PROMOTING NATURE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL AREAS OF HONG KONG

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A STONE’S THROW AWAY FROM THE CONCRETE JUNGLE
PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM

- 24 COUNTRY PARKS
- 22 SPECIAL AREAS
- 4 MARINE PARKS
- 1 MARINE RESERVE

⇒ 40% LAND AREA
LAND USE PLANNING

- Planning Standard and Guidelines
- Statutory Zoning with Planning Intentions
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Conservation Area
  - Green Belt
  - Agriculture
LIMITATIONS

- Interest of land owners
- Lack of incentives for active management
- Agricultural land abandoned and ecologically important habitats unmanaged
- New approaches needed
NEW APPROACHES
NEW NATURE CONSERVATION POLICY

To regulate, protect and manage natural resources that are important for the conservation of biodiversity of Hong Kong in a sustainable manner, taking into account social and economic considerations, for the benefit and enjoyment of the present and future generations of the community.
NEW APPROACHES
NEW NATURE CONSERVATION POLICY

Public-Private Partnership Scheme
Ecologically less sensitive portion: Development allowed

Management Agreement Scheme
Ecologically more sensitive portion: NGOs: Management rights
Long-term conservation and management
Landowners/Tenants: Financial incentives

Government: Funding
Conservancy Association and Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

Since Nov 2005

Aims and Objectives:
- Habitat and biodiversity conservation
- Eco-agriculture development and promotion
- Public education
- Local stakeholder engagement
2/3 of local farming community engaged

~14 ha of farming area managed

Active management to conserve agricultural wetland habitats and wildlife

Number of bird species increased from 221 before the project to 304 in 2016
LONG VALLEY MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS
ECO-AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION

- Promotion and sales of Long Valley farm produce
- Financial sustainability
- Eco-tour guides to share traditional knowledge
- Harvest Festivals

All photos from CA/HKBWS
NEW APPROACHES
HONG KONG GEOPARK PROJECT
HONG KONG UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK
FROM NATIONAL TO UNESCO

Hong Kong National Geopark (Nov 2009)  Hong Kong Global Geopark (Sep 2011)

Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark (Nov 2015, Paris)
HONG KONG UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK
GLOBAL GEOPARK GOALS

- To conserve precious geological heritage
- To popularize earth sciences
- To promote local engagement and sustainable geo-tourism
Local communities engaged:

- Sai Kung Town
- Lai Chi Wo
- Ap Chau and Kat O
- Tung Ping Chau
- Sam Mun Tsai
- Sai Wan
HONG KONG UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK
PARTNERSHIP AND MUTUAL BENEFITS

- Sai Kung Town:

Hong Kong Geopark Gourmet Competition 2016
HONG KONG UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK
ENHANCED VISITOR SERVICES AND ACCESSIBILITY
A 400-year old coastal Hakka village
Surrounded by Plover Cove Country Park and Yan Chau Tong Marine Park
Located within Hong Kong Geopark
Richness in ecological, historical and cultural resources
Popular attraction
Partially deserted since 1980
HONG KONG UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK
EMPOWERING THE LOCALS

Capacity Building for Lai Chi Wo Villagers (2015)

Public Guided Tour by the Trained Villagers (2016)
HONG KONG UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK
ACCESSIBILITY AND VISITOR FACILITIES

Improved Accessibility –
New Kaito Ferry Service

Signature Project –
New Education Centre
HONG KONG UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK
PARTNERSHIP WITH NGOS

- Revitalise villages with non-governmental funding sources
  - “Sustainable-Lai Chi Wo” Project
  - Revitalisation of Hakka Village at Lai Chi Wo
NEW APPROACHES
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG

Infrastructural support and low interest loans

Technical support and services
- Accredited Farm Scheme
- Organic Farming Support Services
- Introduction of new crop varieties and farming technologies
- Facilitating development of leisure farming
- Promotion of marketing of local farm produce
NEW AGRICULTURE POLICY (2016)

Objectives:

- Promote modernization and sustainable development of local agriculture
- Enhance competitiveness of local farms
- Wise use of farmland
- Improve rural environment
NEW AGRICULTURE POLICY
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

$500 million Fund to facilitate:

- Farm mechanization and modernization
- Research and development on agro-technology
- Knowledge transfer and manpower training
- Marketing and branding
- Promotion of agricultural rehabilitation
NEW AGRICULTURE POLICY

AGRICULTURAL PARK

Farmland identified at Kwu Tung South (~80ha)

- A base for experimenting new agri-practices and knowledge transfer
- Nurture agro-technology and agro-business management
- Enhance productivity of commercial farms
NEW AGRICULTURE POLICY

AGRICULTURAL PRIORITY AREAS

- Only some 700 ha out of 4500 ha of farmland are under active agricultural uses

- A consultancy study to:
  - identify clusters of good quality farmland for designation of APAs for long-term agricultural uses
  - explore effective measures for preserving the farmland within APAs and incentivising their long-term agricultural uses
  - devise implementation details
  - stakeholders engagement
“Proactively work with NGOs to adopt a flexible approach to supporting and promoting the protection of our rural areas through harnessing the effort of the community”
A clear policy for sustainable socio-economic development and nature conservation

An adaptive approach with multiple tools / models

Stakeholder engagement and participation to address concerns, build trust and achieve mutual benefits

Provision of incentives: Financial and technical support
THANK YOU