HONG KONG BIODIVERSITY
EXPERT GROUP

HONG KONG BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE HONG KONG SAR GOVERNMENT

NOVEMBER 2024

This report is the result of contributions from approximately 130 experts from Hong Kong and a dedicated Steering Committee . While the contents reflect a diverse range of perspectives from the experts, the prioritised recommendations were synthesised by the Steering Committee.

Published by:	ADM Capital Foundation
Produced by:	Hong Kong Biodiversity Expert Group
Recommended citation:	Hong Kong Biodiversity Expert Group (2024) Recommendations to the Hong Kong SAR Government for the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) 2025–2035. ADM Capital Foundation, Hong Kong.

This report was funded by:

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE HONG KONG SAR GOVERNMENT FOR THE BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN (BSAP) 2025 – 2035

FINAL REPORT

Hong Kong Biodiversity Expert Group

11 November 2024

Executive Summary

This report contains recommendations to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSAR) for the next city Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) 2025 – 2035, as compiled by the Hong Kong Biodiversity Expert Group (HKBEG). The HKBEG comprises more than 100 experts with biodiversity related expertise from universities, NGOs, foundations and the corporate sector. Over the past six months they have worked collaboratively to formulate locally relevant recommendations with reference to the globally agreed Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) 2030 Targets.

Five priority areas are highlighted as being particularly important for the forthcoming BSAP and are presented here with their underlying priority recommendations. The five priority areas are:

i) Initiate large-scale restoration of degraded terrestrial and marine ecosystems to reverse biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem function and connectivity, and improve climate resilience;

ii) Significantly scale-up protection of coastal ecosystems through the designation of marine protected areas (MPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) to achieve the global "30 x 30" target;

iii) Increase safeguards for the most endangered species of animals and plants, to reduce species extinction risk and facilitate recovery of at-risk populations;

iv) Mainstream biodiversity in business decision-making to increase private-sector participation and investment in biodiversity action; and

v) Scale-up efforts to reduce Hong Kong's impact on biodiversity caused by the wildlife trade and unsustainable consumption.

A total of 75 priority recommendations and 65 supporting recommendations are made against 18 of the 23 GBF targets (see Table 1, p. 49). Some 43 of the priority recommendations fall under the five priority areas. The supporting recommendations provide the specifics of the actions to be taken to support delivery of the priority recommendations, and/or were perceived to be less impactful as standalone actions. The portfolio of recommendations are not intended to be fully comprehensive — and do not generally cover activities that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department conducts routinely for example — but they do cover a wider swathe of subject areas than the Hong Kong BSAP 2016-2021 and are ambitious.

For a variety of reasons including the urgent need to respond to the onset of climate change, which threatens to undermine both existing and future nature conservation efforts, the next BSAP will need to be expanded in both scope and depth. This will require a more collaborative approach amongst government and non-government actors to provide the necessary human resources, and substantial new sources and mechanisms of conservation finance. Therefore, while the recommendations in this report are primarily made to the HKSAR Government and in particular the AFCD and Environment and Ecology Bureau as the custodians of the BSAP, they are actually for a broad range of government and non-government actors.

Suggestions are also made for a monitoring and evaluation framework, and to establish the kinds of innovative financing and policy mechanisms that can rapidly mobilise substantial amounts of private capital for nature conservation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Advisory Council on the Environment
AFCD	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
AFFS	Accredited Fish Farm Scheme
BEC	Business Environment Council
BSAP	Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEDD	Civil Engineering and Development Department
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
EEB	Environment and Ecology Bureau
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPD	Environmental Protection Department
FPA	Fisheries Protection Area
GBA	Greater Bay Area
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GLTMS	Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section, Development Bureau
HATS	Harbour Area Treatment Scheme
HKBEG	Hong Kong Biodiversity Expert Group
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWC	International Whaling Commission
LCSD	Leisure and Cultural Services Department
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NbS	Nature-Based Solutions
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan
NDA	New Development Area
OECM	Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure
PA	Protected Area
R&D	Research and Development
SRLI	Sampled Red List Index
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
TNFD	Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

BACKGROUND

In September 2023, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government provided an update to the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) on implementation of Hong Kong' first city BSAP (2016-2021), which included its intention to review and update the BSAP, with a view to promulgating it in 2025. The update to ACE notes that the next BSAP may last for 10 years, and focus on four strategic areas, namely enhancing biodiversity conservation, building capacities, partnering with neighbouring cities and mainstreaming biodiversity.

While the ACE update notes that "Government will continue to adopt a collaborative approach by drawing on the expertise and knowledge of stakeholders", it was subsequently established that it was not the intention to undertake a highly consultative process with non-government stakeholders similar to the process that took place over several years to formulate the first city BSAP.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)'s guidance on formulating NBSAPs notes that "the NBSAP preparation should be a strongly participatory process involving stakeholders in all phases of the planning process, especially in the identification, analysis and selection of strategy options," and that "the process should encompass the full range of sectors concerned with the use and conservation of biodiversity. The involvement and support of high level decision makers in the planning process is critical."

While the CBD guidance above refers to NBSAPs, the guidance cascades down to subnational plans such as the HKSAR's own BSAP, which forms part of China's national plan. In order to assist the HKSAR in following CBD's guidance, and to further efforts to mainstream the BSAP and nature conservation within Hong Kong, a Steering Committee was formed to lead a process whereby interested experts from the conservation community – the Hong Kong Biodiversity Expert Group (HKBEG) – could work together to make recommendations to Government for consideration in the forthcoming BSAP.

Hong Kong Biodiversity Expert Group Composition

Steering Committee and Affiliations

Chair – Christine Loh, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Vice Chair – Dr. Michael Lau, Hong Kong Wetlands Conservation Association

Members

Dr. Bosco Chan, WWF-Hong Kong
Prof. David Dudgeon, The University of Hong Kong
Sophie le Clue, ADM Capital Foundation
Lawrence Iu, Civic Exchange
Simon Ng, Business Environment Council
Stan Shea, BLOOM Association Hong Kong
Marine Thomas, The Nature Conservancy
Ming Chuan Woo, Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

Coordinator
Dr. Andy Cornish, Cornerstone Strategies

The full list of experts who took part in the Biodiversity Expert Group process can be found in the Focus Group reports in Appendix B.

APPROACH

The Steering Committee agreed that the process would broadly follow the participatory process employed for the first BSAP, while also trying to improve on it. Experts were invited to collectively identify the most important subject areas for the coming years, divide into focus groups to analyse progress made to date, and make recommendations in order of priority. These recommendations would then be compiled and prioritised across all subject areas by the Steering Committee, and presented to the HKSAR government for consideration for inclusion in the draft BSAP before it went to public consultation in late 2024.

The first meeting for the HKBEG was held in late March 2024. More than 80 people attended. Presentations were made on relevant international and national developments including the NBSAP, and government representatives shared their plans to update the HKSAR BSAP. The HKBEG attendees worked together to select the most important subject areas, identifying 14 areas and self-selecting leaders for focus groups to work on each.

Focus Groups in alphabetical order:

1. *Business for Biodiversity*
2. *Capacity Building for Biodiversity*
3. *Cross-border Partnership*
4. *Education*
5. *Food Systems Transformation*
6. *Invasive Alien Species*
7. *Mainstreaming Nature-Based Solutions*
8. *Marine Habitats Enhancement and Management*
9. *People, Culture and Biodiversity*
10. *Red List and Endangered Species*
11. *Restoration and Rewilding*
12. *Technology and Data for Biodiversity*
13. *Terrestrial Biodiversity*
14. *Wildlife Trade*

Each focus group was provided with a template form to complete, providing the basis of their reporting to the Steering Committee, while each focus group leader was tasked with inviting the experts they felt necessary to participate in the process, and deciding on how their group would operate. Experts interested in joining a particular group were free to do so. The Steering Committee

analysed the coverage of the focus group portfolio against the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) targets and in some cases requested that focus groups reduce or enlarge their scope to fill gaps and reduce overlap. In a few cases it was decided that the Steering Committee was best placed to produce recommendations where there was a gap in focus group coverage.

Increasing efforts to build nature's resilience to climate change was identified early on as a cross-cutting area worthy of major attention and a capacity building workshop was organised for the HKBEG in late June. Researchers from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology provided detailed climate modelling predictions for 2050 and 2100, and ecologists shared the implications for different taxa.

Work in the focus groups proceeded well and according to schedule, and by early July most had drafted recommendations. A workshop for focus group leaders and the Steering Committee was held in mid-July, and allowed the first opportunity for all to see the emerging recommendations across all 14 areas. A mapping exercise revealed where similar recommendations were emerging, and it was decided that presenting the recommendations according to the GBF 2030 Targets would be the most useful, as well as being in line with CBD guidance.

More than 130 experts took part in the 14 focus groups, and generated 107 recommendations. These were then analysed, organised and prioritised by the Steering Committee. Several notable gaps were identified and additional recommendations were generated by the Steering Committee and experts, and assimilated with those from the focus groups. All of the reports have been compiled into an online Appendix B, a list participating organisations can be found in Appendix A. The Steering Committee acted to streamline the recommendations such as by combining recommendations, and looked to standardise the language used where possible. Five priority areas with specific underlying recommendations were selected as being particularly important to highlight. A total of 75 priority recommendations and 65 supporting recommendations are made against 18 of the 23 GBF targets.

Key Aspects and Challenges Considered in Formulating the Recommendations

- **Aligning with global standards:** All aspects of the BSAP should meet the standards laid out in the Kunming-Montreal agreement which sets out appropriate indicators for each of the 23 2030 targets in the GBF (e.g. https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/), or should otherwise align with international best practice.

- **Building resilience to climate change:** Increasing climate resilience and conserving/restoring biodiversity must take place simultaneously and with urgency – neither can be achieved without the other. The process of restoring habitats, ecosystems and biological populations takes time and can present challenging ecological endeavours. The HKSAR will need to rapidly increase restoration efforts at scale so as to gain local know-how; we must also learn from overseas experience.

- **Integration with the Greater Bay Area (GBA):** Efforts to restore and conserve biodiversity should be integrated with those of the GBA wherever relevant, including to increase regional connectivity and build resilience to climate change. A more integrated approach is particularly relevant to the

marine environment including fisheries management, as the HKSAR's sea area is highly interconnected with surrounding waters.

- **Marine conservation lags behind terrestrial conservation**: This is exemplified by differences in the extent of marine and terrestrial protected areas. Our coasts and seas are a valuable and biodiverse natural asset; the new BSAP should prioritise conservation, restoration and sustainable management of marine biodiversity.

- **Inadequate mitigation measures:** Too often, development takes place before adequate consideration is given to conservation. There are many examples of piecemeal mitigation/compensation measures that are not effective. This needs to be reversed. Hong Kong should adopt an "Avoidance First" approach and Biodiversity Net Gain approach for development to ensure biodiversity can persist. Off-site compensation including restoration that contributes to the wider conservation objectives can help deliver biodiversity net gain.

- **Conservation delivery**: Delivery of an ambitious BSAP will require collaboration among all stakeholders that recognises and utilises the expertise and resources of all parties to devise and execute the BSAP. In line with International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) guidance, recommendations are made for a variety of government and non-government actors i.e. beyond the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB) and Agriculture and Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD).

- **Scaling up and resources.** For a variety of reasons including the urgent need to respond to the onset of climate change, the next BSAP will need to be expanded in both scope and depth. This will require a more collaborative approach amongst government and non-government actors to provide the necessary human resources, but also substantial new sources and mechanisms of conservation finance.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Subnational and local implementation of biodiversity strategies and action plans can only be effective when progress is monitored regularly and appropriately, and results are evaluated by experts and managers against pre-determined and agreed indicators (CBD Secretariat 2017). Hong Kong BSAP monitoring (ACE 2023) is currently focused on the delivery of activities, rather than the impacts of management and other interventions on the state of biodiversity, or on established indicators.

The Hong Kong Government has signaled its intention that the next BSAP will last for ten years, from 2025-2035 (ACE 2023), in contrast to the first BSAP which lasted for five years. China's current NBSAP will last for seven years (2023-2030), expiring in line with the GBF 2030 targets. It is not clear how the Hong Kong Government intends to keep a ten year plan up to date and relevant at a time of rapid change, including climate change impacts which will surely require significant adjustments to management approaches in a way that cannot currently be foreseen. In addition, global and China conservation priorities will be updated in 2030.

It is recommended that:

- Hong Kong's BSAP be synchronised with the China NBSAP in terms of timing so that reporting and actions are aligned.
- AFCD establishes a BSAP monitoring framework in line with CBD decision 15/6, using headline, component and complimentary indicators to monitor progress, and encourages parties with relevant data to contribute to it, including citizen science. Such a monitoring framework will assist with reporting, but more importantly with assessing the local status of biodiversity, whether actions are achieving biodiversity objectives, and enabling adaptive management where not.
- Annual reports of progress against the BSAP are published and shared with key stakeholders, including other Government Bureaus and Departments, academics, NGOs, ACE, BEC etc. Meetings of key stakeholders should be organised at least every two years, to facilitate knowledge-sharing and collaboration on the BSAP, and to assist with mainstreaming.

CONSERVATION PRIORITY AREAS AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

(not in priority order)

The HKBEG has formulated recommendations for the most relevant GBF 2030 Targets. Five priority areas spanning new or significantly expanded areas of work are highlighted (1-5 below) as being particularly important for the forthcoming BSAP. Each has detailed specific priority recommendations underpinning them.

Priority Area 1

Initiate large-scale restoration of degraded terrestrial and marine ecosystems to reverse biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem function and connectivity, and improve climate resilience

Justification

Restoration received limited attention in the previous BSAP. This would be a new priority for Hong Kong, mirroring the 2030 GBF target agreed globally by parties to the CBD, which recognises that conserving what biodiversity is left will not be sufficient, as so much has been lost already.

