



Professional Training Programme:

Urban-Rural Partnership and Sustainable Development

Couse Description

The training programme is tailored for professionals in planning, landscape design, resource management, and conservation. It aims to enhance their expertise in four key emerging areas of sustainable development:

1. Nature-based Solutions and Their Applications
2. Rural-Urban Integration and Collaborative Models
3. Planning and Design for Regenerative Agriculture/Aquaculture Development and Sustainable Food Systems
4. Sustainable Management of Cultural Landscapes

The goal of this training programme is to empower practitioners with the knowledge and skills needed to tackle modern challenges in urban-rural interface planning and management. By incorporating nature-based approaches, participants can contribute to enhancing the overall resilience of cities.

Training Structure and Themes

This training programme offers a hybrid learning experience that combines webinar-based module with field module to incorporate both theoretical knowledge and real-world examples and practical applications. The programme is structured into two semesters, with each semester consisting of two online webinars and one field trip, providing a total of 24 hours of training over two consecutive semesters.

Webinar-based Module – Concepts, Issues and Approaches (4 webinars)

This webinar-based module aims to introduce the basic concepts, global and local issues, and various approaches related to the four knowledge areas. Each webinar will spotlight one of these key cross-cutting areas, with subject experts from the university and the field delivering presentations and leading web-based discussions.

The webinars will be held during office hours on weekdays in Semester One from June to August 2025 and in Semester Two from June to August 2026. Each 2-hour webinar will feature two lectures by different speakers, providing both a comprehensive overview



and practical experience sharing on the topic. Conducted via Zoom, the webinars will include interactive Q&A sessions and can accommodate up to 250 online participants.

Below are the tentative details of each webinar:

Webinar 1: Nature-based Solutions and Their Applications

This webinar explores the theoretical framework and practical application of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and discusses their role in tackling societal challenges and advance sustainability goals. It involves examination of international guidelines such as IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions, and principles governing the implementation of NbS. The discussion will also highlight the potential for Hong Kong to embrace NbS practices in restoring ecosystem health, conserving biodiversity, enhancing climate resilience, and improving water management strategies.

Examples of case studies will be covered in the webinar:

- Vitoria-Gasteiz Urban Green Infrastructure System, Spain
- Benchakitti Forest Park and Water Park near the central business district of Bangkok, Thailand.
- Adopt-a-Park, Manila, Philippines
- Mangrove restoration to enhance coastal resilience of the Shenzhen metropolitan zone

Webinar 2: Rural-Urban Integration and Collaborative Models

This knowledge area explores the critical issues surrounding the integration of rural and urban areas, emphasizing the significance of collaborations and partnerships in driving sustainable development. Concepts and approaches of community and stakeholder engagement and the best practice in cross-sectoral partnership will be discussed. Through practical examples, participants will acquire valuable insights into successful strategies for promoting collaboration and synergy among rural and urban stakeholders.

Examples of case studies will be covered in the webinar:

- UN-Habitat, Urban-Rural Linkages: guiding principles
- EU-funded RURBANIVE project
- Commoning for Rural Revitalisation in the Peri-Urban Setting, Hong Kong

Webinar 3: Planning and Design for Regenerative Agriculture/Aquaculture Development and Sustainable Food System



This webinar is specifically tailored for practitioners involved in the planning and design for primary production development. It provides an in-depth analysis of land use planning, landscape, and system design principles for regenerative agriculture, aquaculture, and food production. Participants will gain insights into the vital role of localizing food production in enhancing ecosystem health and sustainability within food systems. Additionally, the webinar will explore both local and international relevant case studies to highlight practical methodologies, opportunities, and challenges associated with transitioning towards regenerative production, especially in metropolitan city environments.

Examples of case studies will be covered in the webinar:

- MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems, Japan
- Transformation of abandoned land into neighbourhood garden, Marseille, France
- "I Have A Bee" Organisation, Bulgaria
- Good Rural Food, Yunlin, Taiwan

Webinar 4: Sustainable Management of Cultural Landscapes

This webinar focuses on the nature-culture interlinkage of cultural landscapes and their sustainable management. Participants will have the opportunity to explore the multifaceted values embedded in cultural landscapes and gain valuable insights into strategies for sustaining these landscapes through real case examples.

