

Green living

Overview

Hong Kong abounds in unexpected and delightful contrasts. Although renowned as a fast-paced business hub, Hong Kong offers a variety of landscapes and scenic vistas rarely matched in such a compact city, ranging from sandy beaches and rocky foreshores to open grasslands and mountain ranges.

Designated Places for Nature Conservation

- Around **40%** of Hong Kong's 1,108 square kilometres of land is **protected country park and special areas** for the purpose of nature conservation. There are currently 24 country parks and 22 special areas, covering about 44,300 hectares in Hong Kong, which attracts some 11 million visitors every year.
- Many Hong Kong **hiking trails** are near urban areas and easily accessible. For example, it takes less than 20 minutes by bus from the bustling downtown area on eastern Hong Kong Island to reach the start of the Dragon's Back trail, which has been rated Asia's "Best Urban Hike".
- Hong Kong has **six marine parks** and **one marine reserve** to conserve local marine environments, covering about 4 050 hectares. The Southwest Lantau Marine Park was newly designated on April 1, 2020 and the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks was implemented on the same day for better conservation of marine habitats.
- The designation process of a new country park and two new marine parks in the western waters is under way.

Astonishing Biodiversity

- **The Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2021** is being implemented to step up biodiversity conservation and support sustainable development in Hong Kong.
- Hong Kong has over 3,300 species of vascular plants; 55 species of terrestrial mammals; over 550 species of birds (one-third of all bird species recorded throughout China); 115 species of amphibians and reptiles; 187 species of freshwater fish; 245 species of butterflies and 128 species of dragonflies.
- There are more than 1,000 species of marine fish and 84 species of hard corals – more than the hard coral species found in the Caribbean. Some species are endemic to Hong Kong.
- Hong Kong is also home to a number of globally threatened species, such as the rare Bogadek's Burrowing Lizard, Three-banded Box Turtle, Yellow-breasted Bunting, Short-legged Toad, Chinese Pangolin and Chinese Tiger dragonfly.
- **Rich and wonderful biodiversity** is a precious natural resource. The Government on average plants more than one million trees and other plants in the countryside and urban areas annually to green Hong Kong.

Efforts in Ecological, Nature and Countryside Conservation

- To deter illicit trade in endangered species, the Government has phased out the local ivory trade and imposed heavier sentences under the new Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 that came into effect in May 2018, and stepped up co-operation with

Mainland authorities.

- To strengthen the protection of endangered green turtles, the Government has committed to **expand the Sham Wan Restricted Area** to cover green turtles' breeding grounds in the adjacent waters and extend the restricted period. Consultation with stakeholders is in progress.
- The Government strives to promote conservation of remote countryside areas and established the **Countryside Conservation Office** in July 2018 to co-ordinate work related to countryside conservation and revitalisation. Launched in October 2019, the **Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme** is dedicated to support non-profit-making organisations and villagers to carry out sustainable and holistic conservation projects covering a wide spectrum of areas on different levels, ranging from the natural environment/habitats, non-graded built heritage to cultural and historic assets, etc.

Low Carbon and Emission Reduction

- A range of environmental protection policies and measures mitigate environmental pollution, promote environmental technology and green building, advocate energy saving and "waste less", and strengthen environmental education to build a sustainable future.
- Major efforts are being made to achieve the ambitious target of **reducing Hong Kong's carbon intensity by 65% to 70%** in 2030 compared to the 2005 level.
- Since 2013, concentration levels of **major air pollutants** (including roadside nitrogen dioxide and PM2.5) have been **reduced by around 30%**.
- Ocean-going vessels must use low-sulphur marine fuel on Hong Kong waters.
- A new scheme will be launched in the second half of 2020 to progressively **phase out about 40,000 Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles**, with HK\$7.1 billion (US\$910 million) earmarked for ex-gratia payments to vehicle owners concerned.
- \$350 million earmarked for a pilot scheme for electric ferries.
- Hong Kong's first road map on the popularisation of electric vehicles will be formulated to promote the use of **electric vehicles**.
- \$80 million earmarked to launch a pilot scheme for **electric public light buses**.
- A \$2 billion pilot scheme will be launched in the second half of 2020 to subsidise installation of electric vehicle charging-enabling infrastructure in car parks of existing private residential buildings. The scheme is estimated to run for about three years, covering about 60,000 private parking spaces.
- **The Cleaner Production Partnership Programme** is extended to March 2025 with funding of \$311 million to encourage Hong Kong-owned factories to adopt cleaner production technologies with a view to improving the regional environment.

