Integration of Industry and Education Journal (2024), **V3N2**, 7–14
doi:https://doi.org/10.6914/iiej.030202

Integration of Industry and Education Journal

ARTICLE

Strategic Development for a Sustainable Future: Kau Yi Chau Artificial Island Project

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(Received 20 March 2024; revised 25 March 2024; accepted 28 April 2024; first published online 30 June 2024)

Abstract

The Kau Yi Chau Artificial Island (KYCAI) project is a landmark initiative aimed at addressing Hong Kong's critical land shortage while enhancing its global competitiveness and fostering sustainable development. Situated between Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and Lantau Island, the project incorporates innovative strategies to balance environmental, social, and economic considerations. Environmental concerns like biodiversity preservation and carbon footprint reduction are tackled through low-carbon building materials, renewable energy, and sustainable transportation. Social justice is promoted by equitable stakeholder engagement, employment opportunities, and fair access to resources. Leadership styles, including transformational and collaborative models, are key to achieving these sustainability goals through effective stakeholder mobilization. The project stands as a testament to strategic planning and collaborative efforts in sustainable urban development, offering valuable insights into balancing environmental, social, and economic goals.

Keywords: Kau Yi Chau Artificial Island, Sustainable Development, Biodiversity Conservation, Carbon Footprint Reduction, Stakeholder Collaboration, Transformational Leadership

1. Introduction

The Kau Yi Chau Artificial Island (KYCAI) is strategically located between Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and Lantau Island. It is only about 4 kilometers west of Hong Kong Island and 10 kilometers from Hong Kong International Airport. The project aims to meet related land needs and provide additional development space for Hong Kong. The government hopes to use the latest reclamation technology to open up a new piece of land based on Kau

Yi Chau and turn it into a multi-purpose area integrating commercial, residential, office, and leisure facilities. The project can bring huge development opportunities to Hong Kong, enhancing Hong Kong's declining competitiveness by attracting international investment, creating jobs and increasing the supply of low-cost housing and related commercial facilities. However, the Hong Kong government must consider environmental, social and economic aspects to ensure the sustainability of the project.[1]

1.1 Environmental impact

Reclamation can damage marine and island ecosystems. The construction of buildings and infrastructure may affect the original living conditions of local communities. Therefore, environmental protection measures such as ecological restoration, establishment of marine reservs, and sustainable building design are needed to avoid this situation.

1.2 The amount of biodiversity

The reclamation and construction of the KYCAI will destroy the original ecosystem and force local species to migrate. Therefore, the project needs to conduct a biodiversity assessment and adopt specific protection measures, such as establishing relevant protected areas, specific species protection plans, ecological restoration plans, etc.

1.3 Changes in carbon footprint

The construction and operation of the KYCAI will produce a large amount of greenhouse gases and harm climate change. Therefore, low-carbon technologies and renewable energy must be adopted to reduce the carbon footprint, especially using energy improvement technologies, carbon capture and storage technologies.

1.4 Social justice

The KYCAI needs to focus on social equity and ensure that all stakeholders have equal access to the project's facilities and benefits. Therefore, Social Impact Assessment (SIA) needs to be conducted through the participation and collaboration of a wide range of communities and stakeholders. It is necessary to ensure equitable distribution of employment, housing, education and community facilities.

1.5 The resilience of artificial islands to future climate change and sea level rise

In addition to the effects of monsoons and warm currents, artificial islands also need to consider the possibility of future climate change and sea level rise. Therefore, flood prevention measures such as seawalls, flood walls, and coastal protection need to be taken to ensure the stability of artificial islands in the future.

2. Stakeholders involved in the KYCAI project

Each stakeholder has different expectations based on different backgrounds. This section analyzes these stakeholders and their role and contribution in steering the project towards sustainability.