Accelerating climate change presents a significant challenge to both the assisted and natural recovery of ecosystems worldwide. How this complex threat will manifest itself in a restoration context is poorly understood. With rising temperatures, longer summers, more extreme typhoons with accompanying storm surges, and rainfall events, the resilience of Hong Kong's present-day habitats to pest outbreaks, invasive alien species invasion, soil erosion, fire risk and so on is uncertain.

The groundswell of cross-sectoral interest in ecological restoration – both globally and regionally – will need to be leveraged to address issues such as unwieldy, top-down bureaucratic processes and

insufficient cross-departmental collaboration that hinder uptake of progressive environmental initiatives including ecological restoration, and the need to make significant land and sea areas available for restoration. Restoration works should initially focus on existing conservation areas (e.g. Country and Marine Parks, Wetland Conservation Area, Conservation Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest), while research is undertaken to identify other degraded areas that are optimal for restoration.

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) is a key tool for achieving restoration that emphasises the benefits to biodiversity and society, as well as providing mechanisms and incentives for the involvement of private-sector finance. Evaluating ecosystem services is essential for securing the non-traditional sources of finance that will be crucial for large-scale restoration. Research published in 2017 indicated that Natural Climate Solutions could contribute significantly to the cost-effective mitigation required by 2030 to limit global warming to below 2°C if implemented with urgency (Griscom et al. 2017).

Priority Area 2

Significantly scale-up protection of coastal ecosystems in line with the global "30 x 30" target through the designation of marine protected areas (MPAs), and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)

Justification

Marine conservation has lagged behind terrestrial conservation for decades despite Hong Kong having rich biodiversity for such a small sea area. Hong Kong's waters are home to at least 5,943 species, more than one-quarter of all those known from mainland China (Ng et al. 2017). Hong Kong's existing network of MPAs covers only around 5% of its territorial waters, compared to around 40% on land. Many marine biodiversity hotspots and habitat types remain outside the protection of the MPA system, leaving these sensitive habitats exposed to threats from various anthropogenic activities. This has led to serious degradation and loss of inshore habitats, particularly in western waters and around Victoria Harbour.

A comprehensive network of MPAs is needed to safeguard sensitive habitats from threats such as reclamation, overfishing, and improperly managed ecotourism and recreational activities, and ultimately to support the protection and restoration of ecosystems, habitats and species. MPAs that result in effective restoration of depleted fish and invertebrate populations can also support the development of sustainable fisheries in line with AFCD's 2023 Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, as well as increased ecotourism livelihood opportunities.

The Hong Kong Marine Protection Alliance was formed in 2022 and is actively promoting a "30% of coastal waters to be protected" goal, and for no-take zones within existing MPAs to be increased to 20%. It currently has 28 member organisations.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 1: Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss	By 2030, 30% of coastal waters in HKSAR should be designated as MPAs or protected by other effective area-based conservation measures. A clear roadmap should be established for this expansion of the MPA/OECM network, using an internationally recognised biodiversity assessment framework, and time-bound goals.	EEB, AFCD
TARGET 2: Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems	By 2030, 50% of all terrestrial protected areas and 100% of MPAs should have effective management plans with SMART biodiversity objectives[1], rising to 100% by 2035. Any new protected area should have a management plan from the start.	AFCD
TARGET 3: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas	By 2030, at least 30% of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine ecosystems are under effective restoration, with the objective of enhancing biodiversity, ecosystem function and services, and improving or maintaining ecological connectivity that will contribute towards climate resilience.	AFCD, EEB, Lands Dept, Sustainable Lantau Office (CEDD), developers, conservation NGOs

Priority Area 3

Increase safeguards for the most endangered species of animals and plants, to reduce species extinction risk and facilitate recovery of at-risk populations

Justification

Under the current BSAP Action 14a, Red List Assessments for Hong Kong have been conducted for selected taxonomic groups with input from local experts. However, none of these have yet been published and the proposed 'List of Threatened Species' has not been released.

Some of the current legal mechanisms providing species protection are outdated and refer to species that may no longer be considered threatened. Whitfort et al. (2013) proposed ways in which various legislations could be updated to reference a List of Threatened Species (LTS) and include groups of

[1] Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) management objectives; equivalent to requirements set out under the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas (https://iucngreenlist.org/)

species that are currently excluded from protection e.g. marine fishes. In this manner the list of protected species could be updated in the future without further changes to legislation.

Having a government list of protected species that is kept up to date is an essential pillar for conservation legislation in any jurisdiction. For instance, in 2021 China added a stipulation to the Wildlife Protection Law requiring that the lists of Class I and II Nationally Protected species be reviewed and updated every five years. Protected species lists support management efforts to protect species from going extinct, and from being overexploited. Hong Kong urgently needs to update its own approach, and the 2025 timeline proposed for the LTS to be released reflects that it should be close to being completed already.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 4: Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts	**LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES AND ACTION PLANS** a. By mid-2025, establish and maintain an up-to-date list of locally threatened species to provide a foundation for strengthening protection and conservation of Hong Kong's threatened animal and plant species. b. By 2030, review, update and amend legislation related to species protection, so that it refers to LTS and can readily be updated. This will also allow endangered species from all taxa to be protected. At a minimum the legislative amendments should include:- - Cap. 170 to include all animal species (as defined in the ordinance) identified in the LTS - Cap. 96 to include all plant species (as defined in the ordinance) identified in the LTS - Cap. 171 to include relevant "fish and aquatic life" (as defined in the ordinance) identified in the LTS - Cap. 476 to refer to the LTS - Cap. 208 to refer to the LTS - Cap. 499 to refer to the LTS c. Provide guidelines and a time schedule for preparation and updates of Species Action Plans, to include recommendations for actions that	AFCD

	would benefit the conservation of the most threatened species. d. Publish the finalised outstanding species action plans by the end of Q2 2025:- - Chinese White Dolphin - Horseshoe crab - Finless porpoise - Coral - Three banded box turtle - Big-headed turtle	

Priority Area 4

Mainstream biodiversity in business decision-making to increase private sector participation in biodiversity action

Justification

The HKBSAP's 2016-2021 expectation of business is limited. Only action 20e directly addresses businesses, encouraging the sector to collaborate and partner with the Government in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation. However, corporate participants in the HKBEG noted a lack of capacity building and clear guidance and support from the Government regarding business engagement with biodiversity.

Nature is crucially linked to businesses. In line with international developments, some pioneering corporates in Hong Kong are beginning to understand and act to integrate biodiversity into their decision-making and strategies as well as understanding their key nature-related dependencies and the impact of their operations on nature. For example, nine Hong Kong companies have now adopted the Taskforce for Nature-related Financial Disclosure framework (TNFD), which was launched locally earlier this year. To align with international developments, the Government will need to support the establishment of a standardised framework for corporate biodiversity disclosure such as TNFD.

For those businesses that have yet to include nature in their sustainability considerations, more capacity building and analysis (pricing or valuation of nature, conservation and restoration) will be needed to better understand the risks and the opportunities. The Government can further support the uptake of biodiversity considerations by business through collaborating with the private sector and key stakeholders to collate business case studies and resources and promote and disseminate materials to the broader business community for corporates at the entry stages of engaging with nature assessment and disclosure.

Financial institutions are critical stakeholders and should be encouraged to adopt biodiversity policies in their operations. The Government has signalled its intent to build Hong Kong's capacity in

sustainable finance. By providing stronger signals in support of top-down financing of biodiversity conservation, the Government can create the right policy environment for financial actors and build the economic rationale for investing in biodiversity. As a result, the Government can facilitate more green finance to support biodiversity and broader nature conservation from the private sector, while strengthening the city's status as an international finance centre and green finance hub. Figure 1 shows how the various recommendations under this priority area can be grouped together.

Environmental authorities in Hong Kong are known to be particularly interested in recommendations on how business and the finance sector can get more involved in biodiversity conservation and restoration, including through NbS.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity	a. Engage and maintain active involvement with regional and international biodiversity-focused networks / bodies, such as the Biophilic Cities Network, which aims to promote the biophilia concept in urban city planning and development.	CEDD, relevant associations
TARGET 15: Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts	**MAINSTREAM CORPORATE NATURE-RELATED DISCLOSURE** a. The establishment of the corporate biodiversity assessment and disclosure framework by the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) in Hong Kong should be supported to help businesses identify, assess, monitor and report their nature-related dependencies, impacts, risks and opportunities. b. Noting the absence of nature-related disclosures in the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) or equivalent standards to date, the Hong Kong Stock Exchange ("HKEX") should closely monitor international development, and be prepared to review Appendix C2 of the Listing Rules with considerations to strengthen requirements on nature-related disclosures as part of its ESG Reporting. In the event that ISSB issues nature-related disclosure standards, the establishment of an appropriate	FSTB, SFC, HKEX

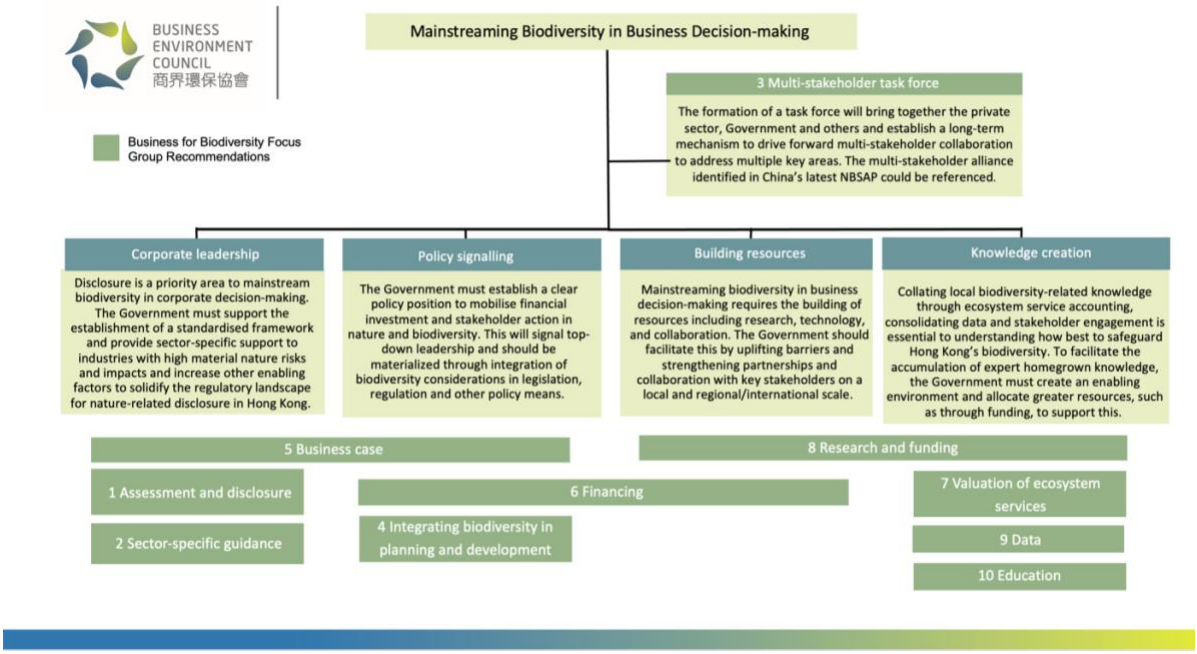
	localised framework/structure for the swift adoption of the standard in Hong Kong must be supported. c. Strengthen the provision and promotion of existing guidance in the form of practical tools and recommendations to enable corporate biodiversity reporting. d. Non-listed large companies with high nature impacts and dependencies should be encouraged to voluntarily disclose, for instance through the implementation of a trial TNFD adoption period to pilot uptake. **ESTABLISH A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER BIODIVERSITY TASK FORCE** b. Establish a multi-stakeholder biodiversity task force to address several objectives that require cross-collaboration, including identifying mechanisms and sources of funding for research, data collection and consolidation, capacity building, identifying financing mechanisms for biodiversity and strengthening the business case for investing in biodiversity. By doing so the task force can drive partnerships between the Government and the private sector including the business and finance sectors and facilitate cross-Government department collaboration toward protecting biodiversity.	FSTB, EEB, AFCD, NGOs, expert academics and researchers, ecologists, consultants, etc.
TARGET 19: Mobilize $200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity from all Sources, Including $30 Billion Through International Finance	**CLEAR POLICY SIGNALLING** a. Establish a clear policy position to reflect the strategic importance of biodiversity to the economy and put in place measures - such as regulatory frameworks, tax breaks and de-risking guarantees, to encourage the private sector to invest. b. Explicitly acknowledge nature as part of the solution to climate change in the next Climate Action Plan, to mainstream nature considerations into Hong Kong's existing environmental regulatory landscape to	HKMA, FSTB, EEB

	recognise the link between climate change and biodiversity. **RESEARCH** a. Explore/expand financial instruments to leverage/incorporate greater biodiversity investment, including promoting blended finance, public-private partnerships, grants and subsidies, and implement strategies to raise new and additional resources to support this. Consider blue/biodiversity bonds as well as expansion in the use of proceeds in future bond issuances to include nature/ biodiversity protection. Review existing incentives (subsidies, tax reliefs etc.) to understand if they may create perverse incentives that undermine biodiversity. b. Prioritise funding in the Environment and Conservation Fund for research on biodiversity and ecosystem services specific to the Hong Kong context, review existing research to identify gaps and promote knowledge sharing of findings. Establish a mechanism to encourage corporate participation throughout the research process to further build the business case to mainstream biodiversity in decision-making and enhance business action. Leverage existing public funds, such as the Environment and Conservation Fund to facilitate biodiversity-specific research, and implement private-public match fund models such as the Recycling Fund's Enterprise Support Programme (which provides match funding to enterprises implementing recycling initiatives) to other public existing funds such as the Innovation and Technology Fund to further the commercialisation of scalable projects for biodiversity, such as nature-based solutions (NbS) or nature-tech. c. Quantify carbon credits to better understand the natural carbon sink potential of different habitats in Hong Kong. This should be done in partnership with HKEX's existing Core Climate platform, considering the voluntary carbon market context in Hong Kong and other regional markets. Explore the concept of	EEB, AFCD

	biodiversity and resilience credits and feasibility on various ecosystems in Hong Kong. d. Leverage carbon, resilience and biodiversity credits where feasible to create financial incentives for implementing NbS projects. By valuing NbS's carbon sequestration, climate resilience and biodiversity enhancement potential, Hong Kong can establish mechanisms to reward organisations and individuals for their efforts in implementing and maintaining such solutions.	
TARGET 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity	**EVALUATE NATURAL ECOSYSTEM SERVICES** a. Adopt a standardised framework to evaluate nature and ecosystem services accounting to quantify Hong Kong's economic dependencies on the natural ecosystem services (marine and terrestrial). The UN's System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Ecosystem Accounting ("SEEA EA"), similar economic modelling, and mainland China's "Gross Ecosystem Products" can be used as references. This approach could be applied to new planned developments such as the Northern Metropolis and encourage private sectors, such as property development, to consider ecosystem datasets in new development projects. **STRENGTHEN CAPACITY THROUGH COLLABORATION** a. Strengthen collaboration with international organisations, standards, and goals related to ecosystem restoration and conservation, such as the CBD, UNFCCC, UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, IUCN, Botanic Gardens Conservation International (London) and Business for Nature. By actively engaging with these entities, Hong Kong can learn from global best practices, align its efforts with international standards, and contribute to the global movement towards sustainable development.	AFCD AFCD, NGOs

