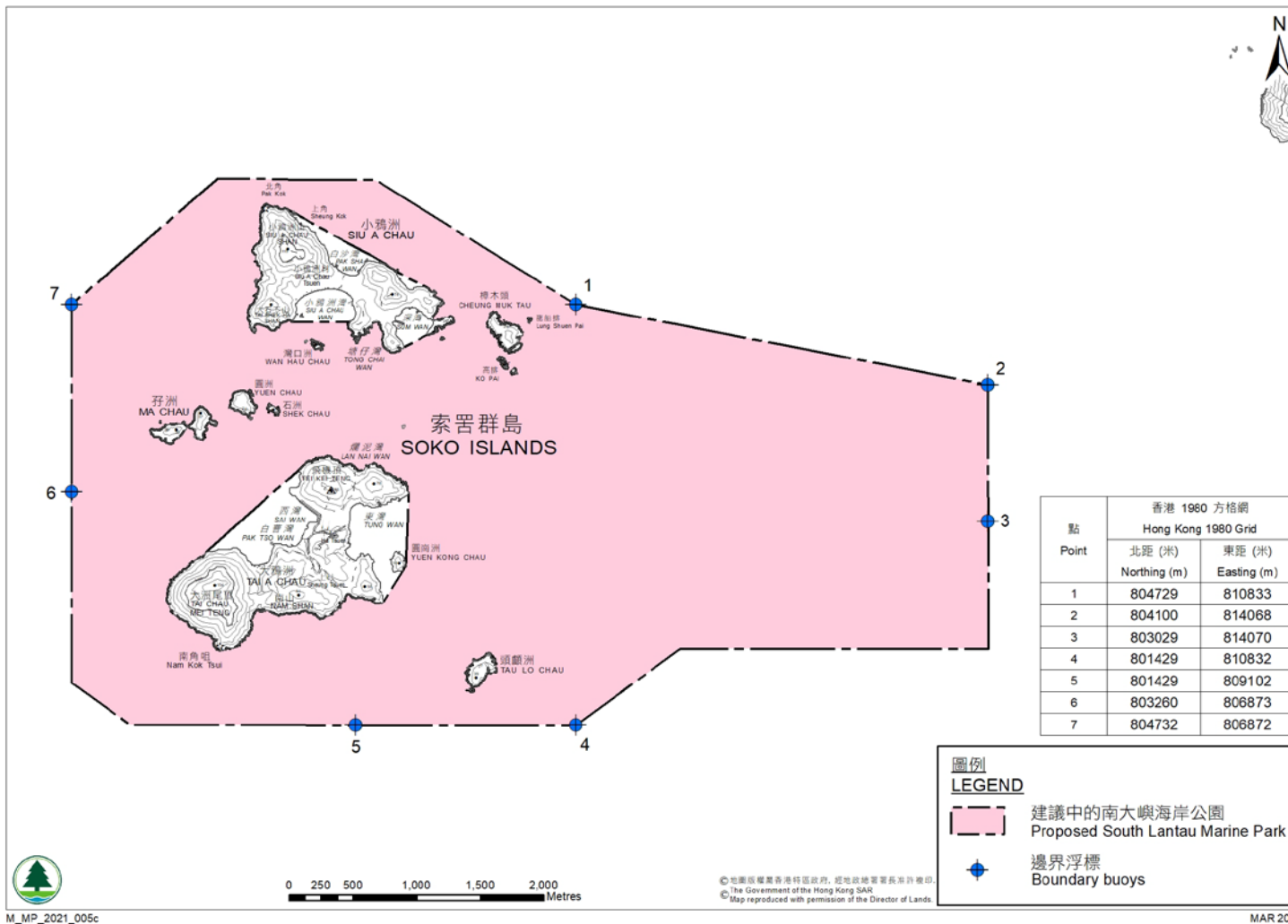


建議中的南大嶼海岸公園未定案地圖
DRAFT MAP OF THE PROPOSED SOUTH LANTAU MARINE PARK



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Original Proposed Locations of Boundary Buoys for the Proposed South Lantau Marine Park



Updated Proposed Locations of Boundary Buoys for the Proposed South Lantau Marine Park