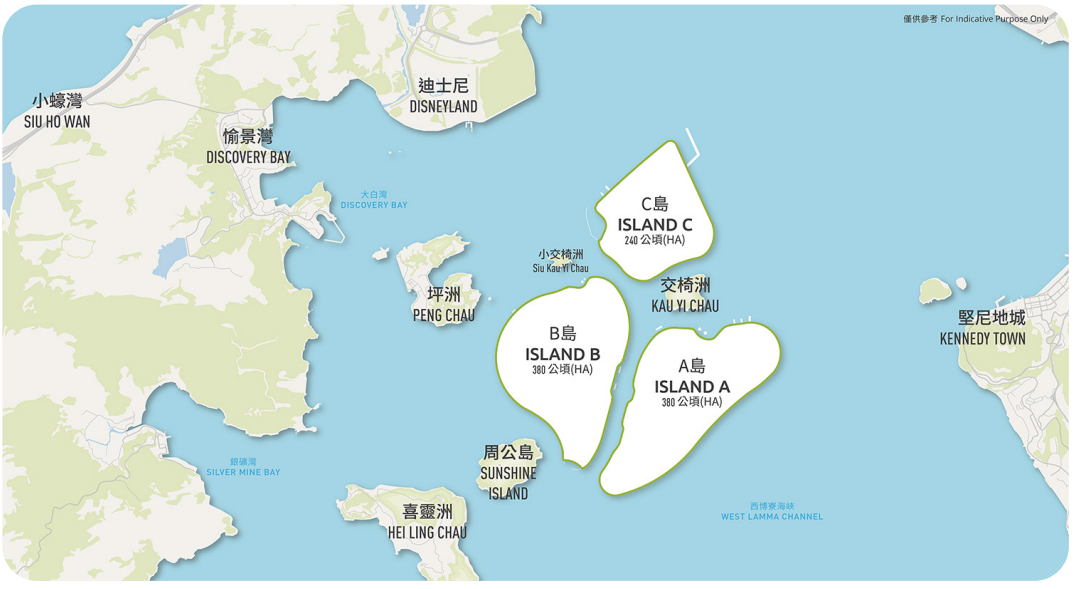

Figure 1. Reclamation scope, source: https://www.centralwaters.hk/en/reclamation-extent

2.1 Government

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSAR) is the main driving force of KYCAI, playing a leading role and is responsible for coordinating the strategic direction and implementation of the project. The government oversees the project's comprehensive planning, financial viability, infrastructure integrity, and consistency with territorial development goals. Their mission is to ensure projects adhere to sustainability standards while promoting economic prosperity and balancing economic growth with environmental protection.

2.2 Community

The community includes various residents, businesses and civil society organizations in and around the project. Communities care about the impact of projects on their lives, properties (especially real estate) and the quality of their living environment. Communicate transparently with the community and include them in the process. The community can provide more feedback to the project, ensuring that KYCAI projects enhance rather than undermine their socioeconomic well-being.[2]

2.3 Commercial sector

The business sector includes industries such as construction, real estate, tourism and transportation. These entities value the project's potential for business expansion, investment prospects and job creation, and anticipate that the KYCAI project will bring significant economic opportunities to the business sector. However, there may be concerns that the involvement of the business sector in this project may hurt commercial viability, competition and sustainable business practices. The government must strictly supervise to ensure that the

commercial activities of this project comply with the principles of sustainable development and encourage the development of green businesses.

2.4 Environmental Team

An environmental team composed of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) plays an oversight role to ensure that KYCAI projects comply with environmental laws and regulations. Their focus is on assessing and mitigating the project's impacts on biodiversity, marine ecosystems and overall environmental health. Through strict environmental impact assessment (EIA), protection measures and ecological restoration work monitoring, we ensure that the project complies with the principles of sustainable development.

2.5 Academic research institutions

Academic research institutions provide professional advice on environmental science, urban planning, etc. to serve project development. By conducting cutting-edge research, these institutions can provide expert advice on sustainable design practices, ecological conservation methods and socio-economic impact analysis. Their participation ensures that the KYCAI project is based on scientific rigor and innovation and is consistent with sustainable development strategies throughout the project life cycle.

