

AGHK Stance on the Development of a Geopark in Hong Kong

The proposal of the development of a geological park (“geopark”) in the October 2008-2009 Chief Executive’s Policy Address would definitely have a long term impact on the conservation of the invaluable geological heritage in Hong Kong. Being the only geoconservation organisation in Hong Kong, Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (“AGHK”) welcomes and appreciates the Government’s decisive efforts and action to conserve our geological heritage. Such efforts, comparable to the foresighted vision of the Country Parks plan thirty years ago, are highly laudable.

AGHK stance on geopark is as follows:-

1. AGHK supports the development of a geopark in Hong Kong as this would conserve our environment and inspire the public’s quest for the knowledge of earth science.
2. AGHK will monitor the Government’s planning, design, development and management of the geopark to comply with UNESCO’s three main principles: a) geoconservation; b) popularization of earth sciences and c) sustainable development. In addition, our geological park development should also work within the framework of UNESCO’s global geoconservation campaign and UNESCO’s International Year of Planet Earth, to achieve the objectives of geopark.
3. AGHK is politically independent. We will give our professional and constructive opinion and closely monitor the overall planning and design of the geopark to ensure it is for the ultimate benefits and betterment of Hong Kong citizen. It will not be the tool of any political parties nor any development destructing our environment.
4. We insist that the Hong Kong geopark development is not a property, tourism or economic development. It is a holistic conservation policy in valuing and protecting both our abiotic and biotic nature.
5. The main objective of geopark is to a) conserve and enhance the value of the Earth heritage, its landscapes and geological formations which are key witnesses to the history of life and base of all ecological system; b) to popularize earth sciences and provide a mean of teaching geoscientific disciplines and c) to foster sustainable geotourism.



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6. Geopark is a conceptual development within the existing framework of our country parks and marine parks which are regulated under respective ordinances. The integration of the geological and geomorphological interests and information in our country and marine parks would increase their attractions, would enable visitors to learn more about the abiotic elements and our geomorphological features.

Within the geopark territory or invaluable geological sites, major development or construction are not required. Excessive setups are not allowed. Minor setups will be installed for safety, instruction and interpretation of geological features purposes. Geological routes and information centre will be added to current visitor information centers at Pak Tam Chung and Tsiu Hang to facilitate visits by citizens and tourists.

7. The establishment of a geopark offers a superlative opportunity to enhance the professionalism of current geotourism industry. All the appreciation guides would have the common mission of promoting geoconservation and popularizing earth sciences. Clearer guidance and code would be provided to the appreciation guides about the appropriate geotourism practices. Accreditation of their geotourism practice would also be required.

AGHK believes that conservation by building up a fence to the public or keeping them ignorant is doomed to failure. Conservation by educating people, making them to understand the importance of rocks and landforms, to appreciate and cherish their beauties and value is the only means to achieve geoconservation. Therefore, Hong Kong geopark is not another Disney Land, Ocean Park or Wetland Park. It is a greater integration and total solution approach for nature conservation.

For any clarities and further queries, please feel free to contact young@rocks.org.hk

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