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ACE Paper 3/2026

For information on 9 March 2026

Report on the 39th Nature Conservation Subcommittee Meeting

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting on 29 January 2026, the Nature Conservation Subcommittee discussed the Updated Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (the updated BSAP). For details of the subject, please refer to ACE-NC Paper 1/2026 at *Annex*. In addition, (a) AI Bird Recognition and Smart Tree Survey; and (b) Suggestion from Dr Bosco Chan of WWF Urging an Update of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (WAPO) were discussed as Any Other Business items.

KEY DISCUSSIONS

Updated Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

2. Members welcomed the promulgation of the updated BSAP. To facilitate its implementation in the coming decade, Members had raised questions and provided suggestions on various aspects including the need to provide sufficient resources. For capacity building, Members opined that the Government should encourage collaborations and participation of all sectors in order to bring together different expertise. In addition, professional advice on biodiversity-related matters should be conveyed to different sectors, with a view to facilitating respective sectoral participants to establish and apply nature-based solutions in their respective areas.

3. Members held the view that the interconnections between climate change and nature conservation as well as the co-benefits of biodiversity enhancement and climate resilience should be better communicated to the relevant government departments and the general public as an effort to deepen mainstreaming. In addition, publicity and education should be stepped up through introducing and promoting the updated BSAP to various stakeholders by using different media and platforms. Members also held the view that specific or quantifiable key performance indicators or baseline could be set for measuring the targeted results.

AI Bird Recognition and Smart Tree Survey

4. Members were pleased to note the application of AI and smart technologies to support environmental impact assessment (EIA) and considered that the EIA process could be further streamlined when a database for Hong Kong would be ready in the future. The Government was suggested to consider exploring wider application of the AI system, including the collected data, for other usage such as public education. Members also suggested that the Government should explore collaborations with different parties including scholars and explore ways to overcome the existing application limitations and consider the requirement of human involvement to complement AI.

Suggestion from Dr Bosco Chan of WWF Urging an Update of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance

5. Members noted that a recent letter to the media has raised the matter of reviewing the WAPO (Cap. 170), given its long-standing enactment. It was suggested that the Government may consider reviewing and amending the ordinance taking into account related matters including the updated BSAP.

6. The above key discussions are reported to the ACE for information.

NCSC Secretariat
March 2026



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ACE-NC Paper 1/2026

For discussion on 29 January 2026

Updated Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

PURPOSE

The Government promulgated the updated Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (the updated BSAP)¹ in December 2025, which serves as the blueprint for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in Hong Kong over the next decade. This paper provides Members with an overview of the key components and implementation arrangements of the updated BSAP.

BACKGROUND

2. The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (the Convention) is an international treaty for conserving biodiversity, promoting the sustainable use of biological resources and ecosystems, and ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources. China has been a Party to the Convention since 1993, and its application was extended to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2011.

3. As part of China and a highly developed international city, Hong Kong is committed to stepping up conservation efforts and supporting sustainable development, thereby contributing to global and national efforts on biodiversity conservation. The first phase of the BSAP was launched in 2016. Since then, relevant government bureaux and departments have been taking forward specific actions in the BSAP under their purviews, co-ordinated by the dedicated Inter-departmental Working Group on BSAP (IWGB). The Government has proactively engaged with stakeholders in the implementation of the BSAP and has regularly reported progress to the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE).

¹ The updated BSAP is available for download online:
https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/conservation/Con_hkbsap/updating_bsap/updating_bsap.html

4. Through the concerted efforts of all sectors of the community, the first phase of the BSAP achieved notable outcomes, including the designation of new country parks and marine parks, the complete ban on the local ivory trade, the establishment of the Long Valley Nature Park, and the launch of the Hong Kong Biodiversity Information Hub², among others. In light of the latest global and national developments, including the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)³ adopted under the Convention and China’s National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (2023–2030)⁴, the Government updated the BSAP with reference to global biodiversity goals, national priorities, and public consultation feedback collected in mid-2025.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

