

**Advisory Council on the Environment
Nature Conservation Subcommittee**

**Hong Kong Wetland Park updates and
Communication, Education and Public Awareness Programme
in 2006/07**

Purpose

This paper updates members on the operation of the Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) and the communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) programme at HKWP in 2006/07.

Hong Kong Wetland Park Updates

2. HKWP has been opened to the general public since 20 May 2006. Up to the end of October 2006, more than 610,000 visitors have visited HKWP. Over 90% of them are local residents. HKWP is collaborating with the Hong Kong Tourism Board to launch a series of overseas promotion to arouse the interest of overseas tourists. It is envisaged that more overseas tourists will visit HKWP later this year.

3. Ecological surveys conducted at HKWP have recorded 195 species of birds, 39 species of dragonflies, 9 species of amphibians, 9 species of mammals, 9 species of reptiles, 113 species of butterflies and 10 species of fish. The biodiversity at HKWP will likely increase when the habitats created there become more mature in the future.

4. Wildlife recorded include rare or endangered species of birds such as Black-faced Spoonbill, Greater Painted-snipe, Pheasant-tailed Jacana and Red-billed Starling, as well as uncommon dragonflies and damselflies such as Four-spot Midget, Scarlet Dwarf and Eastern Lilysquatter.

5. HKWP has established a multi-lingual website at www.wetlandpark.com. The public can obtain information on exhibition galleries, education activities and visitor information as well as pictures of

wildlife and educational resources related to wetland conservation from the website. It also provides a convenient way for visitors to reserve group tickets.

CEPA Programme at HKWP in 2006/07

6. One of the objectives of HKWP is to establish itself as a “Wetland Education Centre” in Asia, with interactive exhibits to showcase interaction between people, wetlands and wildlife, and to promote wetland conservation.

7. To achieve this objective, HKWP has developed a CEPA programme in 2006/07 to:

- a. promote the understanding of ecosystem and biodiversity of Hong Kong’s wetlands;
- b. promote the wise use of wetlands for ecotourism and educational studies;
- c. raise public awareness of the importance of wetland conservation; and
- d. enhance communication, experience sharing on CEPA programmes among wetland centres in Asia.

The CEPA programme is in line with the operational objectives of the resolutions on CEPA programme of the Ramsar Convention, in particular to promote the wise use of wetlands at local and regional levels.

8. CEPA programme at HKWP in 2006/07 includes:

a. School Education Programme

HKWP is a unique place for wetland education in Hong Kong. After the opening of HKWP in May, a series of education activities is launched. A teaching kit is developed to help teachers educate their students on the importance of wetland conservation. A list of education activities conducted is at **Annex 1**.

b. Education for the general public

A series of community education, training and capacity building activities has been conducted to arouse public awareness. These activities are summarized at Annex 2.

c. Volunteer Programme

Volunteers recruited under the HKWP Volunteer Programme would receive training and participate in various volunteer activities. A total of 2,109 individuals and 34 groups have registered as HKWP volunteers.

HKWP volunteers help receive visitors and offer guided interpretation for tours in the Wetland Reserve on topics including wetland features, dragonfly and bird identification. They also participate in practical conservation activities, such as weeding, fertilizing, rice-transplanting and removal of exotic species. From May to October 2006, 29 field habitat management activities have been organized and were attended by about 1,000 volunteers.

HKWP also recognizes the importance of capacity building of HKWP Volunteers. Regular trainings are organized to equip them with interpretative skills and knowledge on exhibits and the Wetland Reserve. A series of advanced trainings is organized to strength volunteers' knowledge on wetland conservation, including training on ecotourism and identification of dragonflies, butterflies, birds and aquatic plants. A total 87 trainings for 2,549 volunteers have been organized from May to October 2006.

d. Partnership programmes

HKWP conducts outreach and public education programmes in partnership with other departments or NGOs to promote public awareness on wetland conservation. A list of these partnership activities is shown at Annex 3.

e. World Wetland Day 2007

The World Wetland Day (WWD) is on 2 February every year. A series of events is organized by different organizations worldwide to celebrate. The Secretariat of Ramsar Convention has set the theme for WWD 2007 as “Wetlands and Fisheries”. HKWP will organize a series of activities under this theme. A summary of activities to be organized is at Annex 4.

f. Wetland Link International – Asia (WLI-Asia) network

WLI-Asia is a regional network of wetland centres established under the Wetland Link International network to promote the exchange of experience, and facilitate communication on CEPA activities and resource development among the wetland centres in the Asian Region.

The first WLI-Asia Symposium will be held from 24 – 26 January 2007 at HKWP. The Symposium is jointly organized by HKWP and World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong to promote communication among wetland centres in Asian Region, strengthen the supporting network, and enhance communication and public awareness programmes. This will be an important event of the WLI-Asia network, and will facilitate cooperation among wetland centres at regional and international levels.

