

ExCo Non-official Members visit wetlands in Deep Bay area and nearby brownfield sites (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Executive Council Secretariat:

Non-official Members of the Executive Council (ExCo Non-official Members) today (November 4) visited wetlands in the Deep Bay area and nearby brownfield sites to learn about the measures for nature conservation, in particular wetland conservation, as well as land use in the New Territories (NT).

Accompanied by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, the ExCo Non-official Members first visited fishponds in the northwest NT. They were briefed by the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, Dr Leung Siu-fai, on the city's conservation efforts for wetlands. Some of the fishponds in the area have joined the Government-funded Nature Conservation Management Agreement Scheme. The Scheme, being one of the Government's measures to promote nature conservation, aims at enhancing the conservation of ecologically important sites that are in private ownership through co-operation with local communities, landowners and non-profit-making organisations. Members then visited the Mai Po Nature Reserve and the Wetland Conservation Area (WCA) and the Wetland Buffer Area (WBA) in the vicinity and learnt about the conservation and management measures of Mai Po, as well as the planning control in the area through the setting up of the WCA and the WBA.

Accompanied by officials from the Development Bureau and the Planning Department, Members then visited brownfield sites along Castle Peak Road – Chau Tau and Lok Ma Chau Road and at Pok Wai, and were briefed on the distribution and profile of brownfield sites in the NT. The Development Bureau and the Planning Department also reported to Members on the land supply initiatives related to brownfield sites in the 2019 Policy Address and follow-up actions being pursued. In particular, the Government will expedite planning of scattered brownfield sites outside New Development Areas (NDAs) and spearhead the development through land resumption for construction of public housing units and Starter Homes, with a view to increasing the housing supply in the short to medium term.

The ExCo Non-official Members shared the view that the Government had to continue the multi-pronged land supply strategy to meet the demand for land and housing in the course of economic development and improve the living conditions of the people. They expressed support for the Government's measures in boosting land supply for housing development through measures including implementing the NDAs and expediting the review on scattered brownfield sites not covered by NDAs. On conservation, Members agreed that the existing conservation measures are conducive in conserving areas of high

ecological value and allowing the community to continue to enjoy Hong Kong's natural resources. These policies as a whole would ensure a proper balance between development and nature conservation for the city.

ExCo Non-official Members joining the visit today were Convenor Mr Bernard Chan, Mr Ip Kwok-him, Mr Tommy Cheung, Mr Joseph Yam, Mr Ronny Tong, Dr Lam Ching-choi and Mr Kenneth Lau.

