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Mai Po Wetland Management Training Programme

“The Contracting Parties shall promote the training of personnel competent in the fields of wetland research, management and wardening.”

– Article 4 of the Ramsar Convention



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Introduction

Since 1983, WWF-Hong Kong has been actively managing Mai Po Nature Reserve, continuously developing wetland research and education programmes while carrying out extensive work to enhance the Reserve’s biological value. In 1995, the Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay site was designated as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention, and since then Mai Po Nature Reserve has been recognized as one of the best examples of wetland management in the world.

Project Background

The development and management of nature reserves and environmental education programmes is a difficult and time-consuming process which requires a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience. Since 1990, using Mai Po Nature Reserve as a “living case study”, WWF-Hong Kong staff have trained a large number of fellow wetland conservationists from mainland China and elsewhere in Asia, providing them with knowledge about the fundamental concepts, principles and techniques of wetland conservation and environmental education and providing them with hands-on experience in the field. WWF-Hong Kong’s wetland training programme is recognized as one of the best such programmes in Asia and the longest-running cooperation project between WWF-Hong Kong and State Forestry Administration, P.R. China. Not only have a large number of frontline wetland conservationists benefitted from the programme, many former participants now occupy senior government positions in mainland China and currently influence wetland conservation policies and regulations. The programme provides all the participants with eye-opening opportunities, fundamentally changing their perspective about wetland conservation; in turn they spread messages about the importance of wetland conservation across China and beyond.

together possible™



1) Demonstrates the practical application of wetland reserve management and shares relevant management techniques

2) Enhances participants' knowledge of the value of wetland ecosystems to both human beings and wildlife

4 Training Objectives:
Mai Po Nature Reserve
and Inner Deep Bay
Ramsar Site acts as a
case study which...

3) Showcases the application of environmental education and nature appreciation programmes

4) Provides opportunities for participants to exchange ideas and experiences

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Training Types and Targets

1. Wetland Management Training Course:

Lasting for eight days, each course involves 10 to 12 participants. The target participants are wetland management staff from nature reserves or wetland parks, staff from planning institutes, scientific researchers and environmental educators.

2. **Wetland Management Study Tour:** These study tours range in length from one to five days and have 10 to 12 participants. The target participants are government officials associated with wetland conservation and managers of non-government organizations related to conservation.

Venue

The 380 hectare Mai Po Nature Reserve has been a paradise for birds and a beautiful, irreplaceable piece of China's wetland kaleidoscope. The Reserve is a vital stopover point for tens of thousands of migratory waterbirds.

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Training Content

Depending on the background and job duties of the various participants, the training content can be tailor-made to cater to their specific needs.

The major topics covered during the training include:

- Basic wetland knowledge
- Wetland management principles and methods
- Wetland research and monitoring
- Environmental education for primary and secondary schools
- Nature appreciation and ecotourism for the general public
- Wetland restoration methods
- Design of wetland reserves and wetland parks
- Wetland management planning – how to develop a management plan



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Training Approaches

Each programme is conducted in small groups and uses both experiential and interactive approaches, including

- Indoor lectures and discussions
- Field studies
- Case studies and analysis
- Experience sharing
- Demonstration of and participation in various education activities
- Practice and exercises involving programme design
- Practice and exercises involving management plan development



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Comments from Participants



"I gained a better and deeper understanding of the 'Mai Po Model', including learning about the establishment of nature reserves, conservation management, scientific research and environmental education. This understanding helped me a great deal with my work."

"The training format is progressive, comprehensive, interactive and deeply impressive."

"Mai Po wetland management training programme enabled grass-roots wetland management personnel to enhance environmental protection awareness, broaden their horizons, learn advanced concepts, management techniques and experience, and promote the development of wetland protection in China."

- China Green Times



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Benefits of Taking Part

- 1) The participants are able to master advanced wetland management and environmental education knowledge and skills.
- 2) Field studies conducted in protected areas across Hong Kong enable participants to experience different management strategies, techniques and hardware.
- 3) The practices and exercises are based on the features of the participants' wetland sites, providing targeted assistance and technical advice to help the participants develop management strategies.
- 4) Providing opportunities to establish networks and exchange views with other wetland managers and lay down the foundations for future cooperation.



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If you are interested in learning more about the content and discovering further details, please visit www.wwf.org.hk or contact our training staff through one of the channels below.



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Application of the Training

Post-training surveys have repeatedly determined that the most useful and applicable programmes are those involving wetland management planning, environmental education, wetland restoration and ecotourism.



Technical Support and Cooperation

Trainers from WWF-Hong Kong frequently visit sites managed by the participants and provide on-site technical support and advice. The possibility of future cooperation can also be explored.

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