Advice Sought

9. Members are invited to note HKWP updates and CEPA programme and offer comments.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
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Annex 1: School Education Programme at HKWP since May 2006

Activities	Description	Target in 2006/07	Participants since May 06
“Park Experience” Programme	A tour to study wetlands through guided interpretation, on-site field studies and classroom activities. These activities facilitate the study of wetland biodiversity, traditional wisdom for wetland usage, as well as challenges face by wetlands.	800 programmes	175 programmes organized for 6,603 students and teachers.
School Visits	A tailor-made school visit programme for HKWP Wetland Interpreters to give lectures in school assembly or classroom promoting the wise use of wetland.	20 schools	12 schools of 3,239 students reached
Roadshows	HKWP provides a set of mobile exhibition panels on wetland biodiversity and wildlife at HKWP to schools for a one-week display. Wetland Interpreters also provide appropriate training to student leaders to help interpretation at school.	20 schools	20 schools were enrolled
Teachers’ workshops	HKWP organizes workshops for teachers and education institutes to introduce educational resources available from HKWP to them.	20 teacher’s workshops	8 teacher’s workshops for 192 teachers
3I (International, Interschool and Interdisciplinary) programme	A pilot programme to encourage web-based learning on wetland conservation. The programme makes use of an internet forum to strengthen communication among students and teachers in Hong Kong and overseas.	6 local schools and 6 overseas schools	6 local schools and 6 overseas schools joined

Annex 2: Public education activities at HKWP

Activities	Brief Description	Target in 2006/07	Events organized
Storytelling at Wetlands	Fixed point interpretation by Wetland Interpreters, four times a day. It introduces succession of wetlands, ecology of stream and mangrove. There is also a small demonstration session on pond dipping after each session.	800 activities	182 activities for 3,324 visitors
“Know More” guided tours	Guided interpretation by HKWP Volunteers. Two types of tours are provided, which include tours to the nature reserve, and tours to explore seasonal wildlife.	280 activities	93 activities for 4,093 visitors.
Bird Watching at Bird Hides	Fixed point interpretation at Bird Hides by elderly voluntary nature interpreters to introduce birdlife and identification tips on Sundays and public holidays.	Every Sundays and public holidays	Ongoing on every Sunday and public holidays
Workshops	Workshop on origami, paper making and grasshopper weaving for the general public to arouse their awareness on wetland conservation through traditional handicraft related to wetlands.	40 activities	8 activities for 121 visitors
Public Lectures	Academics, professional and experts on wetlands are invited to give public lecture at HKWP.	24 public lecture	16 lectures for 1,568 visitors
Temporary Exhibitions	Temporary exhibition was held at HKWP to highlight special topics on wetland conservation.	12	4
Roadshows	Roadshows conducted in different urban districts and Links’ commercial centres to arouse public awareness on wetland conservations.	20	12

Annex 3: Partnership with Other Organizations

Activity	Co-operating party	Description
Wetland Conservation Week	Education and Manpower Bureau	Guided tours and activities to arouse public awareness on wetland conservation held on 24 – 28 June 2006. 1,384 students participated in this programme.
Hong Kong Bird Watching Day	Hong Kong Bird Watching Society	Guided tours and fix-point interpretation to echo the World Bird Festival organized by BirdLife International in October each year.
Dance with the Birds 2006 – Bird Hat Design Competition	Conservancy Association	“Bird Hat” competition and fashion show at the HKWP launched to convey the message of wetland conservation and bird protection.
My Land, My Soil	Hong Kong Art Centre	The activity aims to build up a connection between local community and HKWP.

Annex 4: Activities to be organized to celebrate World Wetland Day 2007 at HKWP

Activities	Target audience	Description
Website Design Competition	Secondary School Students	To encourage students to collect information on various wetland habitats and to deliver message of protection of wetlands through website design.
Storytelling Competition	Kindergarten and Primary School students	To encourage students to tell stories related to “Wetlands and Fisheries” from children literature and script writing.
Drawing and Painting Competition	Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary School	It includes a drawing and painting competition, and public voting for the best artworks. 15 pictures with the highest scores will be produced as e-card to further deliver the message of wetland conservation.
Photo Competition	Secondary School and general public	To promote awareness of wetlands and knowledge of photography.
The 7 th Inter-School Bird Race	Secondary School Students	It will be organized in late December. Training and field trips will be organized before the bird race to equip students with experience on field identification and bird counting.
World Wetland Day Celebration	All participants and visitors	A presentation ceremony on 27 January 2007 for the competitions, and a public education event to strengthen the message of wetland conservation. A public lecture on WWD and exhibitions will also be held at HKWP.
Spring Walk at HKWP	All participants and visitors	A guided visit around the external area of the HKWP.