	STRENGTHEN CAPACITY THROUGH EDUCATION a. Promote improved understanding of biodiversity and nature concepts to the local business community. Collaborate with relevant educational organisational /business network bodies to enable knowledge sharing and knowledge creation. Disseminate resources and facilitate increased knowledge levels through training or workshops among the local business community on biodiversity-related topics and lexicon, such as ecosystem/ ecological services, natural capital accounting, NbS, and so on). **STRENGTHEN CAPACITY THROUGH DATA** a. The recently launched publicly available Biodiversity Geographic Information System (BGIS) includes location-specific data on biodiversity for different regions across the city collated from various sources including Government departments, academic institutions and citizen science platforms. Existing mapping should be enhanced to include data species status (exotic, threatened and protected species); species known to provide ecological benefits such as food and/or habitats; a natural habitat hotspot distribution mapping tool including conservation zones, coastal protection areas and critical habitats; and use and land use change; and water usage. The enhanced database should also include data accessible in formats that are useable for corporates to reference when considering biodiversity data for assessing biodiversity impacts in planning and developments. Including data to rank or rate the conservation value of different habitats should also be considered. b. Make data from completed EIA studies and monitoring data on associated mitigation/compensation measures on projects publicly available and easily accessible online in formats that are useable for corporates to reference when conducting biodiversity assessments.	NGOs, Universities, AFCD, LCSD AFCD, Universities, NGOs

Figure 1. *Grouping for the Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Business Decision-Making Recommendations*



Priority Area 5

Scale-up efforts to reduce Hong Kong's impact on biodiversity caused by the wildlife trade and unsustainable consumption

Justification

Hong Kong has an abundance of species and habitats. However, most biological resources such as food, and timber need to be imported from producing countries across the globe given our small land and sea area, and dense population. Consumption of natural resources per capita is high. According to the most recent Hong Kong Ecological Footprint report data (2021), we would need 4.4 Earths if everyone adopted Hong Kong's lifestyle. Hong Kong's Ecological Footprint is the third-highest per capita in the Asia-Pacific region and ranks 14th globally.

Hong Kong consumes far more pork, beef and poultry per capita than any Asian country (ADHB). According to the UN Food & Agriculture Organisation, Hong Kong also has one of the highest apparent consumption per capita of seafood globally. In 2019, the territory consumed 494,449 tonnes (live weight) in total, or an average 65.8 kg of seafood per person per year, more than three times the global average of 20.5 kg per person per year (FAO 2021). The production of meat, poultry, and seafood contributes significantly to habitat loss as well as greenhouse gas emissions and water use, globally.

The Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) industry is an essential and rapidly expanding component of the healthcare system in Hong Kong and Mainland China. Hong Kong's Government is positioning itself as a global standard-setter, promoting the uptake of Chinese medicine internationally as well as feeding back into the Mainland market. The overexploitation of wildlife to meet the demands of the TCM industry has led to significant declines in many wildlife populations. It has pushed species towards extinction, caused damage to ecosystems and resulted in biodiversity loss. On reviewing the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, over 5,300 assessed species were identified as being used for medicinal purposes (917 fauna, 4,373 flora & 12 fungi species). Of these, at least 319 are threatened, with biological resource use and natural system modifications identified as a key driver of their continued declines. As Hong Kong drafts its Chinese Medicine Development Blueprint to map out the city's vision and strategies for the future development of the industry, there is no mention of sustainability or recognition that the continued use of wildlife species in proprietary Chinese medicines is driving biodiversity loss and increasing extinction risk.

Hong Kong is also a global hub for the wildlife trade. Data from 2015-2022 highlights the following:

i) Hong Kong's imports have accelerated in recent years. From 2015 to 2022, over 5.8 million live exotic animals of more than 700 species were imported. Two-thirds of these animals were regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), i.e. are mostly threatened species.

ii) By weight, Hong Kong is the third largest importer of CITES-regulated wildlife, trailing only Mainland China and Germany.

iii) Over the last decade, the city has dominated global imports of live reptiles, importing nearly double that of Mainland China (the next largest importer). Many of the imported species originate from the wild.

iv) Hong Kong has been the leading importer of live "Ranched" animals

v) 3,500 seizures involving over 2,600 tonnes of wildlife have been made, conservatively valued at HK$990 million.

There are multiple challenges facing the wildlife trade that have not been addressed in Hong Kong, meaning that the trade is not adequately managed, potentially impacting global biodiversity, increasing the risk to Hong Kong's local biodiversity from the escape of invasive alien species (IAS), spread of diseases and increasing the risk to public health from zoonotic diseases.

Poaching wild animals in Hong Kong is also a constant threat to biodiversity, with some globally significant species hunted to the brink of extinction. Maximum penalties under Cap. 170 and Cap. 208[2]

[2] [1] The illegal possession of protected wild animals and trapping of wild animals is regulated by Cap. 170 and Cap. 208. In addition, illegal possession of CITES listed species (such as those being poached for the animal trade) is also regulated by Cap. 586. The primary enforcement authority for these Ordinances is AFCD.

(1 year imprisonment and fine at Level 6) do not provide sufficient deterrence to poachers and do not reflect the serious nature of poaching Hong Kong's wildlife.

Notably, China's National BSAP is explicit on addressing the wildlife trade (both legal and illegal), going beyond the domestic trade and recognising the linkages with biodiversity loss.

Overall, Hong Kong's negative impacts on biodiversity outside our borders are likely to far exceed those within the HKSAR and are disproportionately high even for a city-dominated region. Given the global biodiversity and climate crises, the limited actions in the first BSAP to address these impacts should be scaled up. Heightened awareness and more sustainable practices are needed at all levels of society to address issues of waste, overconsumption, and imports of unsustainable biological sources, while heightened monitoring and controls are required for the wildlife trade.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 5: Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species	**STRENGTHEN CONTROLS ON IMPORT, DOMESTIC TRADE, BREEDING AND POSSESSION OF ALIEN (EXOTIC) SPECIES** *Ensure public safety and limiting ecological impacts both at source and within Hong Kong* **Animals** a. Review, update and maintain the "major factors" governing the permitted import (Special Permits) of alien animal species to ensure the requisite level of domestication, prevent the import of invasive species, limit ecological impact and mitigate the risk of disease introduction. b. Based on the assessment of the "major factors" publish a species-specific list of "alien" animals which can at the discretion of the government be imported and owned, for traders, breeders and the public, and make available the revised and updated "major factors" and the species-specific risk assessments. c. Implement measures to bar ownership of all "alien animals" that are not permitted for import according to the government's species-specific assessments.	AFCD

	Plants a. Conduct a comprehensive stocktake and species-specific risk assessment(s) of alien plants already present in Hong Kong, establishing a baseline, with particular attention paid to ecologically sensitive locations. b. Conduct assessments of invasive and alien plant species not yet known to be present in Hong Kong but known to impart serious ecosystem harm based on their ecological characteristics and documented impacts elsewhere. c. Based on the assessments under a) and b), publish a list of 'alien' plant species which can or cannot, at the discretion of the government, be imported or commercially propagated. **COMBAT ILLEGAL HUNTING LOCALLY & WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING.** *Increase enforcement priority* a. Mandate HKPF (in addition to C&ED and AFCD) to investigate wildlife crimes being perpetrated in and through Hong Kong including cross-boundary offences. b. Regarding illegal hunting and collection of wildlife in Hong Kong, establish a formal operation protocol between AFCD and the HKPF and establish a well-trained and well-equipped anti-poaching unit in AFCD. c. Introduce indictable offences and increase penalties for certain offences in Cap 170 (e.g., hunting, possession, and sale of protected wild animals). d. Review Cap, 208A penalties with a view to increasing the maximum custodial sentence to 12 months. **FACILITATE ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINES** *Enhance protection and avoid over-exploitation of threatened species.* a. Encourage research to fill information gaps on the utilisation of flora, fauna and fungi in Chinese	HKPF, EEB, AFCD, C&ED Health Bureau, Dept. of Health Chinese Medicine Council (CMC), Chinese Medicine

	medicines and develop effective substitutes/alternatives to the use of threatened and protected species , consider funding support by the Chinese Medicine Development Fund (CMDF). b. Encourage, coordinate and provide financial support for research on traditional knowledge relevant to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Chinese medicines. c. Review and strengthen regulations as they relate to the utilisation of flora, fauna and fungi in Chinese medicines to avoid over-exploitation of threatened and protected species.	Regulatory Office (CMRO), EEB
TARGET 6: Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize their Impact	**MANAGE IAS POPULATIONS** *Prevent the establishment of IAS in the local environment and manage already established populations* a. Introduce ongoing monitoring protocols including periodic ecological surveys in sensitive areas such as around country parks, marine parks, local ports of entry, etc. to identify the presence of invasive species. b. Undertake and publish IAS-specific risk assessments and publish a list of IAS that are present in the local environment to prioritise management resources. c. Based on the assessments, establish IAS reduction target(s) aligned with GBF Target 6 with targeted removal of priority species. d. Introduce statutory measures to bar alien plant and animal species from being released into the local environment. e. Establish a local IAS working group / task force with experts and the Hong Kong government for effective management.	EEB, AFCD
TARGET 9: Manage Wild Species	a. Fill gaps to improve seafood traceability and combat illegal, unreported and unregulated seafood, including	EEB, AFCD

Sustainably to Benefit People	mandatory reporting and collection of data on catch area and species name, for imported products. b. Update the definition of 'marine fish' in Cap 291 to include live fish, horseshoe crabs, crustaceans, molluscs and other invertebrates.	
TARGET 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices to Reduce Waste and Over-consumption	a. Introduce waste-management charging in the next 10 years, and expand the government network of community recycling centres. b. Devise and begin implementing a short-medium term strategy to mainstream more sustainable consumption of biological resources and reduce the per capita and total SAR ecological footprint. c. Add food types to the Green Procurement Guidelines and encourage businesses to provide and purchase a wider supply of sustainable products made from biological resources, including by promoting the Green Procurement Guidelines to them.	EEB, EPD, and other relevant government depts. EEB, AFCD EEB, EPD

OTHER PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS, ORDERED AGAINST THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK 2030 TARGETS

TARGET 1: Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss

Overall priority among all three Targets must be given to expanding marine conservation areas; this will be an important contribution to the National BSAP given that HKSAR is host to approximately 20% of China's marine biodiversity.

There is also a need to improve the management of terrestrial and marine protected areas (PA and MPA, respectively), because most are protected but there are no publicly available active conservation management plans in place for improving the biodiversity and restoring/enhancing habitats within these areas (see Targets 2 and 3).

