

20 January, 2024

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Email: wcps_system@afcd.gov.hk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Development of Wetland Conservation Parks System

Designing Hong Kong is writing to raise our concerns on the latest Study of the Development of Wetland Conservation Parks Systems.

The Importance of the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park

The Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park is adjacent to Mai Po Nature Reserve, a wetland of international importance recognised as a Ramsar Site. Mai Po, Sam Po Shue and the surrounding area are important habitat for a diverse range of local and migratory wildlife. Conserving and enhancing the quality of the existing wetland and fishponds does not only benefit local wildlife but is essential to sustaining the regional ecosystem.

Every Hectare Matters: “No-net-loss” in Area and Function

The government must maintain the principle of “no-net-loss” in both area and its function. The wetland in Mai Po, San Po Shue and the surrounding area is a complete system that cannot be separated and segregated. Therefore, the wetland conservation park should include all the existing wetland and fishponds, including the 151 hectares of Wetland Conservation Area that are included in the San Tin Technopole proposal.

The Establishment of the Conservation Park Is Never a Compensation

The wetland in the area is of high conservation value and provide an essential habitat for wildlife. The main purpose of establishing the Wetland Conservation Park is to maintain and where possible improve the ecological function. Creating a Wetland Conservation Park is a long outstanding protection measure of an existing natural habitat, it is not a compensation for ecological and fisheries impacts and destruction of habitats arising from the development of San Tin Technopole.

The Management of the Wetland Conservation Park

A complete and comprehensive enforcement practice with legal powers is needed to be able to conserve and protect the wetland and fishponds which are subject to constant eco-vandalism. We urge government to demonstrate its commitment to conservation by creating the Wetland Conservation Park forthwith. We are deeply concerned that the proposed public-private partnerships are development-based and risk greater human disturbance to the environment and damage of the habitat of the wildlife.

The Capacity of the Wetland Conservation Park

We support promoting eco-education through the Wetland Conservation Park, however, the Government has the responsibility to ensure those educational and recreational activities are monitored and management to ensure that these do not exceed the environmental capacity of the wetland.



Conclusion – Do It Right in One Shot

The plans for the Northern Metropolis will dramatically impact the wetland areas which are a unique natural resource in a short period of time. Damage to the environment and wildlife on the scale that is proposed will be irreversible.

Here we submit our comments for your consideration.

Your sincerely,

Designing Hong Kong Limited