

Asia Pacific Geoparks Network Geopark Development Forum held in Hong Kong

The four-day Asia Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) Geopark Development Forum opened today (May 14) in Hong Kong. Representatives from 22 geoparks in the Asia-Pacific region have gathered to exchange experiences, challenges and good practices in managing geoparks.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark (Hong Kong Geopark) and the Chinese Geoparks Network co-organise the Forum, with the support of the Hong Kong Science Museum of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Through roundtable discussions, guest sharing, visits, etc, the Forum provides a platform for in-depth discussion and experience exchange on geopark management, business partnerships, support from government and non-governmental organisations, and science popularisation activities, with a view to promoting the planning and development of geoparks in future.

The Acting Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, Mr Mickey Lai, while emphasising the significance of Hong Kong Geopark, said, "Hong Kong Geopark has an advantageous location with convenient transportation, which has paved the way for active international exchange. With its diverse and rich geological, ecological and cultural treasures, Hong Kong Geopark has provided invaluable learning opportunities and is committed to serving as a platform for constructing geopark networks and facilitating exchanges."

Second-level Counsel of the Department of Natural Protected Areas Management of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration Ms Yuan Xiaohong praised Hong Kong Geopark as a crucial member of geoparks in China and acknowledged its abilities in attracting academics and visitors from all over the world. She said that Hong Kong Geopark's unique geological landscapes, abundant natural resources, and vibrant cultural ambience have vividly showcased Hong Kong's image as an international metropolis and achieved fruitful outcomes in geoconservation, nature education and community development, as well as international exchange and co-operation.

Hong Kong Geopark became a National Geopark of China in 2009 and a member of the GGN in 2011. Over the years, Hong Kong Geopark has been actively promoting networking within the GGN and is dedicated to conserving geoheritage, ecological environment, cultural and intangible cultural heritage, developing diversified educational activities and boosting local sustainable development. Since 2019, Hong Kong Geopark has taken up the role of social media co-ordinator for the APGN, and has maintained networking within the APGN through regular online meetings.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will later introduce Hing Chun Alliance Heritage Trail to further promote local history, culture and intangible cultural heritage, as well as enhancing visitors'

experience.