However, some important terrestrial habitat types such as *feng shui* forests, marshlands and lowland streams lie outside the Country Parks network. These are also crucial for biodiversity conservation and connectivity and will require support for community-based management or innovative conservation initiatives.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 1: Plan and Manage all Areas to Reduce Biodiversity Loss	• Regularly review, update and publish the biodiversity conservation objectives and management plans of the Country and Marine Parks Authority. Consider opening committee meetings to the public to enhance transparency and participation in decision making. A key milestone will be ensuring that, by 2030, 50% of all terrestrial PAs and 50% of MPAs should have effective management plans with SMART biodiversity objectives, rising to 100% by 2035. • Develop innovative methods to enhance the conservation of ecologically important sites on private land. This would involve a holistic approach of identifying sites of biodiversity importance (e.g. wetlands, stream riparia, farmland, sites within the former Frontier Closed Area) and safeguarding them through designation of appropriate zoning status (e.g. Conservation Area, SSSI, Coastal Protection Area). • Rigorously implement and enforce a presumption against development so as to avoid loss of natural habitats outside designated Country Parks. Evaluate the cumulative impacts of permitting village expansions and strictly control development within Country Park enclaves so as to minimise impacts on biodiversity. • Enhance connectivity that allows wildlife movement across the landscape — a crucial component of adaptation to climate change that will require maintenance of existing corridors as well as promotion of connectivity among blue and green spaces, whether privately owned or government managed. Climate resilience can be enhanced by deploying creative initiatives to safeguard and enhance the connectivity between protected areas	AFCD, EEB, Lands Dept, Sustainable Lantau Office (CEDD), developers, conservation NGOs

	(e.g. animal routes under roads, green bridges over channelised streams, fish ladders, etc.). ● Undertake a holistic review of integrating biodiversity and nature-based considerations into all relevant legislation and ordinances, including (but not limited to) Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, and the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131) in the next 3-5 years to ensure that such frameworks specifically address biodiversity considerations and biodiversity assessment during the early stages of project design and planning in both public and private developments. Furthermore, biodiversity assessment criteria should be integrated in small development projects that do not currently require an EIA, with pre-development biodiversity baseline surveys of potential sites undertaken before any on-site preparatory work takes place. Promote and incentivise habitat restoration and rewilding initiatives as part of development projects to encourage businesses to go beyond mitigation and actively enhance local biodiversity. ● Establish a legal framework and management plans for integrated conservation of the Deep Bay wetlands (including the Ramsar site at Mai Po). Seriously consider establishing a statutory Wetland Trust to oversee the Wetlands Conservation Parks under the Northern Metropolis development strategy. Other mitigation/compensation wetlands and funds from developments can also be vested into the Trust. ● Develop and implement effective community-centred strategies for biodiversity conservation, sustainable agriculture, and rural development in Hong Kong, which involves integrating local knowledge and cultural practices, promoting community stewardship, and transforming the rural economic model through data-driven resource	

	assessments, collaborative industry linkages, and community-driven sustainable enterprises. • Integrate ecosystem-based spatial planning into the next City Master Plan and ongoing development of the Northern Metropolis. In other words, conduct strategic environmental assessment of planned, committed and ongoing developments and their combined ecological effects, so as to minimise cumulative impacts on biodiversity and to include future restoration/protected areas and NbS. Such planning will be especially important in the marine environment as it will inform the extent and locations of the necessary expansion of MPAs in HKSAR.	

TARGET 2: Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems

GBF Target 2 states that, by 2030, at least 30 % of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, with specific objectives to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity, and connectivity. As a relatively new focus area for the HKSAR, it will be necessary to adopt a standardised definition and guidelines for restoration, to ensure that restoration projects follow internationally recognised practices and frameworks.

Restoration, as defined under the GBF, is the process of actively managing the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed. This includes degraded natural ecosystems that no longer function as they should, conversion of non-natural transformed ecosystems back to a natural ecosystem state, as well as ecosystem rehabilitation efforts that increase ecosystem functions and services of transformed ecosystems.

Target 2 also assumes adherence to the principle of natural, effective, and climate-smart restoration, whereby habitat restoration and the construction of ecological corridors should be carried out through near-natural engineering measures to enhance habitat connectivity and expand the scope of suitable habitats in the face of climate change. In the HKSAR, rewilding with species that play key ecological engineering roles (e.g. seed dispersers, oyster reefs) will be necessary in order to restore ecosystem function.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 2: Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems	• Undertake a territory-wide study to identify and map priority habitats and areas in need of restoration to enhance biodiversity and replenish depleted populations of threatened species. This might include rewilding and the reintroduction of species to ensure that ecosystem functioning is restored (for examples, see Restoration and Rewilding Focus Group report in the Appendix). An assessment of degraded areas and habitats is a necessary first step for monitoring the total percent of degraded ecosystems which are under restoration (i.e. reaching 30%). • Make land and water available for restoration, both inside and outside protected areas. This will involve setting up a permitting system for restoration projects, and will require cross-government collaboration (beyond AFCD, including for instance Lands Department and Marine Department). • Incorporate restoration opportunities as Nature-based Solutions in urban planning (particularly in the Northern Metropolis development). • Develop habitat-specific strategies and local guidelines for habitat restoration in Hong Kong. Priorities include degraded hillsides, streams and lowland wetlands on land, as well as shellfish reefs, coral reefs and intertidal mudflats in the sea. • In the short term, restoration works should be conducted within conservation areas, and incorporated in their management plans, so as to maximise the effectiveness and of efforts invested. In the medium term, restoration work should be extended to other sites which should be brought under some sort of management as envisaged under GBF Target 1.	EEB, AFCD (in consultation with NGOs and researchers in local tertiary institutes)

TARGET 3: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas

A major focus of the next BSAP should be to realise the GBF Target 3 which envisages that, by 2030, 30% of coastal waters in HKSAR should be designated as MPAs or protected by other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM) to create a network of ecologically representative and well connected sites.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 3: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas	• Develop a clear roadmap for expansion of the MPA/OECM network, with time-bound goals. • Prioritise Pak Nai, Shui Hau, Port Shelter and Ninepin Group for designation as MPAs. • Enhance the integrity of the Country Parks system by incorporating the 19 existing enclaves within the system or, at a minimum, take action to ensure that the important habitats within these enclaves are included. In addition, adjust or extend Country Park boundaries to incorporate important streams and associated riparian areas. • Develop a platform for government and expert stakeholders in the GBA to share information and plan marine and terrestrial cross-boundary protected areas, with the aim of ensuring ecological connectivity and integrating of the HKSAR protected-area system (particularly the Country Parks network) with that of the mainland.	EEB, AFCD (in consultation with NGOs and researchers in local tertiary institutes)

TARGET 4: Halt Species Extinction, Protect Genetic Diversity & Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts

All priority recommendations for this target are listed under Priority Areas 3 and 1.

TARGET 5: Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species

All priority recommendations for this target are listed under Priority Areas 3 and 5, and Target 10.

TARGET 6: Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize their Impact

All priority recommendations for this target are listed under Priority Area 4.

TARGET 7: Reduce Pollution to Levels that are not Harmful to Biodiversity

Marine pollution has decreased significantly in recent decades through large-scale government initiatives such as the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS). These efforts should be continued to further reduce pollution as a stressor to marine life, including to build resilience to climate change.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 7: Reduce Pollution to Levels that are not Harmful to Biodiversity	• Continue efforts to reduce organic and other pollutants, including from storm water and village houses, to levels where they do not negatively impact marine life including hard corals.	EPD, DSD

TARGET 8: Minimize the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 8: Minimize the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity and Build Resilience	• Embed biodiversity-specific considerations and lexicon into existing green building certifications to drive opportunities and uptake in the building sector. For example, the UK Government has adopted biodiversity net gain in its statutory framework for planning and development. • Integrate NbS into the Climate Action Plan and the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines to ensure that NbS becomes an integral part of the city's sustainable development strategy. By incorporating NbS into urban planning and policy frameworks, Hong Kong can systematically prioritise and implement NbS to address climate change and enhance resilience. • Integrate ecosystem-based marine spatial planning in the next city master plan.	DEVB and works depts

TARGET 9: Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People

All priority recommendations for this target are listed under Priority Areas 3 and 5.

TARGET 10: Enhance Biodiversity & Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries and Forestry

In Hong Kong, agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries have traditionally been viewed primarily as food production industries. However, these sectors are also integral parts of Hong Kong's rural, natural and cultural heritage. To ensure the long-term sustainability of these industries, a more holistic approach is needed.

Acknowledging and integrating the diversity of traditional ecological management systems can lead to more effective and culturally appropriate conservation strategies, such as nature-based solutions and sustainable agriculture/aquaculture/fisheries, which can also help preserve and support the livelihoods of local communities. It will be important to transform the current perspectives on rural communities by promoting local culture, traditional agriculture, and community-driven conservation initiatives to foster a sense of belonging, raise public awareness, and empower local stewardship of Hong Kong's rural natural and cultural heritage.

Existing certification systems and industry practices should be enhanced to better integrate biodiversity conservation and local cultural elements. This could include criteria that reward farmers, aquaculture operators, and fishers who adopt environmentally-friendly techniques, preserve habitats for native species, and maintain traditional small-scale farming or fishing methods. By embedding these values into the industry framework, businesses can be incentivised to operate in a more ecologically and socially responsible manner.

Additionally, innovative collaborations between urban and rural industries can help create new economic models to sustain these heritage-rich sectors. For example, urban-based businesses could partner with rural producers to develop value-added products that highlight local provenance, cultural traditions, and environmental stewardship. This could range from farm-to-table dining experiences to eco-tourism initiatives that showcase rural livelihoods. By forging these cross-sector linkages, the economic viability of Hong Kong's agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries can be bolstered while also preserving their cultural and ecological significance.

Regarding marine capture fisheries, the MSC is the most credible sustainable fisheries certification globally, and many MSC products are imported into Hong Kong to meet demand for sustainable seafood. Achieving MSC certification is a logical progression from the Vision and Targets laid out in the 2023 AFCD Agriculture and Fisheries Blueprint, and can encapsulate all the progress made (e.g. trawling ban, phasing-out of commercial fishing in four marine parks, planning for FPAs and an improved monitoring programme), and currently outstanding issues (e.g. protection for highly threatened species) under one best-practice framework. Achieving MSC certification will also allow current buyers of sustainable seafood to source locally with confidence, and increase the market value for premium seafood products, in line with the Blueprint’s position on the importance of adding value to locally produced seafood products.

Achieving MSC certification will mean that any targeted species for the fishery that are depleted will need to be recovered before they can be fished sustainably. These may require restoration of habitat as well as species.

In the aquaculture sector, the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme (AFFS) currently focuses on ensuring the safety and quality of Hong Kong's aquaculture products through farm management, farming methods, and food safety. With sustainability aspects included only as optional farm management improvement recommendations, the current structure limits the scheme's effectiveness in promoting sustainable aquaculture practices.

Incorporating sustainability elements into the AFFS mandatory requirements would align with the 2023 Blueprint's vision for sustainable aquaculture, which aims to promote responsible farming practices, minimise environmental impact, and enhance the economic viability of the sector. By including elements like feed traceability, waste discharge management, and sustainable juvenile sourcing, the AFFS can encourage fish farms to minimise their ecological impact, reduce pollution, conserve water resources, and promote biodiversity. This will not only enhance the sustainability of the sector but also increase consumer confidence in locally produced aquatic products, hence enhancing their value and competitiveness in the market.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 10: Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry	**SUPPORT RURAL AGRICULTURE AND TRADITIONAL PRACTICES** ● Leverage rural cultural practices and traditional ecological knowledge to develop more effective, culturally appropriate, and locally-driven biodiversity conservation strategies. Acknowledging and integrating the diversity of traditional ecological management systems can lead to more effective and culturally appropriate conservation strategies, such as nature-based solutions and sustainable agriculture/aquaculture/fisheries, which can also help preserve and support the livelihoods of local communities. a) Identify and document the diverse intangible cultural heritage in rural areas, such as traditional agricultural techniques, pond management, and bee farming, that are closely linked to biodiversity. The grouping used in the Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage Database should also be	AFCD, EPD, NGOs, farmers, food industry, community-based producers, impact investment funds, researchers

	revised to reflect the ecological elements of various traditional craftsmanship and recognise their contribution to biodiversity conservation. b) Explore opportunities to enhance the environmental performance of traditional practices through the integration of appropriate technologies and science, while practices which are harmful to biodiversity will be phased out. c) Create multi-stakeholder platforms that bring together rural communities, government agencies, non-profit organisations, and other relevant stakeholders to collectively identify and address biodiversity conservation challenges. d) Develop comprehensive databases and knowledge repositories that document and showcase the linkages between rural cultural practices and biodiversity conservation. e) Provide training, funding, and technical assistance to support the application of relevant traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation initiatives. ● Transform the current perspectives on rural communities by promoting local culture, traditional agriculture, and community-driven conservation initiatives to foster a sense of belonging, raise public awareness, and empower local stewardship of Hong Kong's rural natural and cultural heritage. a) Incorporate place-making initiatives that build a sense of belonging among rural communities.	

	b) Respect and integrate local traditions and culture, including the management of crops and *feng shui* woodlands. c) Utilise existing incentives to conserve the environment and engage residents in nature conservation and cultural research. d) Identify and highlight local characteristics and flagship species to encourage community stewardship and ownership of natural and cultural heritage. e) Empower local communities to take an active role in the design and implementation of conservation initiatives, fostering community-driven and sustainable approaches. f) Include social impact assessment in any developments in rural areas and expand the scope to include the impact on traditional agricultural and fishery cultural practices. g) Provide guidance to identify, assess, and measure the key impacts of projects on traditional agricultural or fishing culture and practices. ● Fostering collaboration between urban and rural industries, such as food processing factories, restaurants and local producers, can foster new business environments and campaigns that support sustainable agriculture and community-based initiatives. a) Develop a centralised data platform to gather and maintain comprehensive information on the natural resources, manpower, and economic activities in Hong Kong's rural areas.	

	b) Conduct detailed assessments to map the existing situation, identify gaps, and inform the development of targeted interventions. c) Ensure the data platform is accessible and regularly updated to support evidence-based decision-making and policy development. d) Facilitate partnerships and knowledge-sharing between urban and rural industries, such as food processing factories, restaurants, and local producers. e) Develop innovative business models and campaigns that support sustainable agriculture, community-based enterprises, and biodiversity conservation. f) Provide technical assistance, financial incentives, and capacity-building programs to empower rural communities to establish and manage sustainable enterprises. g) Leverage the expertise and networks of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and impact investment funds to mobilise resources and scale up successful community-driven initiatives. h) Encourage and provide technical and financial support for stakeholder-led initiatives and community-based projects that address local needs and priorities. **ENHANCE MARINE FISHERIES** ● Obtain Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) sustainable fisheries certification for at least one Hong Kong marine fishery by 2030. ● Use existing AFCD Port Survey and other data to examine the impact of the 2012 trawling ban on the catches of fish by fishing gears that are still permitted.	AFCD, researchers, NGOs, fisher associations, certifying agency

	ENHANCE AQUACULTURE ● Review and enhance existing Accredited Fish Farm Scheme (AFFS) by incorporating sustainability elements into basic requirements.	AFCD, researchers, NGOs, aquaculture associations

TARGET 11: Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People

Priority recommendations relating to NbS are listed elsewhere, notably under Targets 1, 8 and 19.

