



世界自然基金會
香港分會

WWF-Hong Kong

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The Honourable Mr. Paul Chan, GBM, GBS, MH, JP
The Financial Secretary
Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
25/F, Central Government Offices
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

27th January 2021

Dear Mr. Chan,

In order to achieve a green and resilient economic recovery, WWF recommends working towards an economic system that values nature as the central source of human well-being, environmental health, and productive economies in the post-COVID-19 world. Safeguarding biodiversity can help reduce future health risks and make our society more resilient. WWF suggests “nature-based solutions” (NBS) that maximise synergies between ecosystem conservation and human well-being. The NBS will help the HKSAR government to fulfil its obligations under the United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity and achieve its commitment of reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.

We have previously addressed the Chief Executive on our policy recommendations covering NBS, including high disease-risk wildlife trade, wildlife crimes, wetland conservation, marine protected area, dolphin conservation, and marine litter. WWF welcomes the green finance and sustainable and liveable city measures in your 2020-21 Budget announcements, especially with the \$66 billion green bond issuance. This year we hope to see the Government embrace a bolder vision to build a green and resilient economic recovery through NBS, as a mechanism to achieve greener and more resilient economies which benefits both people and nature.

We, therefore, urge you to consider the following measures in the 2021-22 Budget:

- **Marine Protected Areas** – Invest in the establishment of a Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Authority, to manage a network of marine parks covering 30% of HK waters by 2030 with 20% protected by 2025, including the 7 priority conservation sites identified by WWF. Currently, only 2.5% of Hong Kong’s coastal waters are protected. This is much lower than the 30% target recommended by the IUCN, and included in current drafts for the CBD COP15, to be hosted by China in Kunming this year. China already has a figure of 30% of coastal waters under ecological red-line control since 2019. Adequate funding must be allocated to patrolling and enforcement to tackle illegal and unsustainable fishing within and near all marine reserves. Funding is also needed for education and community engagement to build support and improve the efficacy of MPA management. Urgent action is needed to restore our threatened marine species and habitats.

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註冊名稱 Registered Name: 世界自然(香港)基金會 World Wide Fund For Nature Hong Kong
(於香港註冊成立的擔保有限公司 Incorporated in Hong Kong with limited liability by guarantee)



- **Chinese White Dolphin Emergency Action** – Allocate funding to designate and manage a Dolphin Conservation Management Area covering critical dolphin habitat off southern and western Lantau by 2024. The area should be managed to minimize disruption to cetaceans, with limits on boat traffic and other human activities. To conserve the threatened Chinese white dolphins, there is an urgent need to re-route the Adamasta and South Lamma marine traffic channels further to the south of the Soko Islands, to limit vessel operations and divert fast-moving and large vessels away from identified critical dolphin habitats. Assessment of underwater noise and impacts on cetaceans must be made compulsory as part of any marine EIA process, followed by monitoring and auditing of ecological measures mitigating underwater noise impacts arising from approved development projects.
- **Greater Bay Marine Spatial Planning** – Implement a plan for proper usage of our coastal waters in line with the planning processes and zoning occurring in the rest of the Greater Bay Area within Guangdong. This should involve a two-year baseline assessment of coastal and marine environments. Marine spatial planning is a science-based, accountable, and widely accepted public process that helps analyse and allocate the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in a way to minimise conflicts and identify positive synergies among sectors.
- **Plastic Crisis** – For a plastic smart city, Government funding is needed to carry out a feasibility study on extending a Producer Responsibility Scheme to all types of plastic packaging. We suggest Government resources be provided to expand the scope of Plastic Recycling Pilot Schemes to all districts. The government should set up a funding scheme for the F&B industry to develop single-use plastic reduction measures, such as a roll out incentive schemes for customers who bring their own tableware and replace disposable plastic with sustainable materials. The feasibility of bans on the use of certain kinds of single-use plastic products should be evaluated.
- **Wildlife Trade & Crime** – Provide the resources needed to establish a joint law enforcement task force under the Security Bureau to tackle transnational wildlife crime. This joint enforcement task force is necessary to counter the seriousness of involvement of organised transnational criminals in trafficking of CITES-listed species and the need to shed Hong Kong's reputation as Asia's hub for this illicit trade. Anti-money laundering investigations are necessary to deter criminal activity and ensure Hong Kong meets international obligations to end the illegal wildlife trade (and to prevent money laundering). Funding should be allocated to evaluate how to phase out the wild bird, reptile, amphibian, and mammal trade in Hong Kong which is associated with unacceptably high risks of serious infectious diseases threatening public health.
- **Ecotourism** – Allocate funding to support a green recovery through the ecotourism sector, such as to help the diving industry to develop environmental-friendly protocols and code of conducts, and to determine the carrying capacity and environmental impact to highly-visited natural locales. The Government should support community-based projects that can improve ecological value, provide economic activity, whether aquaculture or eco-tourism opportunities, connecting our community and visitors with nature.

We are confident our city can achieve a green and resilient recovery, one that provides a new deal for people and nature and preserves our treasured natural resources, while, at the same time, addressing our city's need for economic and infrastructure development.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Cornthwaite', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Cornthwaite
Chief Executive Officer, WWF-Hong Kong

- c.c. Mr. Matthew Cheung, Chief Secretary for Administration
Mr. Christopher Hui, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Mr. KS Wong, Secretary for the Environment
Mr. CW Tse, Under Secretary for the Environment
Ms. Michelle Au, Political Assistant to Secretary for the Environment
Mr. Michael Wong, Secretary for Development
Mr. Edward Yau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
Mr. John Lee, Secretary for Security