Press Release 27 November 2026

MTR Partners with The University of Hong Kong to Promote Human-Nature Harmony
MTR's Lok Ma Chau Wetland Project Receives the UN-backed 2026 Asian Townscape Award

MTR Corporation is pleased to announce that the Lok Ma Chau Wetland Sustainable Development Project, a collaboration between MTR's team in managing the Lok Ma Chau Wetland and the Centre for Civil Society and Governance of the University of Hong Kong (HKU), has received the 2026 Asian Townscape Award presented by UN-Habitat and other organisations. The award recognises the project's innovative approach to exploring sustainable wetland management solutions, as well as its achievements in enhancing the wetland's ecological value, promoting public engagement and advancing sustainable development. The project also serves as a valuable reference for achieving a balance between urban development and nature conservation.

Covering approximately 32 hectares, the Lok Ma Chau Wetland has been managed and maintained by MTR Corporation since 2007. With the Corporation's continuous investment in wetland conservation, the latest records show that approximately 290 bird species inhabit or stop over at the wetland, representing an increase of about 27% compared with 2007. Recorded species at the wetland include birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and insects, among which are endangered or vulnerable species such as the Black-faced Spoonbill, Yellow-breasted Bunting and Eurasian Otter. Since 2023, MTR has collaborated with HKU's Centre for Civil Society and Governance to proactively explore the application of "Nature-based Solutions" (NbS) in wetland management. Key initiatives include the installation of ecological floating islands, the establishment of nurseries for wetland plants and fish fry, the introduction of suitable freshwater mussel species, and the organisation of guided visits for different groups. These measures have further enhanced the ecological value of the wetland while strengthening public engagement and conservation education. (Please refer to the Annex for details.)

"MTR is committed to keeping cities moving while protecting the environment. We have consistently put in resources in the conservation of Lok Ma Chau Wetland, demonstrating that urban development and nature can thrive together in harmony. This award recognises our efforts to promote sustainable development of the city, and also reflects the achievement of our collaboration with HKU in exploring innovative conservation solutions. Looking ahead, we will continue to work with all sectors of the community to support Hong Kong in moving towards a more livable, resilient and sustainable future," said Mr Wilson Kwong, Hong Kong Transport Services Director of MTR Corporation.

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"This recognition highlights the importance of collaboration between academia, industry, and government integrating nature-based solutions and social innovation into urban development. Our experience from this project will inform the future development and management of the designated conservation park in the Northern Metropolis, providing valuable policy insights that support sustainable growth and a more resilient, environmentally conscious city," said Prof Ming Wen, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Hong Kong.

Launched in 2010, the Asian Townscape Awards are jointly initiated by UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Habitat Society, the Fukuoka Asian Urban Research Center and the Asian Landscape Design Society. The awards recognise urban landscape projects that have made outstanding contributions and delivered lasting impact in promoting harmony between people and nature, enhancing the living environment and advancing sustainable development. More than 60 projects were shortlisted for this year's awards, with 11 projects receiving the "2026 Asian Townscape Awards", reflecting the competitive nature of the awards. The "Lok Ma Chau Wetland Sustainable Development Project" was the only winning project from Hong Kong this year.

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About MTR Corporation

To Keep Cities Moving, MTR makes encounters happen and rendezvous for a more connected tomorrow. As a recognised world-class operator of sustainable rail transport services, we are a leader in safety, reliability, customer service and efficiency.

MTR has extensive end-to-end railway expertise with over 45 years of railway projects experience from design to planning and construction through to commissioning, maintenance and operations. Going beyond railway delivery and operation, MTR also creates and manages dynamic communities around its network through seamless integration of rail, commercial and property development.

With more than 46,000 dedicated staff*, MTR carries over 13 million passenger journeys worldwide every weekday in Hong Kong, Chinese Mainland and beyond. Together, we Go Smart and Go Beyond.

For more information about MTR Corporation, please visit www.mtr.com.hk.

*includes our subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures in Hong Kong and worldwide

About the Centre for Civil Society and Governance, The University of Hong Kong

Established in December 2002, the Centre for Civil Society and Governance was the first research centre in Hong Kong dedicated to enhancing our knowledge of civil society — its nature, constituents, dynamics, roles (in particular its contribution towards governance)—and to contributing to the attainment of a sustainable society through forging community-based, innovative solutions to inform policy deliberation and collective action.

For more information about the Centre, please visit https://ccsg.hku.hk/en/.

Photo Caption:

1. MTR Corporation and the HKU's Centre for Civil Society and Governance collaborated on the "Lok Ma Chau Wetland Sustainable Development Project", which received the "2026 Asian Townscape Awards". Ms Catherine Leung, Lead Environmental Manager of MTR Corporation (2nd left); Prof Cheryl Chui, Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at HKU (2nd right), and Ms Katie Chick, Assistant Director of the Centre for Civil Society and Governance (1st left), attended the award presentation ceremony held in South Korea.



Annex

Measures Piloted at the Lok Ma Chau Wetland
by MTR and HKU's Centre for Civil Society and Governance

Measure	Details
Wetland Plant and Fish Fry Nursery 	• Established a circular aquaculture system based on wetland water resources and aquaponics principles to cultivate fish fry and wetland plants which can better adapt to the wetland environment. • Nurtured fish fry in dedicated tanks to support wetland needs. • Used nutrient-rich water from the nursery to grow native wetland plants, which are later transplanted to ecological floating islands.
Ecological Floating Islands 	• Used them to grow crops and aquatic plants, and to provide habitats for birds and other wildlife. • Plants on the floating islands can absorb excess nutrients and impurities, helping maintain water quality.
Freshwater Mussel Cultivation 	• Introduced freshwater mussels into fishponds to naturally filter impurities and improve water quality. • Mussels that adapt to the wetland environment can help enhance biodiversity and the ecological value of the wetland.

Project	Details
Community Engagement and Conservation Education 	• Launched the "Wetland Nursery on Campus – Experiential Learning Programme "in 2025, enhancing students' understanding of wetland conservation through classroom training and participation. Wetland plants grown by students were transplanted to the Lok Ma Chau Wetland. • Organised visits for various groups to explore the feasibility of providing limited public access to the wetland. Information boards have also been installed to help visitors better understand the wetland and the concept of sustainable development. • Conducted over 20 stakeholder meetings, workshops and site visits so far, engaging government departments, conservation professionals, the fisheries and agriculture sectors, businesses and SMEs, the creative industries and the education sector to gather views on wetland conservation and Nature-based Solutions as reference for project planning and subsequent collaboration.