

City Talk

The three-runway system of Hong Kong International Airport was successfully commissioned in 2024, providing the capacity to meet the passenger and cargo air traffic demand, and allowing for long-term growth.

Constructing the system required reclamation to provide new land for expanded airport infrastructure, including runways and taxiways, the new concourse and other airport facilities. Some critics might have been concerned with its effects on nature and biodiversity.

Being a responsible organization, the Airport Authority would mitigate all and any deterioration in ecology and biodiversity, and a lot of planning has gone in place to ensure minimal impact to environment, incorporating many compensating actions.

In my previous articles, I have already described the construction of the system using deep cement mixing method to stabilize the seabed, which contained contaminated mud pits without need for dredging.

Another innovative construction method used was horizontal directional drilling to intersect two 5.2-kilometer-long pipelines in the rock stratum from opposite ends of the airport island and Sha Chau. It is a world record for longest pipelines installation using this method.

Moving from the three-runway system to a broader scope of biodiversity, the AA has worked with other organizations to formulate a clear strategy on marine ecology and fishery enhancement.

This includes the establishment of two funds: the marine ecology enhancement fund – or MEEF – and the fisheries enhancement fund – or FEF. These funds,

Nuts and bolts

Edmund Leung



with a total initial capital injection of HK\$400 million, enabled a series of projects run by local universities, research organizations and fisheries industry associations to be executed.

The funds are set up for the purpose of enhancing marine environment for the benefit of ecology, including Chinese white dolphins, and fisheries resources in the vicinity of the project area, in Hong Kong's western waters and further afield into the Pearl River Estuary. The FEF also provide support and assistance to affected fishers, and to encourage more sustainable fishing operations.

Here I must declare interests as I have been appointed a director of the trustees of the funds from their inception.

Examples of some projects supported by the funds include pilot projects for pearl farming in Hong Kong's marine waters and for crayfish farming in an industrial godown, studies on the ecological risks of microplastics on horseshoe crabs and on the value of mangrove forests in the Pearl River Estuary as fish habitats. The former two are embryo projects for commercial production of pearls for jewelry and exquisite seafood for boutique restaurants, and the latter two are for supporting the development of ecology conservation and management measures.

In addition, the AA has provided key support to the government on the designation of the North Lantau Marine Park in 2024 that aims to protect the marine habitat

Airport Authority helping ease impact on nature, biodiversity



Recycled shells seeded with oyster larvae are deployed, crayfish farming in an industrial godown, left below, and studies on the risks of microplastics on horseshoe crabs. Photos: AIRPORT AUTHORITY, HK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

in western waters and to compensate for any impact of the three-runway system.

Combined with the adjacent existing marine parks, this provides a 4,570-hectare protected area that is expected to enhance the habitat of the Chinese white dolphins, a precious and protected species of marine mammals in the South China Sea, apart from the rich fisheries resources in the area.

Artificial reefs and shellfish reefs provide safe habitats for marine growth, and already we are seeing a much wider variety of shellfish, and up to five times more species than when the project started in 2021.

The AA has also implemented large-scale fish restocking, releasing over 28,000 fish fingerlings and 1,000,000 shrimp fry into the Lantau waters in recent years as it aims to assist with sustained fishery growth.

In recognition of these efforts, HKIA was awarded platinum recognition by the



ACI Asia-Pacific and Middle East Green Airports Recognition program in 2024.

Within Hong Kong, HKIA also received three awards last year in the climate disclosure contribution category at the Hong Kong Green and Sustainable Finance Awards, organized by the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency, as the first organization to disclose climate-related financial information.

With these accolades, the AA can

proudly claim to be the greenest airport in this region. Building large-scale infrastructural projects are vital for development of Hong Kong, but we must ensure that in constructing them, we do not ignore the need to preserve the environment for our sustainable future.

Veteran engineer Edmund Leung Kwong-ho casts an expert eye over features of modern life

Showcase of talent celebrating diversity of art and depth of voices



Among the sectors in this year's Art Basel Hong Kong are, clockwise from top left, Galleries, Discoveries, Kabinett and Film. Photos: ART BASEL



Hong Kong has again taken center stage in the global art world with the return of Art Basel Hong Kong, the hallmark event of the city's Art Week. Drawing artists, collectors and cultural enthusiasts from around the globe, this year's fair reinforces the city's status as a cultural powerhouse.

This edition of Art Basel brings together 240 leading galleries from 42 countries and territories, showcasing a rich tapestry of artistic talent that celebrates the diversity of global art and the depth of regional voices. The fair has been thoughtfully curated, promising a truly diverse and exciting experience for all art enthusiasts.

The "Galleries" sector underpins the fair, showcasing exceptional works by renowned artists from leading international galleries. "Insights" explores the cultural narratives of the Asia-Pacific region, highlighting historically significant works and underrepresented voices. Meanwhile, "Discoveries" offers a platform for

CULTURAL EXCHANGE BERNARD CHARNWUT CHAN



emerging talent, presenting innovative solo projects by rising stars in the art world.

Other highlights include "Encounters," which features large-scale, immersive installations designed to engage and challenge audiences, and "Kabinett," presenting focused, curated displays within gallery booths. The "Film" sector examines the intersection of contemporary art and moving images, adding yet another dimension to this dynamic event.

The fair has broadened its reach across the city through collaboration with M+. The museum's iconic facade has transformed into a canvas for Night Charades, a captivating AI-generated installation by Singaporean artist Ho Tzu Nyen, which celebrates the golden era of Hong Kong cinema.

A short stroll away, Art Central has made its return to the Central Harbourfront, injecting fresh energy into the city's art scene. Focusing on

emerging and mid-career artists, the fair is showcasing over 100 exhibitors, blending traditional techniques with contemporary themes.

On Friday and Saturday, the Museum Summit, organized by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, will delve into the theme "Going Beyond." It will examine how museums are redefining their roles through deeper connections with tourism, technology, sustainability and wellness.

Hong Kong's Art Week dazzles once again as the city welcomes visitors from across the globe, cementing our status as a global cultural powerhouse and a beacon of creativity.

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