



4 Improving Hong Kong's Environment

5. Nature Conservation

Mission:

To conserve natural resources and the bio-diversity of Hong Kong in a sustainable manner, taking into account social and economic considerations, for the benefit of the present and future generations of the community.

Protecting natural sites

5.1 Hong Kong possesses many natural sites of interest that we are committed to protecting. As such, we have extended legal protection to a number of natural areas and restricted activities that could harm or alter their environment. In 2009, we opened the Hong Kong National Geopark, turning over a new leaf for geo-conservation in Hong Kong.

5.2 We have further implemented two schemes, namely the Management Agreement (MA) and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Schemes, to enhance the conservation of ecologically important sites under private ownership, as promulgated under our New Nature Conservation Policy.

5.3 Landowners can obtain financial incentives from the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) via NGOs to protect sites that would otherwise be developed. Two projects that began in 2005 have achieved significant increases in the diversity and bird and butterfly populations have expanded as a result, and other improvements have been made to their habitats. A further \$9.6 million was awarded in 2009 for this purpose. The Management Agreement projects continued to run with ECF's funding approval made in late 2009, and will end by 2012 and 2013 separately.

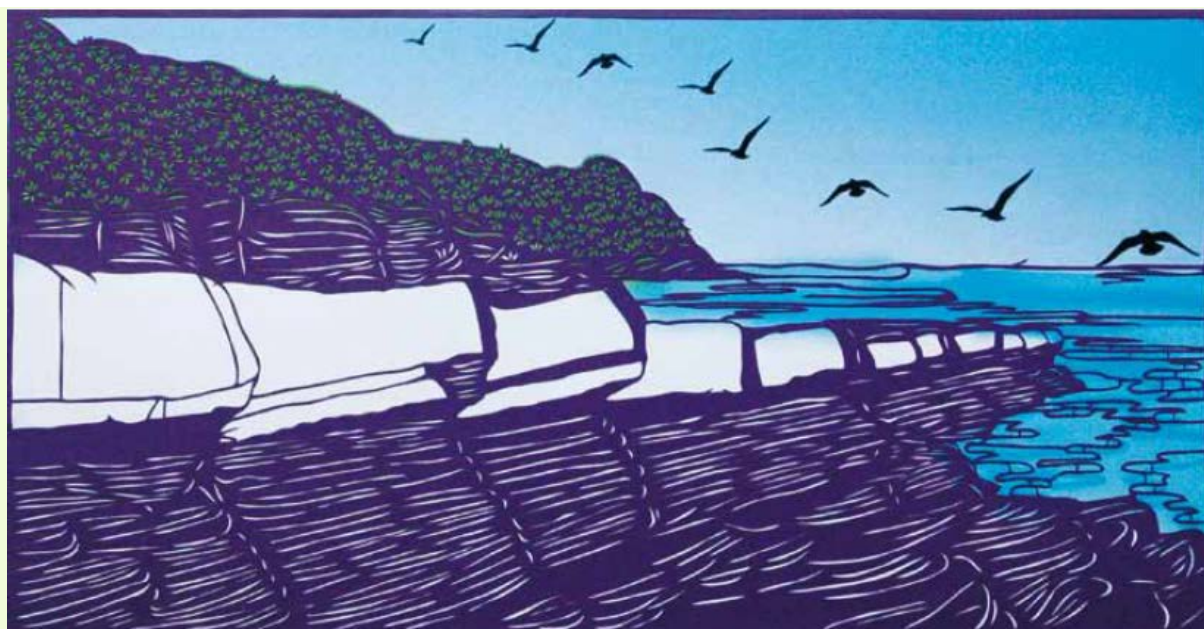
5.4 Through the PPP Pilot Scheme, participants can develop less sensitive areas of a natural site while committing to long-term conservation of the remainder. One such project was suggested for a site in Sha Lo Tung in 2008 which the Government supported in principle. The project proponent is now conducting assessment under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO).

Protecting native species

5.5 The Legislative Council passed the Genetically Modified Organisms (Documentation for Import and Export) Regulation in late 2010, the Genetically Modified Organisms (Control of Release) Ordinance and the Regulation came into effect on 1 March 2011. We made preparations in 2010 to amend the Schedule of Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, including informing stakeholders on the proposed amendments. We informed the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs on the proposed amendments in January 2011. We tabled the subsidiary legislation for the Legislative Council's negative vetting in end February 2011. The amendments took effect on 20 May 2011.

Case Study 6 - Our Asset: The Hong Kong Global Geopark of China and its Festival

The Geopark Festival, which was held from late October 2010 to February 2011, aimed at promoting the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. Not only did it seek to enhance the public's understanding of distinctive landforms and rock formations in the Hong Kong National Geopark, it also stressed the importance of geo-conservation. The Festival included a series of activities such as booth games, exhibitions, photo contest and a "Magnificent Rocks and Magic Scenery" poll, drawing about 90 000 participants. For the photo contest, the best entries were picked from more than 1 100 entries and free-of-charge photography workshops were offered to the participants to visit High Island, Double Haven, Port Island, Bluff Head and Tung Ping Chau areas of our Geopark. In addition, the High Island Geo Trail was voted to be the best geo-tour route among eight routes in the poll. The Geopark has now become a Global Geopark and we will continue to promote this invaluable heritage of Hong Kong to the public.



See *also*: [Targets - Our Progress and 2011 Aims](#).