

## Press Release

### **Nature-based solutions offer significant climate and biodiversity benefits to Hong Kong: The Nature Conservancy and Civic Exchange**

- **Nature-based solutions (NbS) are key to helping Hong Kong achieve carbon neutrality before 2050 and improve the city's resilience to flooding.**
- **Reforestation, mangrove and seagrass restoration could sequester up to 14% of the Northern Metropolis' carbon emissions by 2050 – but only if immediate action is taken.**

[Hong Kong, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024] - The Nature Conservancy and Civic Exchange have jointly released a report titled "*Unlocking the Potential of Nature in Climate Action - A Report on Hong Kong's Nature-based Solutions*".

The report highlights the interconnection between climate change and biodiversity loss, and explores the transformative potential of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to help Hong Kong achieve its climate goals. NbS include actions such as conserving, restoring, and effectively managing ecosystems that can remove carbon from the atmosphere and increase coastal resilience, while simultaneously benefiting biodiversity and human well-being. The report serves as a primer for the Hong Kong government, businesses, and civil society, and provides guidance for initiating NbS in Hong Kong.

The report highlights the urgency in adopting NbS – after 2030, potential benefits are likely to decrease because climate change feedback will gradually weaken ecosystems' resilience, reducing their ability to sequester and store carbon.

NbS also aligns with National Policy. The global agreement on biodiversity, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, has established a clear goal to reverse and halt biodiversity loss by 2030, with NbS as a key strategy. China's recent release of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) has prioritised the implementation of NbS as a key action, and Hong Kong's city-level BSAP currently under review, could follow suit.

In the report's foreword, Mr. Wong Kam Sing, former Secretary for the Environment, expressed his in-principle support to the consideration of NbS, stating, "Hong Kong, including both the public and private sectors, should consider integrating the potential of NbS when updating climate and sustainable development action plans."

#### **Benefits to the Northern Metropolis**

The report utilises the Northern Metropolis (NM) as a case study to illustrate the risks posed by climate change and the opportunities presented by NbS. Most of the NM development is in floodplains, which are particularly susceptible to climate-related risks. Coastal communities in the area frequently suffer significant losses from flooding and severe typhoons, which are expected to worsen with climate change.

Dr. Felix Leung, Climate Change Fellow of TNC, explains, "Comprehensive planning that fully integrates NbS is crucial for ensuring resilience and protecting biodiversity. With effective management, the establishment of a network of Coastal and Wetland Conservation Parks, as well as

reforestation of hillsides is a tremendous opportunity to enhance long-term conservation in the area and increase the resilience of communities facing climate-related risks."

Kitty Tam, Programme Lead of Civic Exchange, states, "Investing in nature can benefit both biodiversity and development. The Climate Action Plan 2050 has committed around HK\$240 billion for climate change efforts over the next 15 to 20 years. Allocating some of this funding towards NbS would be a cost-effective way to reach our climate goals and protect biodiversity".

For media photos, please download from the [LINK](#)

### **About The Nature Conservancy**

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organisation dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at an unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. Working in more than 70 countries and territories, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. TNC has been in Asia Pacific for almost 30 years with projects in Australia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Mongolia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands. TNC was awarded the 2019 Lui Che Woo Prize - Prize for Sustainable Development.

To learn more, please visit: [The Nature Conservancy \(tnc.org.hk\)](https://tnc.org.hk) or follow [TNC HK 大自然保護協會](#) and [@tnc\\_hk](#)

### **About Civic Exchange**

Civic Exchange is an independent public policy think tank with a vision to shape a liveable and sustainable Hong Kong. Our mission is to engage society and influence public policy through research, dialogue, and the development of practical solutions. Civic Exchange has been ranked among the top 50 environment policy think tanks in the world by the University of Pennsylvania since 2011. To know more, please visit: <https://civic-exchange.org/> or follow [Civic Exchange 思匯政策研究所](#) and [Civic Exchange 思匯政策研究所](#)

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