The KYCAI project is a complex ecosystem of stakeholders that requires a strategic engagement approach that prioritizes sustainability and inclusivity. The interdependence of these stakeholders is critical to identifying synergies, mitigating conflicts, and leveraging collective efforts to achieve shared sustainable development goals. Establishing strong mechanisms for stakeholder consultation, feedback and engagement is critical to meeting the diverse interests and expectations of the project.[3]

3. Preliminary plan to promote the sustainable development of the KYCAI

3.1 Use environmentally friendly building materials

To reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, it is recommended to use low-carbon building materials and build energy-saving buildings. By selecting recycled materials and using green building technologies, the project's impact on the environment is reduced and innovative sustainable standards for island construction are achieved.

3.2 Utilization of the latest renewable energy

To achieve energy self-sufficiency in this project, it is proposed to install equipment such as solar panels and wind turbines. In addition, during the project implementation process. Further research into underutilized renewable energy sources should also be considered to continuously improve energy self-sufficiency.

3.3 Biodiversity protection

To protect the existing local biodiversity, it is recommended to retain corresponding green spaces in the artificial island project planning. Build green parks and design wildlife corridors. During project implementation, it is also necessary to regulate the behavior of construction workers to prevent harm to wild animals.

3.4 Establishing a sustainable transportation system

To achieve sustainable transportation, it is recommended to develop convenient public transportation infrastructure such as rail transit systems and electric transportation and reduce dependence on public transportation by providing better non-motorized transportation facilities.

3.5 Management and recycling of relevant waste

Establishing advanced waste management systems is essential to achieve resource recovery and reduce the use of landfills. The system should include effective waste sorting and recycling facilities, encourage residents and businesses to actively participate in recycling activities, and vigorously promote waste reuse.

3.6 Strengthen community engagement and education

To ensure the sustainable development of the project, it is recommended to actively promote community participation and conduct public education. Increase community participation in the project decision-making process, provide relevant training and explanation programs by listening to different opinions and needs, and ensure community support for the project.

Through the above approach, the KYCAI project has the potential to become a model for sustainable development in Hong Kong, with positive outcomes in the areas of environmentally friendly buildings, renewable energy, biodiversity conservation, sustainable transportation, waste management and recycling.

4. Perspectives of potential stakeholders and ways to address their concerns

4.1 Government

The government is concerned about the financial status of the KYCAI project, the use of market forces, the specific timing of project advancement, and environmental issues. On 28 February 2024, Financial Secretary Paul Chan said, taking into account the financial burden, the reclamation project of KYCAI originally scheduled to start at the end of 2025 may be slightly delayed.[4] The government should consider financing plans, including issuing bonds, public-private partnerships, or using both methods at the same time; consider using market forces appropriately to promote projects, including public-private partnerships and other financing methods. Governments also need to consider the timing of projects and control over land ownership based on financial conditions and other factors.

4.2 Community

The community focuses on job opportunities, economic benefits, cultural heritage and community development. They may hope that the project can provide stable employment opportunities and economic benefits for residents and that the project can respect and protect local cultural heritage and promote the inheritance and development of community culture. To address these issues, the project team can work with local communities to prioritize the recruitment of local residents, provide skills training and career development opportunities, promote local economic development, and at the same time carry out cultural protection and inheritance plans to protect local historical buildings and inherit traditional culture.

Promote the development of local cultural industries and enhance community cohesion and vitality.

4.3 Business areas

The business community believes that this project can increase job opportunities and promote economic development, but they are also concerned about the cost-effectiveness of the project and the return on investment. To address these issues, they focus on participating in the planning and construction of projects to ensure their commercial viability and efficiency. They also emphasize working with governments and other stakeholders to address financial, technical and operational challenges.

4.4 Environmental Protection Team

The environmental team took a conservative approach to the project because they were concerned about whether it would have an impact on the natural ecology. They emphasized the need to protect the ecosystem during the project and pushed for a comprehensive environmental impact assessment (EIA). To minimize environmental impacts, environmental groups recommend implementing an effective environmental monitoring program and, to ensure these measures are implemented, choosing to work with project developers.

4.5 Academic and research organizations

Academic and research organizations focus on the long-term impacts of projects, including environmental, social and economic impacts. They emphasized that decisions should be based on sustainable development. Academic and research institutions conduct in-depth research and evaluation on relevant issues and provide scientific basis and suggestions.

