



提升社會及環境可持續性 共享經濟繁榮成果  
就2010-11年施政報告的建議書

Enhancing Social and Environmental Sustainability  
Fair Sharing of Economic Prosperity

Submission on the 2010-11 Policy Address



公共專業聯盟  
The Professional Commons

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**Executive Summary**

Seething public grievance against government's performance has been prevalent amongst people in the lower-income class and even employees in the middle class in Hong Kong who are suffering from life teeming with despairs. Even worse, social justice has been seriously eroded under the highly market-dominated environment as major economic development in recent years has been swerving into a direction opposite to social sustainability. The existing remuneration system is so unfair that most people are suffering exploitation, not to mention sharing the fruits of economic prosperity. The existence of potential social instability has been beyond any doubt, suggesting the idea of "progressive development" proposed by the incumbent Chief Executive (CE) in his 2007-08 policy address was far from satisfactory, as far as its policy outcome is concerned.

The Professional Commons (The ProCommons) is of the view that the governing principles of the SAR Government (the Government) should undergo a paradigm shift by admitting the imbalance in socio-economic development. In the light of this, the strategy for sustainable development should be reestablished. The main points of this policy proposal are as follows:

**Boosting Social Sustainability**

**i. A more positive response to statutory minimum wage issue**

People in the lower-income class are always at a disadvantage and need government's assistance in order to sustain their life at the minimum level. In this connection, The ProCommons is of the view that the suggested range of minimum wage should be between HK\$30 and HK\$33. Its impact on most sectors would be slight in the amount of extra derived cost, except the security and cleaning service industries. Given that they are the service industries derived from domestic demand, proper adjustment in cost structure can certainly help them weather the storm in the future.

**ii. Establishing Universal Old Age Pension Scheme**

The CE should step up to put Universal Old Age Pension Scheme into practice.

According to our proposal, all permanent citizens aged 65 or above are eligible for the proposed pension without any means test involved. As regards the pension rate, employees and employers shall contribute the same rate at 1.9% of employees' monthly income. Workers earning less than HK\$5,000 (2008 level) do not have to contribute, despite that their employers are required so, but no capping on amount of contribution shall be involved. Meanwhile, the Government should reallocate its expenditure on CSSA Scheme and other old age social security to support the proposed pension scheme, in which the amount is subject to further growth accordingly from expected increased population. Also, HK\$25 billion should be injected into the account of the pension scheme every 5 years.

**iii. Resumption of Home Ownership Scheme (HOS)**

The ProCommons is of the view that the initial amount of HOS flat production should be set at 8,000 units per year. The amount shall be distributed to green form and white form applicants in the ratio 7:3, in which the latter is rather close to the gap between the volume of take-up and completion in the past 5 years, therefore not likely to endanger the stability of property market. Meanwhile, we oppose any form of home assistance loan schemes, as they will push up the demand for private residential units, therefore adding fuel to the already soaring property prices and then imposing excessive burden on ordinary buyers. The moral hazard problem facing the Government is also a major issue of concern.

**iv. Streamlining of Urban Regeneration Strategy**

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) should focus on rehabilitation and redevelopment (the 2R) and clearly indicate its future scope of business and market positioning in urban renewal, indicative of its formal departure of the "business-led" redevelopment mode and future shift toward "social redevelopment". Meanwhile, when participating in the revitalization and preservation projects in redevelopment areas, the URA should recoup all the costs involved. Also, to ensure that the mode of redevelopment through "owners' participation" could be a success, the URA should consider playing a new role of "facilitator" in redevelopment projects by providing assistance of certain degree. Subsidies should only be given in accordance with the principles of "resident-led, government facilitates"; "environmental and public need as the foremost" and "comprehensive care, community support".

**v. Establishment of a Fairer Property Market**



In view of the imbalance in land and housing supply, the Government, as the sole land supplier, should resume land sales on a regular basis and enhance the transparency of land reserve. In addition, legislative measures should be introduced to combat market manipulation in the form of insiders trading and intended disclosure of false and misleading information, making reference to the existing Securities and Futures Ordinance.

### **Maintaining Environmental Sustainability**

To improve quality of our physical environment, the combat strategies of the Government against climate change should be more comprehensive, like promoting an extensive use of bicycles as a mode of transport. In view of inadequate legal protection over rural areas of high ecological value, The ProCommons is of the view that the Government should expedite the publication of Development Permission Area (“DPA”) for the remaining 53 high-risk country park “enclaves”, in order to gain time to finally put them under the regulation of the Town Planning Ordinance. In the long run, the CE should establish a high-level “Rural Conservation Planning Task Force”, in which the Chief Secretary for Administration shall be assigned to coordinate the Development Bureau, Environment Bureau and other relevant departments, in a bid to review the policies regarding natural conservation, town and countryside planning, developments on small house and the columbarium in the New Territories, etc.

### **Facilitating the Development of Knowledge-based Economy**

Hong Kong must move towards a high value-added knowledge-based economy. To this end, the Financial Secretary should consider establishing a “Knowledge-based Economy Coordination Unit” to strengthen the co-ordination of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and other departments, and handle policy issues related to knowledge-based economy, particularly information and communication technology (ICT) policies and issues, in a timely manner. Against this background, the coverage of knowledge-based economy should be further extended to most of the economic aspects, in which ICT is supposed to play a more active role in the local economy. The Government should provide concrete measures to help utilize the business opportunities arising from forthcoming landing of more submarine cables, as well as the 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan of the Mainland. In addition, the Government should step up the security of information and protection of personal data via a more holistic approach, whereupon an effective governing structure regulating the Internet, telecommunications and broadcasting shall be in place.

### **Speeding Up the Pace of Democratization**

Economic development in Hong Kong fails to bring a higher level of social sustainability, which is largely attributed to the existing unfair political system. In view of the presence of staged consensus concerning constitutional reform, it would be important for the upcoming local legislation to minimize the unfairness and undemocratic arrangement in the election systems that follow. In the light of this, The ProCommons is of the view that appointed District Council members should be removed in one go from next term in 2012, a clear goal for abolition of all functional constituencies in 2020 should be set, and a maximum threshold of 200 in CE candidate nomination should be in place. Also, the screening mechanism for all CE candidates should be kept to the minimum and only one additional seat could be allocated to members of the CPPCC and the Heung Yee Kuk in the Fourth Sector respectively, which is largely a symbolic gesture indeed.