

To The Hon. Mr Lee Ka-chiu, HKSAR Chief Executive
From: The Hong Kong Countryside Foundation

Date: 28 August 2023

Inputs for the Policy Address
Building Sustainable City and Quality Living Space

1. The Hong Kong Countryside Foundation is highly supportive of the vision of the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (“the Strategy”) to create, for the first time in Hong Kong, a unique metropolitan landscape aiming for the co-existence of Development and Conservation. We advocate that the Government stick to those Key Action Items that would lead to the creation of more environmental capacity, cross-boundary ecological corridors and resumption of land for conservation.
2. Specific recommendations are:
 - a. Create and continually strengthen the **Wutong Mountain/ Robin's Nest/ Pat Sin Leng Ecological Corridor**, in collaboration with the Shenzhen authorities.
 - b. **Study the further expansion of the Robin's Nest Country Park** on its designation, potentially to 1120 hectares, 95% of which is government land, to guarantee the proper functioning of the Corridor, which would be severely compromised by the 550-hectare Country Park now being proposed.
 - c. Proceed swiftly to resume the land designated for the several contiguous wetland conservation parks as set out in the Strategy.
 - d. **Urgent actions should be taken particularly for the Sam Po Shue wetland conservation park** since this habitat accommodates more than 1% of the global population of the endangered species viz. Black-faced Spoonbill, which qualifies it as a **Ramsar wetland site of international importance.**
 - e. Work towards the establishment of a **Greater Bay Area National Wetland Reserve** that encompasses all wetland habitats in the Deep Bay on both sides of the border, in collaboration with the Shenzhen authorities and in alignment with the 14th Five-year Plan (2021-2025).
 - f. Accord further protection to both the proposed Greater Bay Area National Wetland Reserve and the Wutong Mountain/ Robin's Nest/ Pat Sin Leng Ecological Corridor by adopting **the Ecological Red Line concept under the national Ecological Civilisation framework.**
 - g. The **delineation and zoning of development areas** must avoid

disrupting the Comprehensive Ecological Habitat Network and the Urban-Rural Greenway specified in the Strategy.

- h. Specifically, **the proposed plan of the San Tin Technopole should be critically reviewed and revised**, to remove intrusions into the proposed Sam Po Shue wetland conservation park and the buffer zone of the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar wetland of international importance, which would be a **serious contravention of the national priority to expand the area of protected wetlands under the 14th Five-year Plan (2021-2025)** which makes specific reference to wetlands in the Greater Bay Area.
- i. Additional existing, good quality, agricultural land should be suitably identified, zoned as **Agricultural Priority Areas** and included in the Comprehensive Ecological Habitat Network.
- j. **The Fanling Golf Course** should be retained in its entirety for eventual conversion into a multi-purpose **Central Park of the Northern Metropolis**, parts of which should be designated as **Conservation Areas** for specific purposes, thereby fulfilling Planning Principle 3 of the NMDS by providing a ready-made "High-Quality Outdoor Eco-recreation/tourism Outlet".
- k. **Large-scale land resumption** should be undertaken to solve the land supply problem while planning should proceed *expeditiously* to enable timely re-provisioning of land for brownfield operators in the appropriate trades.

By Order of the Board



Lam Chiu Ying
Chairman
28 August 2023

cc Mr Chan Kwok Ki, Chief Secretary for Administration
Mr Chan Mo Po, Financial Secretary
Mr Cheuk Wing Hing, Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration
Mr Wong Wai Lun, Deputy Financial Secretary
Ms Linn Hon Ho, Secretary for Development
Mr Tse Chin Wan, Secretary for Environment and Ecology
Dr Leung Siu Fai, Director of Agriculture, Fisheries & Conservation
Dr Chui Ho Kwong, Director of Environmental Protection
Mr Lai Chi Wa, Director of Lands
Mr Chung Man Kit, Director of Planning