TARGET 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity

Action 10 in HK BSAP (2016-2020) appeared to be tasked to GLTMS whose mandate is to develop and maintain urban trees and forest for landscaping and recreational purposes (although biodiversity is taken into account). There is no urban biodiversity strategy or policy per se in the Government. There appears to be an urban forestry strategy in GLTMS with an increasing emphasis on biodiversity. So far, the focus is on planting more native plant species. Spatial planning for habitat patches and ecological corridors is seen in some NDAs such as Hung Shui Kiu and Tung Chung.

Meanwhile, many of the good actions in the Planning Department's "Green and Blue Space Conceptual Framework" (2016) are not seen in Government policies, plans and projects. Mainstreaming this Framework document within Government will bring substantial progress to urban biodiversity in Hong Kong.

On the other hand, the Sustainable Lantau Office of CEDD has recently completed a "Study on Urban Biodiversity Enhancement for Tung Chung New Town Extension and Adjoining Areas" which included a baseline study of the biodiversity in Tung Chung and adjacent areas; evaluation of the existing and potential habitat patches and eco-corridors in Tung Chung; and recommendations on enhancement measures (planting design, strategy and methods, the provision of artificial features for wildlife) and impact minimisation measures (window bird collisions and artificial lighting at night).

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity	● With reference to the "Study on Urban Biodiversity Enhancement for Tung Chung New Town Extension and Adjoining Areas", develop an Urban Biodiversity Master Plan for all districts in Hong Kong. This could	CEDD, relevant associations

	be done through consultancy studies commissioned by the Government. ● Collaborate with relevant associations to encourage the promotion of biodiversity as a strategic goal in local property asset management to integrate biodiversity considerations into planning and development further. ● Provide incentives to encourage project proponents to implement measures to improve the biodiversity value in larger-scale development.	

TARGET 13: Increase the Sharing of Benefits from Genetic Resources, Digital Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge

No priority recommendations.

TARGET 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level	● Action to fully integrate biodiversity and its multiple values should be taken across all levels of government and particularly those bureaus and departments that have significant impacts on biodiversity, including policies, objectives and decision-making frameworks.	EEB, AFCD

TARGET 15: Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 15: Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts	**SECTOR-SPECIFIC SUPPORT** ● Support the development of sector-specific roadmaps for key sectors including (but not exclusive to) real estate, banks, chemicals, and food & beverage to mainstream corporate biodiversity disclosure, mitigate risks and identify business opportunities. Showcase and publicise model case studies of corporates already engaged in biodiversity assessment and disclosure to reflect the business case for nature. ● Collaborate with established conservation organisations to develop and implement accreditation programmes for businesses engaged in biodiversity conservation efforts, ensuring high standards and best practices are maintained. **STRENGTHENING THE BUSINESS CASE FOR BIODIVERSITY** ● Work with the private sector to collate and build resources for businesses of all industries to consider biodiversity concerns in their decision-making, business strategies and investments. Work with the private sector to identify and determine appropriate funding mechanisms or models to strengthen the business case to understand key nature dependencies, reduce impacts and implement initiatives including nature-based solutions, suitable for the Hong Kong context.	EEB, AFCD, NGOs

TARGET 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices to Reduce Waste and Overconsumption

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices to Reduce Waste and Overconsumption	• Promote sustainable seafood and other food types, sustainable timber products, and plant-based diets.	EEB, EPD, AFCD, researchers, NGOs

TARGET 17: Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology

No priority recommendations.

TARGET 18: Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity

No priority recommendations.

TARGET 19: Mobilize $200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity from all Sources, Including $30 Billion Through International Finance

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 19: Mobilize $200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity from all Sources, Including $30 Billion Through International Finance	• Establish a mechanism for financial penalties from convictions for wildlife crime offences to be redirected (as appropriate), compliant with restorative justice principles, to support conservation measures and restoration of damaged ecosystems and to recover and compensate costs incurred by specified parties.	EEB, AFCD, Department of Justice

TARGET 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity	**VALUATING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES** ● Building on existing broader studies on Hong Kong's ecosystem services, conduct an updated in-depth study linking ecosystem services with monetary valuation (such as understanding the air quality regulation function of terrestrial ecosystems and the carbon sequestration rate of vegetation in various habitats to support climate regulation), and the economic value attached to these. Publish habitat valuation results on a domain accessible to the public and categorise ecological value into high, medium and low ratings.	AFCD, EEB, LCSD
	STRENGTHENING CAPACITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY ● Encourage the development and use of innovative technologies that can help in conserving and restoring biodiversity. ● Develop and promote the use of sustainable technologies that have a lower environmental impact. ● Develop and implement citizen science methods for biodiversity monitoring, reporting and data sharing. ● Promote the use of technology to raise awareness and educate the public about biodiversity conservation.	AFCD, EEB
	STRENGTHENING CAPACITY THROUGH COLLABORATION ● Organise an annual business-biodiversity forum in collaboration with relevant international organisations, such as IUCN and TNFD, to leverage Hong Kong as a platform to promote and strengthen	EEB, AFCD

	national, regional and international exchange of expert insights on biodiversity.	

TARGET 21: Ensure that Knowledge is Available and Accessible to Guide Biodiversity Action

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 21: Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible To Guide Biodiversity Action	• Enhance biodiversity education at all levels from kindergarten to university through curricula enhancements, including through exposure to urban and rural nature and conservation efforts, and increase reward incentives for educators.	Education Bureau, Curriculum Development Council, Tertiary Institutes, NGOs, AFCD, EPD, EEB, LCSD, education sector including associations for educators/specific education areas

TARGET 22: Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice, and Information Related to Biodiversity for all

No priority recommendations.

TARGET 23: Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action

No priority recommendations.

ENABLING RECOMMENDATIONS

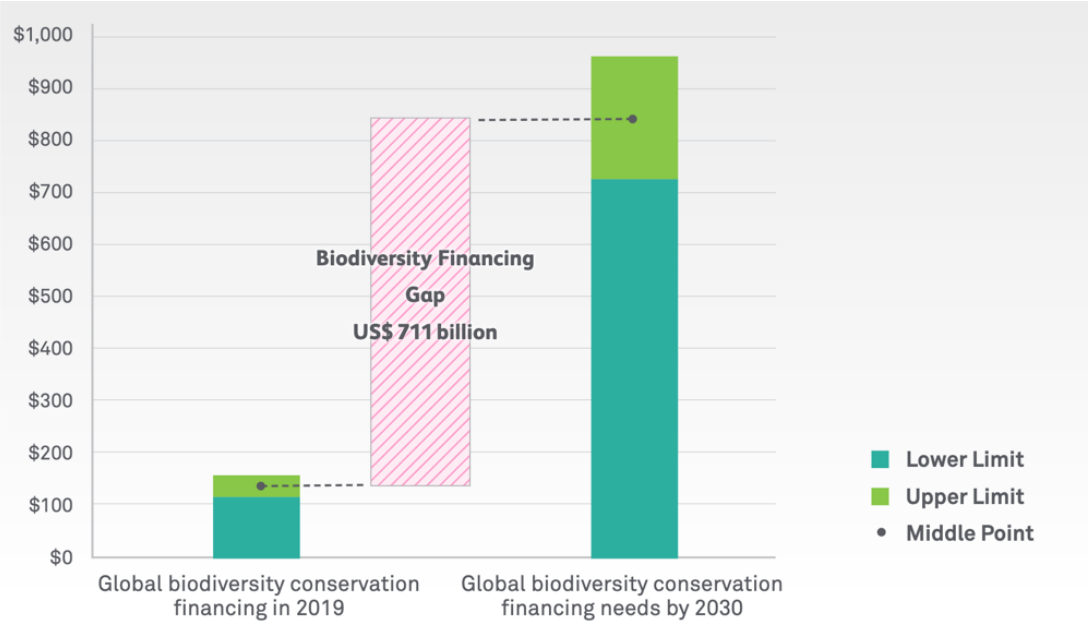
The scale of the recommendations for the next BSAP made by the HKBEG is such that it will not be realistic for the HKSAR Government to lead on delivering all of them, because of the human and financial resources required. This is implicitly recognised. Instead, we follow the lead of the international community and the Convention on Biological Diversity in identifying that significant amounts of private sector financing will be required in addition to that provided by the HKSAR Government and other sources.

a) Increasing and diversifying finance for nature that is not solely dependent on Government

The CBD Secretariat notes that capacity for implementing the Convention in terms of human, technical and financial resources is limited in many countries, and that the mobilisation of adequate financial resources is critical for achieving the goals and targets of the GBF.

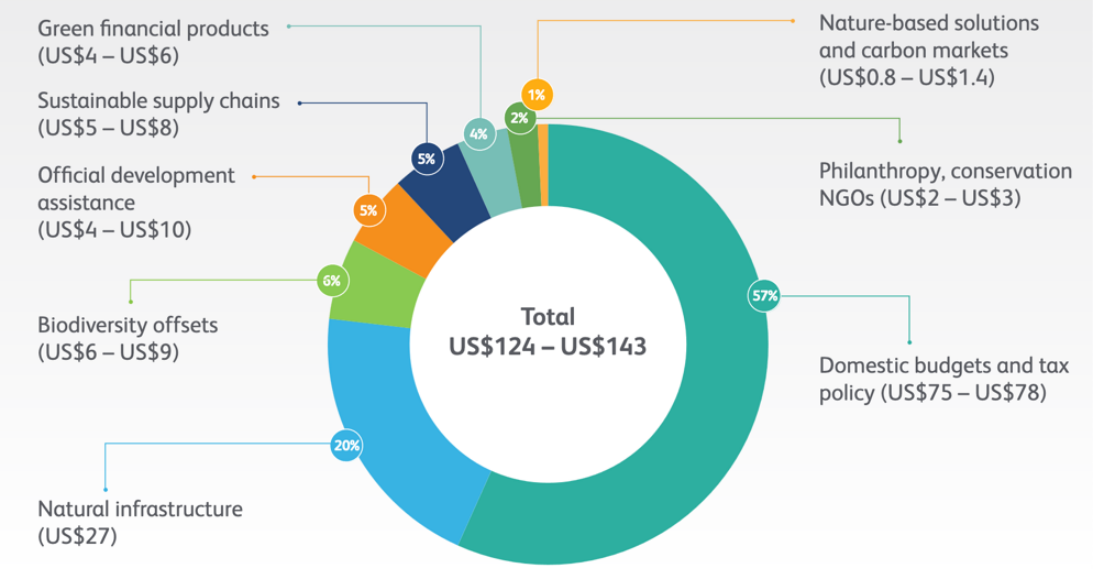
On a global scale, the amount spent on global biodiversity conservation was estimated at US$ 124-143 billion in 2019 (Figure 2), while the finances required to reverse the decline in biodiversity by 2030 was estimated at between US$ 722-967 billion each year until 2030 (Duetz et al. 2020). The funding gap is therefore around US$ 598-824 billion, equating to an average US$ 711 billion per year (see Figure 3). Estimates such as this have informed GBF Target 19 which aims to mobilise USD 200 billion for biodiversity annually from all sources until 2030.

Figure 2. *Global biodiversity conservation financing in 2019: Summary of financial flows into biodiversity conservation in 2019 (US$ billions per year*



Reproduced from Duetz et al. (2020)

Figure 3. *Global biodiversity conservation financing compared to global biodiversity conservation needs (US$ billions)*



Reproduced from Duetz et al. (2020)

While a comprehensive breakdown of the funding spent on nature is not currently available for Hong Kong, the majority of current funding comes from the Hong Kong Government (i.e. domestic budgets and tax policy). Philanthropic and NGO grants for conservation (local and overseas) provide additional funds. The HKSAR is typically not eligible for overseas development agency funding, while private-sector funding, such as through biodiversity offsets, nature-based solutions etc. is in its infancy.

While the biodiversity conservation needs and associated financing requirements have yet to be determined through the next BSAP, the urgency required to deal with the twin threats of climate change and biodiversity loss will require a substantial scaling-up of actions by government and non-government actors. This will require the urgent identification and implementation of innovative financing and policy mechanisms that can rapidly mobilise substantial amounts of capital for nature conservation, as well as credible estimates of the Hong Kong current expenditure on nature conservation, future needs, and funding gaps.

b) Creating a policy framework that encourages private-sector investment

Hong Kong is well placed to implement innovative approaches to financing nature, being an international finance centre and at the same time having a rich and well-studied biodiversity and relevant expertise. However, investment by the private sector into nature is largely limited at this time to philanthropic donations, NGOs and researchers, and to large companies seeking to reduce the impacts of their own activities — for instance, by establishing managed areas of habitat to compensate for the loss of natural habitat from their projects.

To realise private-sector investment in biodiversity conservation and restoration, the Government will need to clearly lay out biodiversity projects with associated targets for 2030 in areas where it would like to see private investment. It will also need to put in place policy measures – such as regulatory

frameworks, tax breaks, and de-risking guarantees – to encourage the private sector to invest. By sending stronger signals of their commitment to working transparently together with the private sector to catalyse top-down financing of biodiversity conservation, the Government can remove existing barriers and build the economic rationale for investing in biodiversity.

The private sector needs to be supported to value ecosystem services and frameworks for reporting such as TNFD. This is in line with the intention already signalled by the Government to build Hong Kong's capacity in sustainable finance. Financial instruments such as blended finance, public-private partnerships, impact funds grants and subsidies, innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green/blue bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, and biodiversity projects including bankable nature solutions and NbS solutions will need to be explored and evaluated. This will require experts from government, the finance and business sectors, and ecologists to come together and work through the challenges and opportunities.

