



環 譜 有 限 公 司  
Environmental Strategy,  
Conservation and Management  
Company Limited

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By post and by email

Mr. LAM Sai Hung, JP  
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Dear Sir,

**Enquiry about handling of trees of undesirable species,  
*Leucaena leucocephala* 銀合歡 in Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal**

We write to enquire about the handling of trees of undesirable species *Leucaena leucocephala* 銀合歡 in tree preservation proposals. Ecologically speaking *Leucaena leucocephala* is native to Central America and is an IAS (invasive and alien species) in Hong Kong and other parts of the world. It is considered as one of the 100 worst invasive species by IUCN. In Hong Kong, it is commonly seen in vacant lands, forest edges, hillside, parks and roadsides and should be removed immediately and as much as possible to avoid its spreading and damage to the ecosystems.

However, based on our experience and communications with both local ecological and landscape consultants, a number of current and past tree preservation proposals for both government and private projects still included *Leucaena leucocephala* in the tree schedule and tree compensation ratio of Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal (TPRP).

Our queries on the treatment of this IAS were raised in a recent webinar held by International Society of Arboriculture Hong Kong Chapter (ISAHK) on 17 Dec 2020 - “Webinar: A Quick Digest of the Latest TRAM Guidelines and Review of Assessment Skill”. Representatives of GLTMS, DEVB were the speakers of the webinar. A question was raised during the Q&A session whether the invasive tree species *Leucaena leucocephala* is required to be included in the TPRP. DEVB confirmed that it is not necessary to be included in the proposal.



We further reviewed the policies concerning the handling of these trees under different documents issued by the government:

1) Tree Preservation Technical Circular (Works) No. 4/2020 by Development Bureau (DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020), and

2) Lands Administration Office Practice Note (“LAO PN”) Issue No. 2/2020 “Tree Preservation and Removal Proposals for Building Development in Private Projects Compliance of Tree Preservation Clause under Lease”.

In the Tree Preservation Technical Circular (Works) No. 4/2020 by DEVB (DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020), which sets out the policy, control procedures and detailed requirements that government departments have to observe and follow to preserve trees at different stages of government projects as well as those under arboricultural maintenance, it is mentioned in paragraphs 8 and 25 that Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal (TPRP) is not required for removal of undesirable species (e.g. *Leucaena leucocephala*) and these species does not need to be transplanted:

“8. When considering the need for transplanting trees under paragraphs 7(b) or 7(c) above, there is no need to transplant trees with the following features under normal circumstances — (e) **undesirable species** (e.g., *Leucaena leucocephala* which is an invasive, exotic and self-seeding tree)

25. A TPRP is not necessary for the following types of tree removal — (a) removal of common **undesirable species** characterised by their aggressive and invasive growing habits and ability to prevent natural succession of native species” (DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020)

While in the Lands Administration Office Practice Note (“LAO PN”) Issue No. 2/2020 “Tree Preservation and Removal Proposals for Building Development in Private Projects Compliance of Tree Preservation Clause under Lease”, which sets out the streamlined arrangements for processing Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal (TPRP) arising from building developments in private projects for compliance with the tree preservation clause under lease, it is mentioned in paragraphs 13 and 22 that trees of undesirable species should be included in the compensation, yet transplanting of these species should not be considered suitable:

“13. ....As far as possible, implementation of compensatory tree planting, of a ratio not less than 1:1 in terms of quantity within the subject Lot would be acceptable. That is, the total numbers of compensatory trees within the site should not be less than that of the lost tree(s), including all felled dead trees and trees of **undesirable species** and any transplanted tree that is subsequently deceased. ....



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22. Although tree transplanting should be considered as far as possible instead of felling if retaining is considered not practicable, trees with the following features should not be considered suitable for transplanting under normal circumstances: (g) **undesirable species** (e.g., *Leucaena leucocephala* which is an invasive exotic tree).” (LAO PN Issue No. 2/2020)

We therefore would like to seek clarification on the proper way to handle this IAS during submission of TPRP. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,

MAN Chi Sum

Managing Director

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Cc:

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