5. Leadership style to adopt

To develop the KYCAI project, it is recommended that the government flexibly use a variety of environmental leadership models.

5.1 Transformational leadership model

By demonstrating the long-term vision of the KYCAI project as a sustainable development model, stakeholders can be motivated through the following aspects. Emphasis should be placed on sustainability, reducing environmental impact and cost savings. Highlighting the importance of these measures can motivate stakeholders to pay more attention to sustainability issues. The sustainability of the KYCAI project not only helps protect the environment but also brings economic benefits. For example, solar power can reduce energy costs, rainwater harvesting and reuse can reduce water costs, and waste recycling can reduce garbage disposal costs.

The sustainability of the KYCAI project is not only conducive to environmental protection and economic benefits but also conducive to fulfilling social responsibilities. The project's environmentally friendly measures can bring a better living environment to local communities while leaving a better planet for future generations.

5.2 Collaborative leadership model

The government also seeks to involve various stakeholders in the sustainable development process. Identify and communicate with all stakeholders. Communication can take the form of meetings, seminars, surveys, social media, etc. When communicating with stakeholders, be sure to value their opinions. Ownership can be promoted by involving them in project decisions, providing feedback and input, etc.

6. Conclusion

The Kau Yi Chau Artificial Island (KYCAI) project emerges as a pivotal initiative for addressing Hong Kong's urgent need for land, enhancing its competitiveness, and fostering sustainable development. The project intricately balances environmental, social, and economic considerations, demonstrating a multifaceted approach to urban development. Environmental impacts, biodiversity conservation, and carbon footprint management are addressed through innovative strategies such as the use of low-carbon materials, renewable energy sources, and biodiversity protection measures. These efforts are vital for minimizing ecological disruptions and fostering a harmonious relationship with the natural environment.

The project's emphasis on social justice, community engagement, and the resilience of artificial islands underscores a commitment to inclusive and equitable development. By incorporating stakeholder perspectives and ensuring equitable access to resources and benefits, the KYCAI project aims to foster community well-being and social cohesion. Moreover, the engagement of a diverse array of stakeholders, including the government, commercial sector, environmental teams, and academic institutions, highlights the importance of collaborative efforts in achieving sustainability goals.

The leadership styles recommended for the project—transformational and collaborative—reflect an adaptive and inclusive approach to management. These styles are instrumental in rallying stakeholders around a shared vision for sustainable development, ensuring that environmental considerations are seamlessly integrated with economic and social objectives.

In conclusion, the KYCAI project stands as a testament to the potential of strategic planning and stakeholder collaboration in creating sustainable urban environments. By prioritizing environmental integrity, social equity, and economic viability, the project sets a precedent for future development initiatives in Hong Kong and beyond. Its success will depend on continuous engagement, rigorous environmental assessments, and a commitment to sustainability principles throughout the project's lifecycle. This case study not only contributes to the discourse on sustainable urban development but also offers practical insights for implementing large-scale infrastructure projects in a manner that is environmentally sustainable, socially just, and economically beneficial.

ACKNOWLEGEDS

Thanks to Ms. Zhihui LIAO, Ms. Xidan WANG, Mr. Ruizheng YIN and Mr. Changkui LI from Hong Kong Metropolitan University for their contributions to the paper.

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Cite This Article

Xin WEN,Yining HE.(2024).Strategic Development for a Sustainable Future: Kau Yi Chau Artificial Island Project. *Integration of Industry and Education Journal*, *3*(2):7-14, DOI:https://doi.org/10.6914/iiej.030202.

Integration of Industry and Education Journal, ISSN 2791-2671 (print), ISSN 2791-268X (online), DOI 10.6914/iiej, Volume 3 Issue 2, was published by Creative Publishing Co., Limited on 30 June 2024, ISBN 978-988-79866, http://www.iiej.cc, http://ssci.cc/,https://cpcl.cc/, Email:wtocom@gmail.com,kycbshk@gmail.com.