



Executive Summary

Background

Biodiversity refers to different plants, animals and microorganisms that make up a variety of ecosystems. It also refers to the genetic diversity of each of these organisms, and the differences in the ecosystems themselves. Biodiversity is important because it is a measure of how stable our ecosystems are. It reflects the interconnectedness of life, and in that sense is about people and our need for food, air, water, shelter as well as our appreciation of natural beauty. People around the world are concerned that we are tipping the balance and impacting our biodiversity as our economies develop. In particular, Hong Kong faces great challenges as it has to balance the increasing needs for land, food, consumables and the need to protect our magnificent natural assets.

In 1992, world leaders signed the “Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)”, promising to take steps to conserve biodiversity and fairly share the benefits of biodiversity among people. China joined the CBD in 1993, and extended the CBD to Hong Kong in 2011. After 18 months of stakeholder engagement and deliberation, including public exhibitions and programmes, the Government has recommended four areas for action over the next five years. These proposals are described here; the next step is to receive public views.

Our Efforts, Achievements and Challenges

Much work has been done on managing our natural resources for conservation through decades of habitat and species protection. New partnerships between the Government, landowners and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are coming to fruition and biodiversity is enhanced on the sites protected or managed for conservation. However, urbanisation impacts biodiversity. Economic growth and development demand land and resources. We must balance these needs with their impact on biodiversity. We need to find ways to support the sustainable use of biological resources in our long-term growth as a society.

Creating a Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) for Hong Kong

Our Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) will describe the priorities identified and actions to conserve our biodiversity. The plan will evolve, and it will involve everyone in our society. In the next five years, we propose to focus on the following four areas -

<p>AREA 1 Conservation continue to implement and enhance existing conservation measures</p> 	<p>AREA 2 Mainstreaming incorporate biodiversity considerations into planning and decision-making to achieve sustainable development</p> 
<p>AREA 3 Knowledge conduct biodiversity surveys and studies to fill knowledge gaps</p> 	<p>AREA 4 Community Involvement promote public awareness and knowledge of biodiversity among stakeholders and the public</p> 

Invitation for Comments

We wish to explore with all who have a stake in this city ways to take forward biodiversity conservation in Hong Kong for the benefit of the present and future generations. Your views on the proposed areas of action would be particularly important in making our first BSAP effective and achievable.