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Table 1. Full List of Priority and Supporting Recommendations by GBF 2030 Targets

Priority recommendations represent those perceived by the HKBEG to be the most impactful and needed in the coming years, and are therefore the highest priority recommendations to the HKSAR Government and conservation community for the forthcoming BSAP. Those priority recommendations that fall under the five priority areas are highlighted in **bold**. The supporting recommendations provide the specifics of the actions to be taken to support delivery of the priority recommendations, and/or were perceived to be less impactful as standalone actions.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 1: Plan and Manage all Areas To Reduce Biodiversity Loss	1.1. Regularly review, update and publish the biodiversity conservation objectives and management plans of the Country and Marine Parks Authority. Consider opening committee meetings to the public to enhance transparency and participation in decision making. **A key milestone will be ensuring that, by 2030, 50% of all terrestrial PAs and 50% of MPAs should have effective management plans with SMART biodiversity objectives, rising to 100% by 2035.** 1.2. Review the strengths and weaknesses of current approaches to conserve ecologically important sites on private land, and develop innovative approaches to conserve the most important sites in need of greater protection.	EEB, AFCD (in consultation with NGOs and researchers in local tertiary institutes)	1.9. Develop habitat- specific strategies and local guidelines for Hong Kong that are endorsed by AFCD. The FG has developed detailed habitat-specific strategies (in appendices). Key targets include: ● Terrestrial forests: Initiate the restoration of at least 1,000 hectares of forest landscape, with a focus on degraded hillsides currently under grassland or shrubland, in the northern New Territories and outlying islands. ● Streams and rivers: Establish percentage of rivers already channelised & map dams to understand the scale of	EEB, AFCD (in consultation with NGOs and researchers in local tertiary institutes)

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	1.3. Avoid loss of natural habitats outside designated Country Parks. Evaluate the cumulative impacts of permitting village expansions and strictly control development within Country Park enclaves so as to minimise impacts on biodiversity. 1.4. Enhance connectivity that allows wildlife movement across the landscape — a crucial component of adaptation to climate change that will require maintenance of existing corridors as well as promotion of connectivity among blue and green spaces, whether privately owned or government managed. Climate resilience can be enhanced by deploying creative initiatives to safeguard and enhance the connectivity between protected areas (e.g. animal routes under roads, green bridges over channelised streams, fish ladders, etc.). 1.5. Undertake a holistic review of integrating biodiversity and nature-based considerations into all relevant legislation and ordinances, including (but not limited to) Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, and the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131) in the next 3-5 years to ensure that such frameworks specifically address		damming. Identify priority sites and sites suitability for dam removal. Pilot removal of at least one dam with appropriate pre- and post-monitoring. ● Wetlands: Restore 30% of the abandoned/ inactive fishponds to floodplains or modernised 'gei wais' with natural processes (i.e. restore hydrological connectivity and intertidal habitats). ● Coastal habitat forming species: Launch restoration projects in 30% of suitable bays for important habitat-forming species (shellfish, corals and sea grass) including all existing and newly established FPAs/MPAs. 1.10. Regulate the number of visitors to popular marine hotspots and eco-tourism designations in planning (e.g. Northern Metropolis, Southern Lantau and Northeastern water), and promote a visitor's code of conduct for such places.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	biodiversity considerations and biodiversity assessment during the early stages of project design and planning in both public and private developments. Furthermore, biodiversity assessment criteria should be integrated in small development projects that do not currently require an EIA, with pre-development biodiversity baseline surveys of potential sites undertaken before any on-site preparatory work takes place. Promote and incentivise habitat restoration and rewilding initiatives as part of development projects to encourage businesses to go beyond mitigation and actively enhance local biodiversity. 1.6. Establish a legal framework and management plans for integrated conservation of the Deep Bay wetlands (including the Ramsar site at Mai Po). Seriously consider establishing a statutory Wetland Trust to oversee the Wetlands Conservation Parks under the Northern Metropolis development strategy. Other mitigation/compensation wetlands and funds from developments can also be vested into the Trust. 1.7. Develop and implement effective community-centred strategies for biodiversity conservation, sustainable agriculture, and rural development in Hong Kong, which involves integrating local knowledge and cultural			

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	practices, promoting community stewardship, and transforming the rural economic model through data-driven resource assessments, collaborative industry linkages, and community-driven sustainable enterprises. 1.8. Integrate ecosystem-based spatial planning into the next City Master Plan and ongoing development of the Northern Metropolis. In other words, conduct strategic environmental assessment of planned, committed and ongoing developments and their combined ecological effects, so as to minimise cumulative impacts on biodiversity and to include future restoration/protected areas and NbS. Such planning will be especially important in the marine environment as it will inform the extent and locations of the necessary expansion of MPAs in HKSAR.			
TARGET 2: Restore 30% of all Degraded Ecosystems	**2.1. By 2030, at least 30% of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine ecosystems are under effective restoration, with the objective of enhancing biodiversity, ecosystem function and services, and improving or maintaining ecological connectivity that will contribute towards climate resilience.**	AFCD, EEB, Lands Dept, Sustainable Lantau Office (CEDD), developers, conservation NGOs	2.7. Adopt international best-practice standards for planning, carrying out, and monitoring ecological restoration, and build local capacity to execute such projects. 2.8. Make resources available for government departments, NGOs and universities to conduct R&D on strategies and activities that can help enhance or accelerate restoration efforts, for	AFCD, EEB, Lands Dept, Sustainable Lantau Office (CEDD), developers, conservation NGOs

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	2.2. Undertake a territory-wide study to identify and map priority habitats and areas in need of restoration to enhance biodiversity and replenish depleted populations of threatened species. This might include rewilding and the reintroduction of species to ensure that ecosystem functioning is restored (for examples, see Restoration and Rewilding Final Focus Group Report, Appendix). An assessment of degraded areas and habitats is a necessary first step for monitoring the total percent of degraded ecosystems which are under restoration (i.e. reaching 30%). 2.3. Make land and water available for restoration, both inside and outside protected areas. This will involve setting up a permitting system for restoration projects, and will require cross-government collaboration (beyond AFCD, including for instance Lands Department and Marine Department). 2.4. Incorporate restoration opportunities as Nature-based Solutions in urban planning (particularly in the Northern Metropolis development). 2.5. Develop habitat-specific strategies and local guidelines for habitat restoration in Hong Kong. Priorities		example on the production of native seedling materials for forest restoration. 2.9. Train and form restoration practitioners: To achieve effective upscaling of restoration in Hong Kong, a steady and growing supply of certified restoration practitioners is needed. To facilitate this, recruitment of graduates from environmental courses at local universities should be prioritised to steer young people into restoration professions. 2.10. Undertake active management with specific objectives to recover marine ecosystems that have been degraded or destroyed, especially designated and proposed MPAs and other marine biodiversity hotspots. 2.11. Support rewilding efforts: Focus on native species where possible while considering climate related dynamics (competitiveness, distribution range etc). Promote genetic and generic diversity to increase overall resilience in the face of upcoming challenges due to eutrophication and climate change. Develop ways to speed up faunal	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	include degraded hillsides, streams and lowland wetlands on land, as well as shellfish reefs, coral reefs and intertidal mudflats in the sea. 2.6. In the short term, restoration works should be conducted within conservation areas, and incorporated in their management plans, so as to maximise the effectiveness and of efforts invested. In the medium term, restoration work should be extended to other sites which should be brought under some sort of management as envisaged under GBF Target 1.		growth and propagation. Support the development of nurseries and hatcheries and facilitate permitting for importing live species. 2.12. Engage community in the restoration process: Develop programs to educate and engage a broad cross-section of Hong Kong society (including the general public, nearby residents of restoration projects, and students across all grades) in restoration initiatives, to achieve both social and ecological goals of restoration. The corporate sector should be invited to finance restoration sites under a public-private partnership model, with competitive metrics set for the attainment of specific biodiversity goals.	
TARGET 3: Conserve 30% of Land, Waters and Seas	**3.1. By 2030, 30% of coastal waters in HKSAR should be designated as MPAs or protected by other effective area-based conservation measures.** A clear roadmap should be established for this expansion of the MPA/OECM network, using an internationally	EEB, AFCD (in consultation with NGOs and researchers in local tertiary institutes)	3.5. Plan and implement targeted monitoring programmes using standardised methodology and technology in order to monitor changes in biodiversity across sites/habitats/years so that the effectiveness of protected areas and the status of threatened species is regularly evaluated; this will inform potential adjustments	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	recognised biodiversity assessment framework, and time-bound goals. 3.2. Prioritise Pak Nai, Shui Hau, Port Shelter and Ninepin Group for designation as MPAs. 3.3. Enhance the integrity of the Country Parks system by incorporating the 19 existing enclaves within the system or, at a minimum, take action to ensure that the important habitats within these enclaves are included. In addition, adjust or extend Country Park boundaries to incorporate important streams and associated riparian areas. 3.4. Develop a platform for government and expert stakeholders in the GBA to share information and plan marine and terrestrial cross-boundary protected areas, with the aim of ensuring ecological connectivity and integrating of the HKSAR protected-area system (particularly the Country Parks network) with that of the mainland.		to management plans for protected areas and threatened species. Ensure that this monitoring is adequate to detect responses of species and habitats to climate change, in order to ensure that the 30% conserved areas remain fit for purpose. Report the results of monitoring biennially, so that losses or increases in habitat extent or population sizes can be addressed in a timely manner as the climate changes. 3.6. Enhance cross-border Greater Bay Area dialogue channels and data-sharing, including between local governments, and the managers of connected reserves, to ensure conservation and restoration efforts e.g. Robins Nest - Shenzhen Wutongshan Forest Park. Species that would benefit from a more integrated cross-border examples include cetaceans, corals, migratory birds, mangroves, Eurasian otter, and horseshoe crabs.	
TARGET 4: Halt Species Extinction,	**LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES AND ACTION PLANS**		4.5. Evaluate threatened and recovering species under the IUCN Green List criteria to demonstrate the benefits of active conservation	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
Protect Genetic Diversity, and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts	**4.1. By mid-2025, establish and maintain an up-to-date list of locally threatened species to provide a foundation for strengthening protection and conservation of Hong Kong's threatened animal and plant species.** **4.2. By 2030, review, update and amend legislation related to species protection, so that it refers to LTS and can readily be updated. This will also allow endangered species from all taxa to be protected. At a minimum the legislative amendments should include:** - **Cap. 170 to include all animal species (as defined in the ordinance) identified in the LTS** - **Cap. 96 to include all plant species (as defined in the ordinance) identified in the LTS** - **Cap. 171 to include relevant "fish" (as defined in the ordinance) identified in the LTS** - **Cap. 476 to refer to the LTS** - **Cap. 208 to refer to the LTS**	AFCD	measures and identify conservation actions that have proven effective in the protection of endangered species. 4.6. Establish a Sampled Red List Index (SRLI) of a sample of species across a wide range of taxonomic groups and threat levels that can be reassessed on a regular basis (every 5-10 years), to provide an overview of current status of biodiversity conservation in Hong Kong without requiring a full reassessment of all species on the Red List. 4.7. Publish a list of species that are known/presumed to have become extinct in Hong Kong that can be used to inform future habitat restoration and/or species reintroductions. 4.8. Organise a IUCN /regional level workshop to review the conservation status of priority cross-border species and develop conservation actions at least once every 4 years. 4.9. Conduct IUCN green status species assessment for species that form living habitat	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	- **Cap. 499 to refer to the LTS** **4.3. Provide guidelines and a time schedule for preparation and updates of Species Action Plans, to include recommendations for actions that would benefit the conservation of the most threatened species.** **4.4. Publish the finalised outstanding species action plans by the end of Q2 2025:** - **Chinese White Dolphin** - **Horseshoe crab** - **Finless porpoise** - **Corals** - **Three banded box turtle** - **Big-headed turtle**		e.g. shellfish, coral and seagrass, to assess their current status and monitor any changes.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 5: Ensure Sustainable, Safe and Legal Harvesting and Trade of Wild Species	**STRENGTHEN CONTROLS ON IMPORT, DOMESTIC TRADE, BREEDING AND POSSESSION OF ALIEN (EXOTIC) SPECIES** **5.1. Animals:** **a. Review, update and maintain the "major factors" governing the permitted import (Special Permits) of alien animal species to ensure the requisite level of domestication, prevent the import of invasive species, limit ecological impact and mitigate the risk of disease introduction.** **b. Based on the assessment of the "major factors", publish a list of "alien" animals which can at the discretion of the government be imported and owned, for traders, breeders and the public, and make available the revised and updated "major factors" and the species-specific risk assessments.** **c. Implement measures to bar ownership of all "alien animals" that are not permitted for**	AFCD	5.10. Strengthen traceability across the exotic animal trade by expanding unique marking schemes for species where identifying individual animals is appropriate, and documentation of ownership. 5.11. Enhance management of the possession of CITES regulated species by reintroducing previous controls and strengthen measures to ensure ranched animals are regulated as wild animals. 5.12. Build multi-stakeholder alliance(s) to improve awareness of the scale and impacts of the wildlife trade among the general public, traders and other relevant stakeholder groups including statutory bodies including the Endangered Species Advisory Committee (ESAC), Animal Welfare Advisory Group (AWAG) and Veterinary Surgeons Board (VSB). 5.13. Increase research to investigate the ecological impacts of uncontrolled harvesting outside MPA, investigate carrying capacity of marine biodiversity hotspots.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	import according to the government's species-specific assessments. **5.2. Plants:** **a. Conduct a comprehensive stocktake and species-specific risk assessment(s) of alien plants already present in Hong Kong, establishing a baseline, with particular attention paid to ecologically sensitive locations.** **b. Conduct assessments of invasive and alien plant species not yet known to be present in Hong Kong but known to impart serious ecosystem harm based on their ecological characteristics and documented impacts elsewhere.** **c. Based on the assessments under a) and b), publish a list of 'alien' plant species which can or cannot, at the discretion of the government, be imported or commercially propagated.**		5.14. Evaluate threatened and recovering species under the IUCN Green List criteria to demonstrate the benefits of active conservation measures and identify conservation actions that have proven effective in the protection of endangered species.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	COMBAT ILLEGAL HUNTING LOCALLY & WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING. **5.3. Mandate HKPF (in addition to C&ED and AFCD) to investigate wildlife crimes being perpetrated in and through Hong Kong including cross-boundary offences.** **5.4. Regarding illegal hunting and collection of wildlife in Hong Kong, establish a formal operation protocol between AFCD and the HKPF and establish a well-trained and well-equipped anti-poaching unit in AFCD.** **5.5. Introduce indictable offences and increase penalties for certain offences in Cap 170 (e.g., hunting, possession, and sale of protected wild animals).** **5.6. Review Cap, 208A penalties with a view to increasing the maximum custodial sentence to 12 months.** **FACILITATE ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINES** **5.7. Encourage research to fill information gaps on the utilisation of flora, fauna and fungi in Chinese medicines and develop effective substitutes/alternatives to the use**	HKPF, EEB, AFCD, C&ED Health Bureau, Dept. of Health Chinese Medicine Council (CMC), Chinese		

