

Foreword



ur natural environment makes life on earth possible. It is an invaluable resource, shared by everyone. As economies continue to develop, living places become more urbanised, and the impact of climate change becomes more apparent, we have to work harder and smarter to ensure that our city can progress toward sustainable development.

We need to change how we are treating the natural environment if we want to continue to enjoy its benefits. Countries around the world have recognised this need, and have begun to take action. China has joined this movement, and Hong Kong should not lag behind. One key determinant of the benefits and services delivered by our natural environment, or ecosystems, is biodiversity. The more different kinds of organisms and habitats, the more variation within each species, the more likely our natural environment can sustain itself as conditions change. Simply put, the more complex the ecosystem, the better. The conservation of our biodiversity resources crosses paths with many social and economic issues, and can guide our efforts in a productive direction toward sustainable development.

Thus, countries around the world—including China—have committed themselves to developing goals and plans, or adopting existing ones, to better conserve and even increase the biodiversity within their borders according to their particular conditions and capabilities. This is something every sector of the society can help with. Here in Hong Kong, the Government will shoulder its share of responsibility by committing resources to specific projects, educating the public, and providing leadership and support for independent efforts. At the same time, we need you to participate; we need you to partner with us to share knowledge, spread the message, and work together toward a common goal. We need you to look into the areas and processes you have influence or control over, with a view to looking for opportunities to conserve biodiversity and support sustainable use of natural resources.

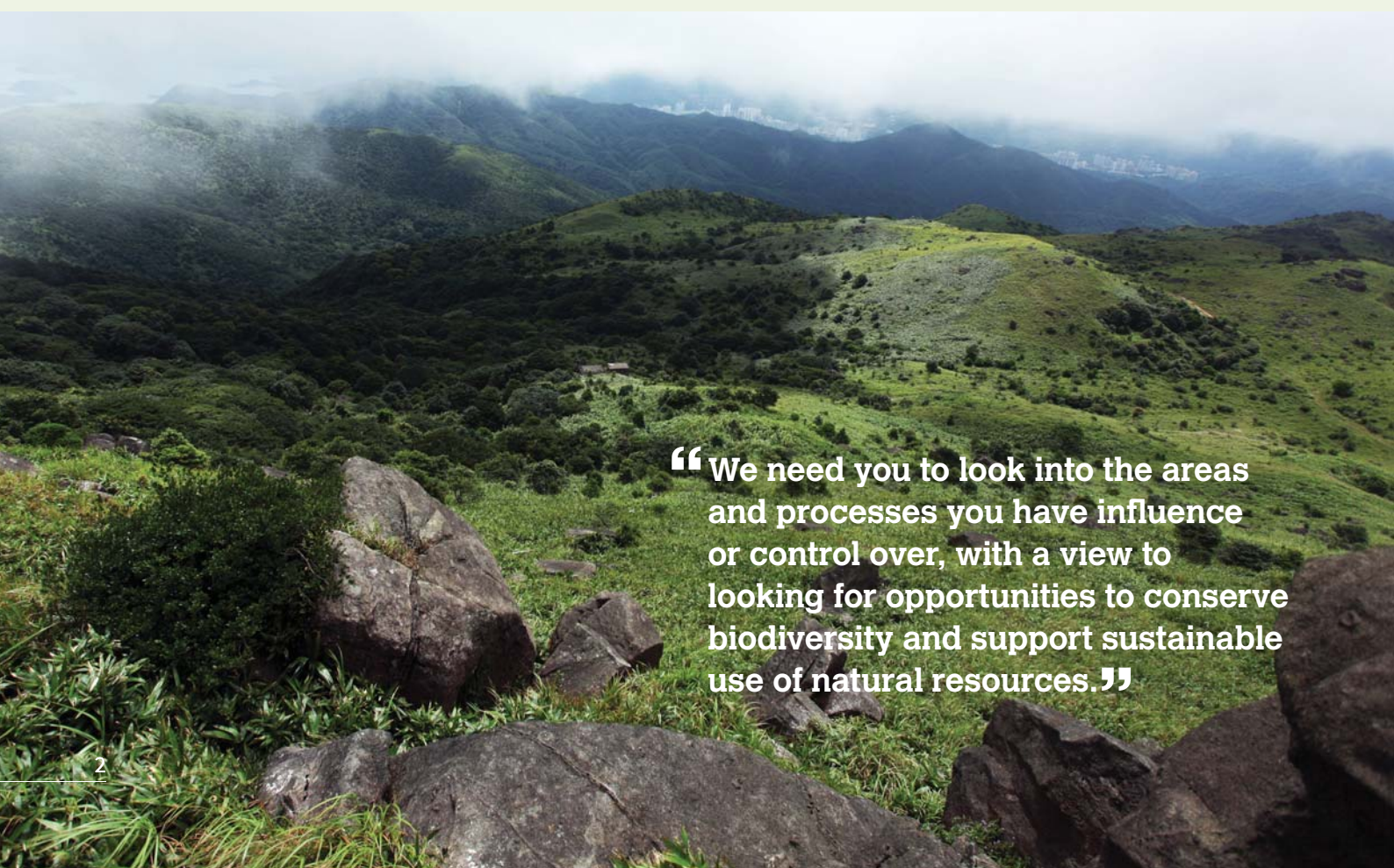
The first step from the Government is to create a five-year Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) for Hong Kong. We have already been working on this for more than two years. We formed advisory committees to take forward the BSAP and to achieve the best outcomes. Various public events have been held, including the first-ever Biodiversity Festival to draw input from the public.

Any such plan will be most effective when everyone in the community, with our various capacities and expertise, participates. We now need your views in order to map out a BSAP that can be effectively implemented. We will then need your efforts to make it work.

This document sets out four proposed major areas of action. It suggests what specific actions could be taken within these areas over the next five years to support biodiversity and sustainable development. We now ask for your opinions and suggestions.

Please read this document carefully, and respond.

Let's do our part for biodiversity—for the planet—for our home—together.



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