5. A two-month public consultation exercise (from 12 May 2025 to 11 July 2025) was conducted to ensure broad representation and stakeholder engagement for the updated BSAP. During the consultation exercise, over 1 400 written submissions were received, including about 600 template-based submissions. The ACE was also consulted on 27 June 2025⁵. The public consultation exercise gathered inputs from a wide range of stakeholders through various channels. There was broad support for the implementation of BSAP across all four strategic areas proposed, reflecting a strong societal commitment to advancing biodiversity conservation in Hong Kong through inclusive, science-based, and collaborative approaches. All feedback received has been carefully considered and incorporated into the updated BSAP as appropriate.

THE UPDATED BSAP

6. The updated BSAP was launched on 31 December 2025, providing a comprehensive policy direction and action framework for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development for the next decade. The updated BSAP document has been uploaded to the website of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD).

7. The updated BSAP is steered by a clear vision and an overarching goal that define the long-term aspirations for Hong Kong’s biodiversity, and are given below:

² ACE Paper 15/2023 reports the overall implementation of first phase of BSAP and key decisions adopted under the Convention since then. It is available at:

https://www.eeb.gov.hk/sites/default/files/en/node5840/ACE_Paper_15_2023.pdf

³ Full version of the KMGBF is available at:

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf>

⁴ China’s NBSAP is available at:

<https://chinadevelopmentbrief.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/China-Biodiversity-Action-Plan-1.pdf>

⁵ ACE paper 9/2025 reports the background and the proposed update to BSAP. It is available at:

https://www.eeb.gov.hk/sites/default/files/en/node5840/ACE_Paper_9_2025.pdf

Vision: The rich biodiversity of Hong Kong is valued, conserved, restored, sustainably managed and wisely used, thereby maintaining essential ecosystem services and sustaining a healthy and liveable place to the benefit of all people.

Overarching Goal: By 2035, Hong Kong will be a sustainable and liveable place where humanity and nature coexist in harmony, as reflected by the achievement of the 10 Overall Targets set out in the updated BSAP:

- (1) Refined policies, regulations, institutional frameworks and technological innovations for biodiversity conservation;
- (2) An expanded network of effectively managed protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures;
- (3) Enhanced and widely mobilised societal efforts in habitat restoration;
- (4) Strengthened protection of endangered species against poaching and trafficking;
- (5) Effectively managed risks or impacts posed by invasive alien species;
- (6) Further consolidated Hong Kong's position as an international green and sustainable finance hub;
- (7) Reduced pollution to aquatic environments, enhanced waste recycling rates, and advanced to the implementation of a circular economy;
- (8) Widely adopted nature-based solutions (NbS)⁶ and upgraded urban blue-green spaces;
- (9) Enhanced public knowledge on biodiversity, raised awareness and boosted community participation; and
- (10) Launched a series of biodiversity-positive joint initiatives, demonstrating a more cohesive and effective collaboration across jurisdictions and stakeholders.

8. To realise the above, the updated BSAP sets out four strategic areas: **Nature Conservation, Deepening Mainstreaming, Capacity Building, and Collaborative Partnering**. Under these strategic areas, 30 priority actions and 81 priority projects are outlined to guide implementation. It aims to strengthen biodiversity governance, enhance ecological resilience, and foster collaboration across boundaries and sectors to enable the continuous co-existence of economic development and environmental sustainability in Hong Kong. A brief illustration of the four strategic areas is given below:

Area 1: Nature Conservation

9. This strategic area focuses on preventing biodiversity loss and ensuring ecological resilience through comprehensive habitat and species protection, recovery, and restoration. Preserving healthy ecosystems requires consistent implementation

⁶ Nature-based Solutions (NbS): "Actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services and resilience and biodiversity benefits including on mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction." (Secretariat of the Convention)

of robust conservation measures, particularly the strengthening of efforts in managing threats as well as enhanced protection of species and habitats. Priority actions include establishing new protected areas and wetland conservation systems, and enhancing management of protected areas and habitat connectivity. Complementary measures, such as restoring degraded ecosystems, revitalising remote countryside, and conserving ecologically important private sites, extend effective conservation beyond protected area networks. Additional efforts including enhanced species protection, strict enforcement against wildlife crime, and better control of the risk of invasive alien species for addressing their direct threats to biodiversity, while reducing pollution and nutrient runoff to help protect aquatic environments from degradation.