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	of threatened and protected species , consider funding support by the Chinese Medicine Development Fund (CMDF). **5.8. Encourage, coordinate and provide financial support for research on traditional knowledge relevant to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Chinese medicines.** **5.9. Review and strengthen regulations as they relate to the utilisation of flora, fauna and fungi in Chinese medicines to avoid over-exploitation of threatened and protected species.**	Medicine Regulatory Office (CMRO), EEB		
TARGET 6: Reduce the Introduction of Invasive Alien Species by 50% and Minimize Their Impact	**MANAGE IAS POPULATIONS** **6.1. Introduce ongoing monitoring protocols including periodic ecological surveys in sensitive areas such as around country parks, marine parks, local ports of entry, etc. to identify the presence of invasive species.** **6.2. Undertake and publish IAS-specific risk assessments and publish a list of IAS that are present in the local environment to prioritise management resources.**	EEB, AFCD	No supporting recommendations.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	6.3. Based on the assessments, establish IAS reduction target(s) aligned with GBF Target 6 with targeted removal of priority species. **6.4. Introduce statutory measures to bar alien plant and animal species from being released into the local environment.** **6.5. Establish a local IAS working group / task force with experts and the Hong Kong government for effective management.**			
TARGET 7: Reduce Pollution to Levels That Are Not Harmful to Biodiversity	7.1. Continue efforts to monitor and reduce organic and other pollutants (e.g. microplastics), including from storm water and village houses, to levels where they do not negatively impact marine life including hard corals.	EPD, DSD	No supporting recommendations.	
TARGET 8: Minimize the Impacts of Climate Change on Biodiversity	8.1. Embed biodiversity-specific considerations and lexicon into existing green building certifications to drive opportunities and uptake in the building sector. For example, the UK Government has adopted biodiversity	DEVB and works depts	8.4. Organise events and initiatives to promote NbS, such as an 'NbS week' in collaboration with industry stakeholders and universities. By engaging key stakeholders from diverse sectors, including government, businesses, academia, and civil society, Hong Kong can foster collaboration	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
and Build Resilience	net gain in its statutory framework for planning and development. 8.2. Integrate NbS into the Climate Action Plan and the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines to ensure that NbS becomes an integral part of the city's sustainable development strategy. By incorporating NbS into urban planning and policy frameworks, Hong Kong can systematically prioritise and implement NbS to address climate change and enhance resilience. 8.3. Integrate ecosystem-based marine spatial planning in the next city master plan.		and create momentum for the widespread adoption of NbS. 8.5. Conduct wide-scale research on the impacts of climate change and the loss of natural coastlines on marine species, habitats and ecosystems.	
TARGET 9: Manage Wild Species Sustainably to Benefit People	**9.1 Fill gaps to improve seafood traceability and combat illegal, unreported and unregulated seafood, including mandatory reporting and collection of data on catch area and species name, for imported products.** **9.2. Specifically, update the definition of 'marine fish' in Cap 291 to include live fish, crustaceans and molluscs.**	EEB, AFCD	9.3. Strengthen controls on breeding exotic animals by aligning licensing conditions for exotic animal breeders with those for dog breeders.	AFCD

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 10: Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry	SUPPORT RURAL AGRICULTURE AND TRADITIONAL PRACTICES 10.1. Leverage rural cultural practices and traditional ecological knowledge to develop more effective, culturally appropriate, and locally-driven biodiversity conservation strategies, such as nature-based solutions and sustainable agriculture/aquaculture/fisheries which also help preserve and support the livelihoods of local communities. New initiatives can include fostering new business environments and campaigns that support sustainable agriculture and community-based projects that facilitate collaboration between urban and rural industries, such as food processing factories, restaurants and local producers. 10.2. Transform the current perspectives on rural communities by promoting local culture, traditional agriculture, and community-driven conservation initiatives to foster a sense of belonging, raise public awareness, and empower local stewardship of Hong Kong's rural natural and cultural heritage.	AFCD, EPD, FEHD, other relevant Government departments, NGOs, farmers, food industry, community-based producers, impact investment funds, researchers	LEVERAGE RURAL PRACTICES AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, FOSTER COLLABORATION WITH URBAN AND RURAL SERVICES 10.5. Identify and document the diverse intangible cultural heritage in rural areas, such as traditional agricultural techniques, pond management, and bee farming, that are closely linked to biodiversity. The grouping used in the Hong Kong Intangible Cultural Heritage Database should also be revised to reflect the ecological elements of various traditional craftsmanship and recognise their contribution to biodiversity conservation. 10.6. Explore opportunities to enhance the environmental performance of traditional practices through the integration of appropriate technologies and science, while practices which are harmful to biodiversity will be phased out. 10.7. Create multi-stakeholder platforms that bring together rural communities, government agencies, non-profit organisations, and other	EEB, AFCD

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
			relevant stakeholders to collectively identify and address biodiversity conservation challenges. 10.8. Develop comprehensive databases and knowledge repositories that document and showcase the linkages between rural cultural practices and biodiversity conservation. 10.9. Provide training, funding, and technical assistance to support the application of relevant traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation initiatives, including those that conserve ecosystem services. 10.10. Develop a centralised data platform to gather and maintain comprehensive information on the natural resources, manpower, and economic activities in Hong Kong's rural areas. 10.11. Conduct detailed assessments to map the existing situation, identify gaps, and inform the development of targeted interventions.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
			10.12. Ensure the data platform is accessible and regularly updated to support evidence-based decision-making and policy development. 10.13. Facilitate partnerships and knowledge-sharing between urban and rural industries, such as food processing factories, restaurants, and local producers. 10.14. Develop innovative business models and campaigns that support sustainable agriculture, community-based enterprises, and biodiversity conservation. 10.15. Provide technical assistance, financial incentives, and capacity-building programs to empower rural communities to establish and manage sustainable enterprises. 10.16. Leverage the expertise and networks of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and impact investment funds to mobilise resources and scale up successful community-driven initiatives.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
			10.17. Encourage and provide technical and financial support for stakeholder-led initiatives and community-based projects that address local needs and priorities. TRANSFORM CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON RURAL COMMUNITIES 10.18. Incorporate place-making initiatives that build a sense of belonging among rural communities. 10.19. Respect and integrate local traditions and culture, including the management of crops and *feng shui* woodlands. 10.20. Utilise existing incentives to conserve the environment and engage residents in nature conservation and cultural research. 10.21. Identify and highlight local characteristics and flagship species to encourage community stewardship and ownership of natural and cultural heritage.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
			10.22. Empower local communities to take an active role in the design and implementation of conservation initiatives, fostering community-driven and sustainable approaches. 10.23. Include social impact assessment in any developments in rural areas and expand the scope to include the impact on traditional agricultural and fishery cultural practices. 10.24. Provide guidance to identify, assess, and measure the key impacts of projects on traditional agricultural or fishing culture and practices. 10.25. Use existing AFCD Port Survey and other data to examine the impact of the 2012 trawling ban on the catches of fish by fishing gears that are still permitted. 10.26. Formulate a “ghost net” strategy by 2027 that will reduce the amount of monofilament nets being lost or abandoned at sea by 50% annually, and be implementing it by 2028.	AFCD, NGOs, researchers

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	ENHANCE MARINE FISHERIES 10.3. Obtain Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) sustainable fisheries certification for at least one Hong Kong marine fishery by 2030. ENHANCE AQUACULTURE 10.4. Review and enhance existing Accredited Fish Farm Scheme (AFFS) by incorporating sustainability elements into basic requirements.	AFCD, researchers, NGOs, fisher associations, certifying agency AFCD, researchers, NGOs, aquaculture associations	FOOD PRODUCTION 10.27. Increase Government funding and other support for initiatives to enhance the sustainability of local food production, such as the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF). 10.28. Enhance cooperation with the Greater Bay Area on sustainable food production and practices.	
TARGET 11: Restore, Maintain and Enhance Nature's Contributions to People	No priority recommendations.		No supporting recommendations.	
TARGET 12: Enhance Green Spaces and Urban	**12.1. Engage and maintain active involvement with regional and international biodiversity-focused networks / bodies, such as the Biophilic Cities Network, which**	CEDD, relevant associations	12.5. Facilitate educational and vocational training to specific sectors such as the local horticultural sector to improve understanding of	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
Planning for Human Well-Being and Biodiversity	**aims to promote the biophilia concept in urban city planning and development.** 12.2. With reference to the "Study on Urban Biodiversity Enhancement for Tung Chung New Town Extension and Adjoining Areas", develop an Urban Biodiversity Master Plan for all districts in Hong Kong. This could be done through consultancy studies commissioned by the Government. 12.3. Collaborate with relevant associations to encourage the promotion of biodiversity as a strategic goal in local property asset management to integrate biodiversity considerations into planning and development further. 12.4. Provide incentives to encourage project proponents to implement measures to improve the biodiversity value in larger-scale developments.		maintenance to enhance biodiversity in landscape management.	
TARGET 13: Increase the Sharing of Benefits From Genetic Resources, Digital	No priority recommendations.		No supporting recommendations.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
Sequence Information and Traditional Knowledge				
TARGET 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level	14.1. Action to fully integrate biodiversity and its multiple values should be taken across all levels of government and particularly those bureaus and departments that have significant impacts on biodiversity, including policies, objectives and decision-making frameworks.	AFCD Education Bureau, Curriculum Development Council, Tertiary Institutes, NGOs, AFCD, EPD, EEB, LCSD, education sector including associations for educators/specific education areas	14.2. Publish annual reports of progress against the BSAP and share them with key stakeholders, including other Government Bureaus and Departments, academics, NGOs, ACE, BEC etc. Organise meetings of key stakeholders at least every two years, to facilitate knowledge-sharing and collaboration on the BSAP. 14.3. Establish an independent authority for overseeing the preparation and update of the List of Threatened Species, facilitate Red List assessments by non-governmental organisations or individuals, and incorporate verifiable observations from academic research, citizen science projects and EIA surveys into the Biodiversity Information Hub. 14.4. The decreasing number of ecology programmes and teachers, particularly in terrestrial ecology, within local universities in	EEB, AFCD Education Bureau, AFCD.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
			recent years is a concerning trend. The ongoing challenge of recruiting adequately trained ecologists has been a persistent issue, evident through feedback from consultancies, environmental NGOs, and relevant government departments. It is recommended that the University Grant Council should address this matter to ensure the availability of qualified personnel for the effective implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) in Hong Kong.	University Grants Council
TARGET 15: Businesses Assess, Disclose and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts	MAINSTREAMING CORPORATE ASSESSMENT AND DISCLOSURE ON BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE **15.1. The establishment of the corporate biodiversity assessment and disclosure framework by the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) in Hong Kong should be supported to help businesses identify, assess, monitor and report their nature-related dependencies, impacts, risks and opportunities.**	FSTB, SFC, HKEX	SECTOR-SPECIFIC SUPPORT 15.7. Support the development of sector-specific roadmaps for key sectors including (but not exclusive to) real estate, banks, chemicals, and food & beverage to mainstream corporate biodiversity disclosure, mitigate risks and identify business opportunities. Showcase and publicise model case studies of corporates already	EEB, AFCD

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	15.2. Noting the absence of nature-related disclosures in the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) or equivalent standards to date, the Hong Kong Stock Exchange ("HKEX") should closely monitor international development, and be prepared to review Appendix C2 of the Listing Rules with considerations to strengthen requirements on nature-related disclosures as part of its ESG Reporting. In the event that ISSB issues nature-related disclosure standards, the establishment of an appropriate localised framework/structure for the swift adoption of the standard in Hong Kong must be supported. **15.3. Strengthen the support provision and promotion of existing guidance in the form of practical relation to metrics and tools and recommendations to enable support corporate biodiversity reporting.** **15.4. Non-listed large companies with high nature impacts and dependencies should be encouraged to voluntarily disclose, for instance through the implementation of a trial TNFD adoption period to pilot uptake.**		engaged in biodiversity assessment and disclosure to reflect the business case for nature. 15.8. Collaborate with established conservation organisations to develop and implement accreditation programmes for businesses engaged in biodiversity conservation efforts, ensuring high standards and best practices are maintained.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	ESTABLISHING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER BIODIVERSITY TASK FORCE **15.5. Establish a multi-stakeholder biodiversity task force to address several objectives that require cross-collaboration, including identifying mechanisms and sources of funding for research, data collection and consolidation, capacity building, identifying financing mechanisms for biodiversity and strengthening the business case for investing in biodiversity. By doing so the task force can drive partnerships between the Government and the private sector including the business and finance sectors and facilitate cross-Government department collaboration toward protecting biodiversity.** STRENGTHENING THE BUSINESS CASE FOR BIODIVERSITY 15.6. Work with the private sector to collate and build resources for businesses of all industries to consider biodiversity concerns in their decision-making, business strategies and investments. Work with the private sector to identify and determine appropriate funding	FSTB, EEB, AFCD, NGOs, expert academics and researchers, ecologists, consultants, etc.		

