

SDEV speaks to the media

Following is the transcript of remarks at a media session by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, after attending a radio programme this morning (October 18):

Reporter: It has been a few days since the reclamation project has been unveiled. What is your response so far to the criticisms and concerns that have been expressed?

Secretary for Development: We will listen to the views very carefully. Coming up, there will be a rational discussion. Over the past few days, the Government's intention, vision and detailed contents (of the project) have become clearer and clearer. We discussed that in the programme earlier on. Initially, there was impression that the Government will immediately go ahead with reclamation of the scale of 1 700 hectares. It is now getting clearer and clearer to the public that our initial vision, if we talk about the more concrete part of our vision, it pertains to the reclamation around Kau Yi Chau. We are talking about 1 000 hectares, which corresponds to what the Task Force on Land Supply has been engaging the public about. Now it becomes very clear. There are concerns revealed during the discussion processes, such as concerns over costs, concerns over the ability to respond to the climate, concerns over the technical feasibility of the entire project. For all these, we will explain and come up with factual information to allow the public to understand better about the rationale of the project. That is what we would do in the coming months. As I said, the next checkpoint, if I may use this word, is when we go to the Legislative Council for funding for the planning and engineering study, which will mainly focus on the 1 000 hectares of reclamation of the Kau Yi Chau project. That will happen in a few months' time. Before that, we have enough time to communicate, explain and listen.

Reporter: Can I ask you a bit about the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge? Yesterday, the Liaison Office issued an invitation for Hong Kong media. Is it kind of unusual that the distribution of announcement is not from the Hong Kong Government?

Secretary for Development: For that, you have to understand that it is under the purview of the Transport and Housing Bureau. It will be much better for them to explain to you the situation.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)