

COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS BOARD

Summary Report of the Country Parks Committee

1. Purpose

1.1 This paper aims to inform Members of the major issues discussed at the Country Parks Committee meeting held on 12 June 2025.

2. An Update on Public Engagement Activities for Hiking Trail Maintenance in Country Parks

2.1 To promote sustainable use of hiking trails, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has collaborated with several universities and non-governmental organisations to launch the “Repair Your Own Trail” Scheme (the Scheme), with a view to engaging the public in constructing and repairing degraded trails in country parks. The AFCD briefed Members on the public engagement activities and latest progress of the Scheme, including the launch of the “Country Parks Trail Volunteer Scheme” this year. The Scheme promotes the construction and maintenance of hiking trails using the handcrafted trail approach, enhances public understanding of the principles and methods involved in the construction and maintenance of hiking trails in Hong Kong, and systematically manages and nurtures experienced trail volunteers to provide long-term support for the maintenance of hiking trails in country parks.

2.2 A Member suggested recruiting students and enterprises to participate in hiking trail maintenance work. The AFCD agreed that the scope of the target participants should be expanded to include groups with no prior experience in trail maintenance, so that trail maintenance work can also fulfil an educational function. However, since trail maintenance differed from conventional volunteer activities such as tree planting in the way that it was more demanding on volunteers’ technical skills and physical fitness, suitable target groups should be selected through screening.

2.3 Members specifically pointed out that the stone basket workshops had expansion potential. The AFCD said that the activity was an effective means of public education which enables people with different abilities, including those with mobility impairment and the elderly, to participate in pre-repair preparatory work. As for the succession of the craftsmanship of handcrafted trails, the AFCD had been conducting internal training to pass down the trail maintenance skills.

3. Improvement and Expansion of Mountain Bike Trail Networks in South Lantau

3.1 The first two phases of the Improvement and Expansion of Mountain Bike Trail (MBT) Networks in South Lantau, implemented by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), were completed and opened to the public in 2017 and 2022 respectively. The CEDD planned to commence works of the remaining phase in mid-2025. This included the construction of a MBT connecting Mui Wo Mountain Bike Practice Ground to Pui O, and associated landscape and ancillary works. The CEDD and the consultant briefed Members on the proposed alignment design, the Preliminary Environmental Review (PER), Ecological Impact Assessment (EcoIA) and Tree Preservation and Removal Proposal (TPRP).

3.2 In response to Members' concerns about the impact of the works on the Lantau South Country Park, the CEDD and the consultant stated that natural materials would be adopted and tree felling would be avoided as far as practicable in order to preserve the environment of the country park. On-site supervision of the contractor's operations would be carried out during construction and mitigation measures would be implemented. The impact on ecology was expected to be low. For the remaining phase, the works would segregate hikers and mountain bikes to prevent an overlap between the MBT and the hiking trail. Clear warning signs would also be erected to remind hikers and mountain bikers to be aware of the road situation so as to reduce the risk of accidents.

3.3 Another Member suggested upgrading the MBT to a world-class route to host international competitions. The AFCD explained that while small-scale mountain bike competitions had been held in Hong Kong, there were limitations on the overall infrastructure in country parks, and might not be able to satisfy the requirements of

international events. The AFCD would continue to explore the feasibility of the proposal after connecting the trails.

4. Presentation

4.1 This paper is prepared for Members' information.

Country and Marine Parks Authority

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