Area 2: Deepening Mainstreaming

10. This strategic area seeks to further integrate biodiversity conservation across all sectors in our society, transforming it into a shared responsibility to be embedded in economic, urban, and community practices. This is fundamental to the creation of resilient urban systems that address interconnected challenges such as climate adaptation and social cohesion, ultimately building a biophilic city that thrives in harmony with nature. Priority actions include promoting NbS and wildlife-friendly designs in development projects, supporting pro-innovation green technologies, advancing green finance and sustainable practices, encouraging biodiversity risk disclosure by enterprises, fostering circular economy models, and promoting sustainable agricultural and fisheries practices and eco-tourism. Implementation requires concerted efforts from government, businesses, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academia, and civil society. For instance, NGOs and charitable organisations play key roles in mobilising community participation and initiating and delivering on-the-ground projects, while academic institutions advance research and capacity-building. Collectively, these efforts realise projects of various types conducive to biodiversity, expand urban blue-green spaces, and cultivate a culture of sustainability across society.

Area 3: Capacity Building

11. This strategic area focuses on strengthening Hong Kong's institutional, technological and human capacity for biodiversity conservation, recognising that knowledge and technical expertise underpin effective decision-making. The goal is to empower all sectors to contribute meaningfully to knowledge building and sharing. Priority actions include sustained investment in scientific and transdisciplinary research to address knowledge gaps, promoting knowledge transfer, and nurturing next-generation conservation talent. Initiatives will also establish central biodiversity resource facilities and digital platforms to improve public access to data and learning opportunities. By leveraging technology for monitoring, education, and enforcement, and fostering long-term interest in conservation, Hong Kong will strengthen its ability to manage biodiversity sustainably and adaptively.

Area 4: Collaborative Partnering

12. This strategic area aims to foster a culture of collaboration, broaden and deepen partnerships across regions, industries, and communities to advance biodiversity conservation. As ecological systems transcend administrative boundaries, effective conservation requires joint efforts. Hong Kong will strengthen cross-boundary collaborations, such as developing habitat corridors and coordinating enforcement against wildlife crime and illegal wildlife trade, as well as supporting relevant capacity building activities and youth training programmes. Regional and international partnerships will enable knowledge exchange, sharing of best practices, and joint research initiatives. Engagement with Greater Bay Area cities and global networks will drive innovative solutions and improve ecological resource management. Through these collaborative actions, Hong Kong will amplify its contribution to biodiversity conservation, facilitating the delivery of natural benefits to both local and regional communities.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION

13. The updated BSAP will be implemented over the next 10 years under the coordination of the dedicated IWGB, which will monitor progress, facilitate biodiversity mainstreaming, and strengthen professional capacity across the Government. Progress will be reported annually to the ACE, and the ACE's Nature Conservation Subcommittee will be consulted on specific projects as needed. The updated BSAP will maintain flexibility, with a mid-term review to assess all actions and adapting strategies to reflect local and global developments.

14. To measure effectiveness and communicate impact, a set of quantitative and semi-quantitative indicators will be adopted to track conservation outcomes. These indicators will take into account key metrics, such as the expansion or maintenance of protected areas and other area-based measures, blue-green spaces, and green coverage. These results, supported by visual infographics and photos, will be published on the BSAP website to ensure transparency and public engagement.

ADVICE SOUGHT

15. Members are invited to provide comments on implementation of the updated BSAP.

Environment and Ecology Bureau
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
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