

The Honourable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM, GBS

Chief Executive

Office of the Chief Executive,

Tamar, Hong Kong

15 December 2021

(By letter & e-mail)

Dear Chief Executive,

Green groups' views and recommendations
on the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy

We, the undersigned green groups, recognize and welcome the positive intent of “Proactive Conservation Policy”. Having said that, the delivery of such a policy relies on a number of important aspects of governance, principle, and practical implementation to be appropriately addressed before the policy intent can be effectively achieved. These are broadly consistent with the rigorous application of Hong Kong existing environmental policy and regulatory frameworks.

We look forward to the development of an implementation plan that will set the milestones and help to manage the public’s expectations for the delivery of the environmental agenda of the Northern Metropolis. The Green Groups are eager to contribute our collective expertise in the practical application of active and positive nature conservation to this process. We note that our collective experience includes:

- Active management of sites of ecological importance through existing frameworks such as the Management Agreements for the Deep Bay fishponds, Long Valley and Sha Lo Tung, and the management of Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve, as well as the proposed conservation trusts for some of the privately held sites.
- Raising comments in public consultations and engaging as concerned stakeholders with public and private sector project proponents on planning and rezoning applications, EIAs, planning studies etc., in the Northwest and Northeast New Territories.
- Advisory/supervisory roles for Lok Ma Chau Ecological Enhancement Area and Tung Chung New Town Extension.
- Monitoring of cases of environmental destruction such as pond filling, tree removal, fly tipping etc., in ecologically sensitive areas such as the Northwest New Territories and Lantau South.

We recommend the following holistic and pro-active conservation policies for consideration and adaptation by the Chief Executive:

- 1. Recognise and protect sites of conservation importance through effective policies and regulations**
- 2. Alleviate development pressure on sites of conservation importance**
- 3. Ensure no ecological degradation during the transition from policy announcement to designation of protected areas**
- 4. Ensure the protected areas are planned, established, and managed for conservation**

Details of the policy recommendations are appended. We look forward to your adoption of a holistic, nature-positive policy that integrates conservation with development in the Northern Metropolis Strategy, for a better livelihood and well-being of people, and ensure a Hong Kong where people and nature thrive in harmony.

Yours sincerely,

Co-signed groups (in alphabetical order):

The Conservancy Association

Designing Hong Kong

Green Power

Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

WWF-Hong Kong

c.c.:

Mr Michael Wong Wai-lun, JP, Secretary for Development

Mr Kam-sing Wong, GBS, JP, Secretary for the Environment

Professor Sophia Chan, JP, Secretary for Food and Health

Mr Chin-wan Tse, BBS, JP, Under Secretary for the Environment

Mr Liu Chun San, JP, Under Secretary for Development

Dr Chui Tak-yi, JP, Under Secretary for Food and Health

Dr Leung Siu-fai, JP, Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Mrs Ng Kiang Mei Nei, Millie, JP & Mr Fung Ho Yin, Owin, JP, Director of Environmental Protection (Acting)

Mr Lai Chi Wah, Andrew, Director of Lands

Mr Chung Man-kit, Ivan, JP, Director of Planning