

Save Our Country Parks from Development
Let's Walk together in Tai Lam

Hong Kong, 28 May 2017 – Over 10 concern groups, legislative councilors, district councillors and over (100) volunteers gathered at the Ma On Kong Warden Post for a walk through Tai Lam Country Park. The event was organized in opposition to Government's invitation of a developer, the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) to study the development potential of two areas in Tai Lam and Shui Chuen O which fall within or lie close to Tai Lam Country Park and Ma On Shan Country Park.

The groups urged Ms. Carrie Lam, the Chief Executive-elect, to withdraw the invitation to HKHS and to first establish a task force with civil society to engage the community on a macro review of our land supply options.

During the walk, walkers observed the pristine nature of the country park and had a view of alternative development sites including brownfields.

Peter Li, the Senior Campaign Manager of the Conservancy Association, thanked the public and volunteers for their support. Peter explained that the aim of the event was to demonstrate the strong determination to protect Hong Kong's country parks from development. He also emphasized that Green Groups fully recognize the housing need. "We understand that there is a public concern over the supply of housing in Hong Kong. However, housing needs and elderly welfare are unacceptable excuses for development of country parks as there are ample other options available for development."

Paul Zimmerman, the CEO of Designing Hong Kong, reiterated that in recent years concern groups continuously highlighted inefficient land uses and reasonable alternatives for development Hong Kong, including underused military facilities, one of the golf courses in Fanling, and large areas of brownfields in the New Territories. "With acceptable options for development available, there appears to be no excuse for rushing to invite a developer to conduct a development study and creating a precedent which puts our entire country park system at risk."

Roy Tam, the Chief Executive (Voluntary) of Green Sense, reminded the government that the housing problem in Hong Kong could not be solved by simply identifying new land but that it should also reconsider the demand side. Population, immigration and other demand-control policies should be used to by government to address the mismatch in land supply.

Partners:

Designing Hong Kong, Environmental Life Science Society.SS .HKUSU, Friends of Hoi Ha, Friends of the Earth Hong Kong, Green Sense, Greeners Action, Greenpeace, Lantau Buffalo Association, the Conservancy Association, the Green Earth, the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, Green Power, Friends of Sai Kung , Living Islands Movement, Green Lantau Association.