

The Government Launches Consultation on Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Hong Kong

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Consultation on BSAP

On 8 January 2016, the HKSAR Government has published a consultation document on [Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan](#) (“BSAP”) for Hong Kong, seeking public views on the proposed actions for stepping up efforts in conserving biodiversity and supporting the sustainable development of Hong Kong in the next five years. The consultation exercise will end on 7 April 2016.

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity refers to different plants, animals and microorganisms, genetic information they contain and ecosystems they form. Three levels of biodiversity include genetic diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity. These three levels work together to create the complexity of life in the biosphere on earth.

Convention on Biological Diversity

At the Earth Summit held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, many countries signed the Convention on Biological Diversity (“CBD”). The objectives of the CBD are (1) conservation of biological diversity, (2) sustainable use of the components of biological diversity, and (3) fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.

To date, 196 countries and organisations have ratified or accepted the CBD, and become “Parties to the CBD”. The People’s Republic of China joined the CBD in 1993. It updated its national BSAP in 2010 to identify strategic goals, tasks and priority areas for biodiversity conservation in China for the next two decades. The Central People’s Government extended the CBD to Hong Kong in 2011.

Key Elements of the Proposed BSAP for Hong Kong

Objectives	Contribute to the global effort on biological diversity and to China’s National BSAP
Vision	The rich biodiversity of Hong Kong is valued, conserved, restored, sustainably managed and wisely used, thereby maintaining essential ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy and liveable place and delivering benefits for all people.
Mission	To value, conserve and restore the rich biodiversity of Hong Kong, to ensure that it is sustainably managed and wisely used, and to promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity issues and values across all sectors of the society, with social and economic aspects duly considered and balanced, so that ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services, and the precious environment that supports and enriches the life of Hong Kong people is passed on to future generations

Action Areas

1. Conservation

Continue to implement and enhance existing conservation measures



Habitat protection

- Maintain existing protected areas and pursue new country or marine parks
- Designate fisheries protection areas
- Develop or review management plans of protected areas
- Enhance conservation of ecologically important sites, in particular natural streams and rivers

Species protection

- Use the existing administrative and legislative approaches
- Implement ongoing species conservation measures and species action plans
- Seek to protect more species of conservation concern, especially those highly endangered or of particular ecological value

Planting native species

- Plant more native species in urban areas, countryside and country parks

Planning and decision-making

- Take biodiversity into consideration in its decision-making and operation, such as HK2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030 and Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines

Works implementation

- Increase consideration of biodiversity in works projects particularly those involving freshwater areas

“Connector” education

- Encourage professional bodies or frontrunners of various sectors to introduce to their partners the linkages between sustainable development and biodiversity, and to share knowledge about sustainable operation

Public awareness

- Implement measures to promote public awareness which will help mainstream biodiversity

Monitoring

- Conduct long-term biodiversity surveys on target groups of plants and animals

Public database

- Consolidate the data and make it publicly available

New initiatives

- Introduce new initiatives driven by the consolidated information

Research gaps

- Encourage relevant institutions to begin research on the topics related to ecosystem services, keystone or functionally important species and so on, which major gaps have been identified

Coordinate research and funding

- Coordinate research and connect funding sources with projects so that limited resources can be directed to the highest priority areas

2. Mainstreaming

Incorporate biodiversity considerations into planning and decision making to achieve sustainable development



3. Knowledge

Conduct biodiversity surveys and studies to fill knowledge gaps



4. Community Involvement

Promote public awareness and knowledge of biodiversity among stakeholders and the public



Biodiversity education network

- Partnered with organisations to launch a three-month biodiversity festival in 2015

Museum exhibition

- Set up and curate a permanent exhibition on biodiversity in the Hong Kong Science Museum

Agriculture and fisheries support

- Promote environmental-friendly practices through education and ongoing support for local farmers and fishermen

School programmes

- Continuously incorporate the concept of biodiversity into the formal school curriculum at both primary and secondary levels and encourage and create opportunities for experiential learning and guided field trips

Business and professional sectors support

- Develop ways to provide the knowledge that the sectors need and to collaborate in designing and implementing programmes

BEC's Submission

BEC is collecting views from BEC members to help prepare our policy submission on the BSAP. Please click [here](#) for the questions and forward your views to communications@bec.org.hk by 10 February 2016. A draft policy submission will be circulated to all BEC members for comment in due course.

For more information about the BSAP, please contact Ms. Maya De Souza (E: maya@bec.org.hk; T: 2784-3910).

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About Business Environment Council Limited 商界環保協會有限公司

Business Environment Council Limited 商界環保協會有限公司 ("BEC") is an independent, charitable membership organisation, established by the business sector in Hong Kong. Since its establishment in 1992, BEC has been at the forefront of promoting environmental excellence by advocating the uptake of clean technologies and practices which reduce waste, conserve resources, prevent pollution and improve corporate environmental and social responsibility. BEC offers sustainable solutions and professional services covering advisory, research, assessment, training and award programmes for government, business and the community, thus enabling environmental protection and contributing to the transition to a low carbon economy.

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