Examples of case studies will be covered in the webinar:

- Botanical garden and its greenhouses renovation, Rouen, France
- The Satoyama and Satoumi Initiatives for the Conservation of Biodiversity and the Reactivation of Rural Areas in Japan
- Kaiping Cangdong Project, China

Field Module: Local Field Trips (2 trips)

Following the webinar series, participants will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning experiences through two field trips. These trips are designed to enable participants to visit relevant local sites, interact with practitioners in the field, and apply the knowledge gained from the webinars in real-world scenarios. The field trips will visit sites within the Northern Metropolis and aim to provide a practical and immersive learning opportunities that complements the theoretical knowledge acquired during the webinars. Two full-day field trips are scheduled in Oct – Nov 2025 and 2006 respectively. Each trip is designed to accommodate up to 30 participants. A re-run of the two field trips can be arranged if needed.



Field Trip 1: Long Valley, Lok Ma Chau and Deep Bay

The northern and northwestern regions of the Northern Metropolis encompass vast areas of fishponds and farmlands. These landscapes were once the most fertile production areas in Hong Kong, sustaining generations of its people. There are still some fishing, farming, as well as indigenous communities managing their lands for production purposes, but many of these areas are now idle. The region is also recognized for its high ecological value and its importance in protecting biodiversity at both local and international levels.

Field Trip 2: Lai Chi Wo and the surrounding rural villages and district

Since 2013, Lai Chi Wo has been at the forefront of a decade-long rural revitalization in Hong Kong. These efforts have extended to nearby villages and district, and the success story has established the area as a celebrated model for rural revitalization in the region. Rich in ecological, cultural, and social resources, the area is situated at the heart of the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism, and Conservation Circle under the Northern Metropolis Development, now serving as a focal point for rural sustainable development in Hong Kong.



Schedule

Semester	Content
Semester 1: Jun – Dec 2025	<p><u>Webinar-based module – Concepts, Issues and Approaches</u> Period: Jun – Aug 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Webinar 1: Nature-based Solutions and Their Applications• Webinar 2: Rural-Urban Integration and Collaborative Governance <p><u>Field module : Local Field Trips</u> Period: Sep – Dec 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Field Trip 1: Long Valley, Lok Ma Chau and Deep Bay
Semester 2: Jun – Dec 2026	<p><u>Webinar-based module – Concepts, Issues and Approaches</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Webinar 3: Planning and design for Regenerative Agriculture/Aquaculture Development and Sustainable Food System• Webinar 4: Sustainable Management of Cultural Landscapes <p><u>Field module : Local Field Trips</u> Period: Sep – Dec 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Field Trip 2: Lai Chi Wo and the surrounding rural villages and district



University Trainer Team

Names	Expertise
Professor Wai-Fung LAM	Professor of Public Administration, Director of the Centre for Civil Society and Governance, Co-Director of the Centre for Water Technology and Policy, Director of the Doctor of Public Administration Programme, and Director of the Master Public Administration Programme at The University of Hong Kong Expertise in common pool resource management, social innovation, institutional policy analysis and public governance
Dr. Winnie LAW	Deputy Director and Principal Lecturer at the Centre for Civil Society and Governance of The University of Hong Kong. Expertise in sustainable development and community engagement
Dr. Billy HAU	Principal Lecturer, School of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science, and Director of the Master of Science in Environmental Management Programme, The University of Hong Kong. Expertise in terrestrial ecology, conservation biology and ecological restoration
Ms. Katie CHICK	Assistant Director of the Centre for Civil Society and Governance at the University of Hong Kong Expertise in cultural landscape management, sustainable agriculture and, natural and cultural resource management
Dr. Vivian Chu	Deputy Director & Lecturer of the Master of Social Science in Sustainability Leadership Governance Programme Expertise in environmental policy and sustainability
Dr. Taihua HU	Assistant Project Manager of the Centre for Civil Society and Governance at the University of Hong Kong Expertise in biotechnology, appropriate technology and human-centred design

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