

## LCQ5: Promoting trail tourism

Following is a question by the Hon Vincent Cheng and a reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, in the Legislative Council today (February 12):

Question:

It has been reported that a recently released documentary film on four Hong Kong trails is widely acclaimed. There are views that as Hong Kong has beautiful trails and ridgelines, the Government should adopt a new mindset or a new perspective in promoting trail tourism. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the Government's plans in place to enhance the ancillary facilities on trails or in country parks, such as providing additional replenishment and rest stations, water-filling stations, toilets and directional signs, so as to meet the needs of different types of hikers, and to further promote trail tourism and a safe hiking culture;

(2) of the Government's plans and publicity strategies in place to promote Hong Kong's trails to tourists from different places, such as whether it will consider taking the initiative to invite renowned runners to promote the trails, or supporting the broadcasting of the aforesaid documentary film on international streaming platforms or in places outside Hong Kong, so as to attract tourists from abroad; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) in order to further promote Hong Kong's trail tourism, whether the Government will consider supporting the organisation and promotion of trail races or cross-country races, so as to attract more local and non-local people to take part in such races, thereby stepping up publicity on Hong Kong's beautiful natural trails?

Reply:

President,

Hong Kong has rich green and eco-tourism resources, including hiking trails and country parks throughout the city, with breathtaking great outdoors that are only minutes away from the urban hustles, attracting numerous tourists each year for hiking and outdoor activities. Further capitalising on Hong Kong's abundant ecological resources for promoting green tourism development, is in fact one of the directions in diversifying tourism products as outlined in the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0 that we announced at the end of last year.

In respect of the question raised by the Hon Vincent Cheng, in consultation with the Environment and Ecology Bureau, the reply is as

follows:

To promote green tourism, the Tourism Commission, in collaboration with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), has been taking forward the Enhancement of Hiking Trails since 2018 to enhance the tourism supporting facilities of 20 hiking trails in country parks which are popular and with tourism potential, and to enhance the "Enjoy Hiking" thematic website. Enhancement works include improvement to existing hiking trail network, control of soil erosion at trails, enhancement of vegetation coverage, addition of lookout points and enrichment of visitor information. The enhancement works on 12 hiking trails have been completed, and those for the remaining eight hiking trails are expected to be completed progressively by the first quarter of 2026.

The AFCD also seeks to enhance hiking trails and provide supporting facilities in country parks, including the provision of 57 flushing toilets and over 120 portable toilets; 289 pavilions, 37 water filling stations and about 30 drinks vending machines. The Government has set aside \$500 million to enhance country parks, including the improvement and addition of facilities, as well as gradually setting up large-scale enhancement facilities such as tree-top adventure and open museum of historical relics. Examples of the works involved are the construction of five toilets and reconstruction of six toilets at popular hiking spots. These toilets will adopt low-carbon and environmentally-friendly designs, and will be gradually rolled out from 2026 to 2028. The viewing platform overlooking Po Pin Chau and the Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave Revitalisation Project were opened to the public in end-2024.

The AFCD makes use of school visits, guided tours, online videos, social media, etc, to promote the unique natural scenery and hiking experiences of Hong Kong, provide information on hiking safety and hill fire prevention, and advocate "take your litter home". Apart from placing directional signs in country parks, the AFCD also provides consolidated information of hiking trails, including maps, distance, level of difficulty and attractions along the trails, through the "Enjoy Hiking" website, to facilitate locals and tourists' planning of their itineraries. The mobile application "Enjoy Hiking Hiker Tracking Service" also records users' location, thereby shortening the search and rescue time in case of accidents. Furthermore, the AFCD collaborates with the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) in the Mainland and the Forestry Administration of Guangdong Province to promote Hong Kong's natural scenery and hiking routes, as well as to disseminate hiking safety messages, through their social media platforms in the Mainland. The AFCD will continue to review and refine its promotion strategy and information, and through diverse information distribution channels, to ensure locals and tourists safely enjoy the natural wonders of Hong Kong. At the same time, the Hong Kong Police Force, the Fire Services Department, the Government Flying Service and the Civil Aid Service also raise hiker's awareness on hiking safety through various channels and activities.

Apart from the AFCD's promotion, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb), through its "Hong Kong Great Outdoors" year-round promotional platform,

introduces in detail hiking trails in different districts accompanied by stories to deepen understanding of the trails, as well as docent activities and tourism products by the travel trade and other organisations, allowing tourists to appreciate Hong Kong's inspiring natural landscape. Besides, films are also a very effective promotional channel. For example, the film "Four Trails" documents a recent trail running event, featuring participants from various places who challenge their limits by crossing mountains and valleys, while simultaneously showcasing Hong Kong's unique natural scenery. The Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA) is collaborating with overseas ETOs and the film festival partners worldwide to promote this film at overseas film festivals. In addition, CCIDA will strive for opportunities of showing this film on both international and Mainland streaming platforms to attract more tourists to experience the natural beauty of Hong Kong. Also, the HKTB previously invited the director and producer of the film to share Hong Kong's great natural scenery and trail running experiences with overseas media.

In addition, various trail running and cross-country events are held by different organisations every year, along with other leisure trail events. The Government has supported and promoted some of these events to encourage more tourists to come to Hong Kong and participate. The Government will continue to promote green tourism based on the principles of nature conservation and sustainable development to pursue the concept of "tourism is everywhere" in Hong Kong.