Green Building Design and Technology

- Target of reducing Hong Kong's energy intensity from the 2005 level by 40% by 2025.
- Measures outlined in "**Energy Saving Plan for Hong Kong's Built Environment 2015~2025+**" include: setting an energy saving target and timeline; development of green buildings; tax concessions; expanding the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labeling Scheme; running the "Energy Saving for All" campaign.
- Upon completion of all energy saving measures, the annual reduction in CO2 emissions will be about 1.7 million tonnes, equivalent to about 4% of Hong Kong's total emissions in 2016.
- The first "**Green Energy Target**" aims to further improve Government energy use by 6% in five years

from 2020-21 to 2024-25.

- **"Green School 2.0"** to enhance energy efficiency in schools.
- The **Zero Carbon Building** in Kowloon Bay, which opened in 2012, is the city's first building with a zero carbon footprint, featuring over 80 types of green technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **The T-PARK** sludge treatment facility at Nim Wan, Tuen Mun, opened in 2015 and is one of the most technologically advanced facilities of its kind in the world.
- Heat produced from incinerating sludge at T-PARK is recovered for electricity generation, thus **transforming waste into energy**, which is also used to provide heating for spa pools established within the Environmental Education Centre at T-PARK, which people can enjoy for free.

Innovation and Technology (I&T) for a Green Future

- **The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD)** has been working with the trade and academia to promote I&T related to electrical and mechanical services.
- E&M InnoPortal lists the service needs of various government departments, public organisations and the E&M trade. Universities and start-ups can propose related I&T solutions for matching.
- In 2019, the EMSD signed **Memoranda of Co-operation** with 15 organisations to establish strategic partnerships and thereby foster collaboration with the E&M trade.
- A \$200 million **Green Tech Fund** is set up to support the R&D and application of decarbonisation and green technologies.

Waste Management

- **The Plastic Shopping Bag (PSB) Charging Scheme** was introduced in 2009 to reduce the use of plastic by providing an economic incentive at retail level.
- Based on the "polluter pays" principle, the **Producers Responsibility Scheme (PRS) on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment** was implemented in August 2018, while the PRS on glass beverage containers is being implemented progressively to promote recycling and resource recovery.
- The Government is preparing to introduce the PRS on plastic beverage containers, and is considering the application of Reverse Vending Machines on recovery of used plastic beverage containers.
- Plan to introduce municipal solid waste charging to drive behavioural change in waste reduction, and develop **"Community Green Stations"** in each district to enhance support for waste reduction and recycling.
- A **"food wise" culture** is being promoted to reduce food waste.
- Under the Food Waste Plan, **the Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 1 (O-PARK1)** started receiving commercial and industrial food waste since July 2018. O-PARK1 can treat and convert 200 tonnes of food waste per day into biogas for power generation, and process the digestate to produce compost. O-PARK1 can generate about 14 million kWh of surplus electricity, enough to power about 3,000 households, and transmit to the grid annually. The Design-Build-Operate contract of the Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 2 (O-PARK2), with daily treatment capacity of 300 tonnes of food waste, was awarded in August 2019. The O-PARK2 is scheduled for commissioning in 2022.
- Starting from 2020-21, a sum of not less than \$300 million will be reserved each year for implementing a waste paper recycling scheme. The Environmental Protection Department will start the scheme in the second half of 2020.
- The Government is in the process of making arrangements for a two-year voluntary scheme for phasing

out personal care and cosmetic products containing microbeads, aiming to encourage the trade to stop the production, importation and sale of these products, and to assist consumers choose microbead-free products.

Water Quality Management

- A total investment of \$6 billion over the past three years in providing and upgrading sewerage and wastewater treatment infrastructure for further improvement of water quality in all areas of Hong Kong, in particular Victoria Harbour.
- Since the formation of the Inter-departmental Working Group on Marine Environmental Management in 2012, additional annual funding of about \$150 million has been allocated to clean shoreline work.

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