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	mechanisms or models to strengthen the business case to understand key nature dependencies, reduce impacts and implement initiatives including nature-based solutions, suitable for the Hong Kong context.			
TARGET 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices to Reduce Waste and Over-consumption	**16.1. Introduce waste-management charging in the next 10 years, and expand the government network of community recycling centres.** **16.2. Devise and begin implementing a short-medium term strategy to mainstream more sustainable consumption of biological resources and reduce the per capita and total SAR ecological footprint.** **16.3. Add food types to the Green Procurement Guidelines and encourage businesses to provide and purchase a wider supply of sustainable products made from biological resources, including by promoting the Green Procurement Guidelines to them.** 16.4. Promote sustainable seafood and other food types, sustainable timber products, and plant-based diets	EEB, EPD, and other relevant government depts. EEB, AFCD EEB, EPD	16.5. Provide policy and financial support to NGOs specialising in tackling food, plastic, clothing and other waste, and reduce the administrative burden associated with government funding. 16.6. Continue to provide support to schools and NGOs to promote awareness raising and behaviour change for more sustainable consumption patterns.	EEB, EPD, and other relevant government depts.

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 17: Strengthen Biosafety and Distribute the Benefits of Biotechnology	No priority recommendations.		No supporting recommendations.	
TARGET 18: Reduce Harmful Incentives by at Least $500 Billion per Year, and Scale Up Positive Incentives for Biodiversity	No priority recommendations.		No supporting recommendations.	
TARGET 19: Mobilize $200 Billion per Year for Biodiversity From all Sources, Including $30 Billion Through	**CLEAR POLICY SIGNALLING** **19.1. Establish a clear policy position to reflect the strategic importance of biodiversity to the economy and put in place measures - such as regulatory frameworks,**	HKMA, FSTB, EEB, Financial stakeholders, banks,	19.7. Establish financing mechanisms to support cross-border nature conservation / restoration activities. 19.8. Establish a mechanism for financial penalties from convictions for wildlife crime offences to be redirected (as appropriate)	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
International Finance	**tax breaks and de-risking guarantees, to encourage the private sector to invest.** **19.2. Explicitly acknowledge nature as part of the solution to climate change in the next Climate Action Plan, to mainstream nature considerations into Hong Kong's existing environmental regulatory landscape to recognise and highlight the link between climate change and biodiversity.** **RESEARCH** **19.3. Explore/expand financial instruments to leverage/incorporate greater biodiversity investment, including promoting blended finance, public-private partnerships, grants and subsidies, and implement strategies to raise new and additional resources to support this. Consider blue/biodiversity bonds as well as expansion in the use of proceeds in future bond issuances to include nature/ biodiversity protection. Review existing incentives (subsidies, tax reliefs etc.) to understand if they may create perverse incentives that undermine biodiversity.** **19.4. Prioritise funding in the Environment and Conservation Fund for research on biodiversity and**	investors, corporates EEB, AFCD	compliant with restorative justice principles to support conservation measures and restoration of damaged ecosystems and to recover and compensate costs incurred by specified parties. 19.9. Enhance research in quantifying the benefits of NbS to establish robust metrics, checklists, and certification systems for NbS projects. This will provide a clear framework for evaluating and comparing the effectiveness of different NbS initiatives, and with engineering options.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	ecosystem services specific to the Hong Kong context, review existing research to identify gaps and promote knowledge sharing of findings. Establish a mechanism to encourage corporate participation throughout the research process to further build the business case to mainstream biodiversity in decision-making and enhance business action. Leverage existing public funds, such as the Environment and Conservation Fund to facilitate biodiversity-specific research, and implement private-public match fund models such as the Recycling Fund's Enterprise Support Programme to other public existing funds such as the Innovation and Technology Fund to further the commercialisation of scalable projects for biodiversity, such as nature-based solutions (NbS) or nature-tech. **19.5. Quantify carbon credits to better understand the natural carbon sink potential of different habitats in Hong Kong. This should be done in partnership with HKEX's existing Core Climate platform, considering the voluntary carbon market context in Hong Kong and other regional markets. Explore the concept of biodiversity credits and feasibility on various ecosystems in Hong Kong.**			

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	19.6. Leverage carbon and biodiversity credits where feasible to create financial incentives for implementing NbS projects. By valuing NbS's carbon sequestration, climate resilience and biodiversity enhancement potential, Hong Kong can establish mechanisms to reward organisations and individuals for their efforts in implementing and maintaining such solutions.			
TARGET 20: Strengthen Capacity-Building, Technology Transfer, and Scientific and Technical Cooperation for Biodiversity	**EVALUATING NATURAL ECOSYSTEM SERVICES** **20.1. Adopt a standardised framework to evaluate nature and ecosystem services accounting to quantify Hong Kong's economic dependencies on the natural ecosystem services (marine and terrestrial). The UN's System of Environmental-Economic Accounting Ecosystem Accounting ("SEEA EA"), similar economic modelling, and mainland China's "Gross Ecosystem Products" can be used as references. This approach could be applied to new planned developments such as the Northern Metropolis and encourage private sectors, such as property development, to consider ecosystem datasets in new development projects.** **STRENGTHENING CAPACITY THROUGH COLLABORATION**	AFCD, FSTB. Academics and universities, consultants, NGOs	20.8. Promote and enhance resources for biodiversity education for the private sector: a. Promote improved understanding of biodiversity and nature concepts to the local business community. Collaborating with relevant educational organisational/business network bodies to enable knowledge sharing. Disseminate resources and facilitate increased knowledge levels through training or workshops among the local business community on biodiversity-related topics and lexicon, such as ecosystem/ecological services, natural	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	20.2. Strengthen collaboration with international organisations, standards, and goals related to ecosystem restoration and conservation, such as the UNCBD, UNCCC, UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, IUCN, Botanic Gardens Conservation International (London) and Business for Nature. By actively engaging with these entities, Hong Kong can learn from global best practices, align its efforts with international standards, and contribute to the global movement towards sustainable development. **STRENGTHENING CAPACITY THROUGH EDUCATION** **20.3. Promote improved understanding of biodiversity and nature concepts to the local business community. Collaborate with relevant educational organisational /business network bodies to enable knowledge sharing and knowledge creation. Disseminate resources and facilitate increased knowledge levels through training or workshops among the local business community on biodiversity-related topics and lexicon, such as ecosystem/ ecological services, natural capital accounting, NbS, and so on).** **STRENGTHENING CAPACITY THROUGH DATA**	AFCD, NGOs NGOs, Universities, AFCD, LCSD	capital accounting, biodiversity net gain and nature positive. b. Facilitate educational and vocational training to specific sectors such as the local horticultural sector to improve understanding of maintenance to enhance biodiversity in landscape management. c. Collaborate with relevant associations to encourage the promotion of biodiversity as a strategic goal in local property asset management to integrate biodiversity considerations into planning and development further. 20.9. Develop and implement citizen science methods for biodiversity monitoring, reporting and data sharing, such as for invasive alien species. 20.10. Assess the local capacity to support rapidly expanding areas of nature conservation by conducting a questionnaire survey of the HR of	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	20.4. The recently launched publicly available Biodiversity Geographic Information System (BGIS) includes location-specific data on biodiversity for different regions across the city collated from various sources including Government departments, academic institutions and citizen science platforms. Existing mapping should be enhanced to include data species status (exotic, threatened and protected species); species known to provide ecological benefits such as food and/or habitats; a natural habitat hotspot distribution mapping tool including conservation zones, coastal protection areas and critical habitats; and use and land use change; and water usage. The enhanced database should also include data accessible in formats that are useable for corporates to reference when considering biodiversity data for assessing biodiversity impacts in planning and developments. Including data to rank or rate the conservation value of different habitats should also be considered. **20.5. Make data from <u>completed</u> EIA studies and monitoring data <u>on associated mitigation/compensation</u> measures on projects publicly available and easily accessible online in formats that are useable for**	AFCD, Universities, NGOs, Environmental Consultants, Green Tech Firms	professional ecologists in Government, NGOs, and consultancies in Hong Kong.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
	corporates to reference when conducting biodiversity assessments. VALUATING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES 20.6. Building on existing broader studies on Hong Kong's ecosystem services, conduct an updated in-depth study linking ecosystem services with monetary valuation (such as understanding the air quality regulation function of terrestrial ecosystems and the carbon sequestration rate of vegetation in various habitats to support climate regulation), and the economic value attached to these. Publish habitat valuation results on a domain accessible to the public and categorise ecological value into high, medium and low ratings. STRENGTHENING CAPACITY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY 20.7. Encourage the development and use of innovative and cost-effective technologies that can help in monitoring, conserving and restoring biodiversity, including through the Innovation and Technology Fund	AFCD, FSTB, Academics, Universities, Environmental Consultants, NGOs		

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
TARGET 21: Ensure That Knowledge Is Available and Accessible To Guide Biodiversity Action	21.1. Enhance biodiversity education at all levels from kindergarten to university through curricula enhancements, including through exposure to urban and rural nature and conservation efforts, and increase reward incentives for educators.	Education Bureau, Curriculum Development Council, Tertiary Institutes, NGOs, AFCD, EPD, EEB, LCSD, education sector including associations for educators/specific education areas	21.2. Promote campus-based biodiversity education in school, and provide continuing education courses in environmental education 21.3. Establish ecotourism and environmental education as one of the Applied Learning courses 21.4. Enhance biodiversity education pedagogy with elements including Aesthetic Education (AE), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), outdoor experience, and nature play 21.5. Optimize early childhood environmental education facilities in urban areas. Organize Hong Kong and Greater Bay Area (GBA) biodiversity study competition (E.g. BioBlitz, Science-themed, Art-themed).	Education Bureau, Curriculum Development Council, Tertiary Institutes, NGOs, AFCD, EPD, EEB, LCSD, education sector including associations for educators/specific education areas
TARGET 22: Ensure Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice and	No priority recommendations.		22.1. Foster an inclusive network by trust building among stakeholders, actively engage and empower young people and underrepresented groups to maintain the diversity and equity of the biodiversity conservation.	

GBF 2030 Target	Priority Recommendations (Those under the five Priority Areas are in **bold**)	Lead Agencies	Supporting Recommendations	Lead Agencies
Information Related to Biodiversity for all			22.2. Engage young people and underrepresented Groups through volunteering opportunities and internship. 22.3. Document and acknowledge the contributions of underrepresented groups in biodiversity, and provide opportunities for them to participate. 22.4. Promote trust building among the stakeholders, including by encouraging stakeholder-led initiatives and community-driven solutions.	
TARGET 23: Ensure Gender Equality and a Gender-Responsive Approach for Biodiversity Action	No priority recommendations.		No supporting recommendations.	

Appendix A. List of Participating Organisations

1. *2041 Hong Kong*
2. *ADM Capital Foundation*
3. *Airport Authority Hong Kong*
4. *Animals Asia*
5. *Archireef*
6. *Aurecon*
7. *AVPN*
8. *BLOOM Hong Kong*
9. *Business Environment Council*
10. *C&R Wildlife*
11. *Chinachem Agencies Ltd*
12. *City University of Hong Kong*
13. *Civic Exchange*
14. *CLP Power Hong Kong Limited*
15. *Cornerstone Strategies*
16. *Designing Hong Kong*
17. *Diocesan Commission for Integral Human Development (DCIHD)*
18. *Eagle Owl on Lantau*
19. *Eco Institute*
20. *Environmental Association*
21. *Friends of the Earth*
22. *Gammon Construction Limited*
23. *Good Old Soil*
24. *Grateful Green Group*
25. *Green Hospitality*
26. *Green Power*
27. *Henderson Land Development Company Limited*
28. *Ho Koon Nature Education cum Astronomical Centre*
29. *Hong Kong Bird Watching Society*
30. *Hong Kong Discovery*
31. *Hong Kong Green Finance Association*
32. *Hong Kong Marine Protection Alliance*
33. *Hong Kong Metropolitan University*
34. *Hong Kong Ocean Park Conservation Foundation*
35. *Hong Kong Shark Foundation*
36. *HSBC*
37. *Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden*
38. *Lingnan University*
39. *Little Woods Nature Education*
40. *Living Seas Hong Kong*
41. *LumiVoce*
42. *MasterPlan*
43. *Ocean Park Conservation Foundation*

44. *Ocean Park Hong Kong*
45. *Outdoor Wildlife Learning Hong Kong*
46. *Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Limited*
47. *Porticos Inc.*
48. *Porticus Asia Limited*
49. *PricewaterhouseCoopers Limited (PwC)*
50. *SEAMAR*
51. *Sino Group*
52. *SNAPP Ocean Data*
53. *Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)*
54. *Swire Pacific Limited*
55. *Swire Properties Limited*
56. *The Chinese University of Hong Kong*
57. *The Conservancy Association*
58. *The Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited*
59. *The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited*
60. *The Hong Kong Animal Law and Protection Organisation (HKALPO)*
61. *The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology*
62. *The Hong Kong Wetlands Conservation Association*
63. *The Nature Conservancy Hong Kong*
64. *The University of Hong Kong*
65. *University of Suffolk*
66. *URBIS Limited*
67. *World Wildlife Fund Hong Kong (WWF HK)*

NOVEMBER 2024