

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Committee on Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development

Tree Preservation Policy

The Policy

The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) endeavors to preserve the beautiful natural environment of its campus and, as far as practicable, to protect all its trees. It seeks to minimize destruction and damage to trees in the course of campus development.

Values and Strategies

Protecting CUHK's Trees

1. CUHK's trees are a beautiful and valuable natural resource. No other local university has such a large and thickly-wooded campus. CUHK's forested slopes contain over a third of all tree species found in Hong Kong, and this natural habitat supports a wide variety of animal, bird and insect life. Over 130 bird species have been attracted to the University's wooded campus, representing about a quarter of all bird species found in Hong Kong. Many of Hong Kong's lovely butterfly species are also found on CUHK's campus. The University's trees are things of beauty. They provide shade, encourage reverie and promote relaxation. They are also an important resource for environmental education and help to inform policymaking in areas such as wildlife conservation and rural and urban forestry. Last but not least, they serve as a daily reminder to all members of CUHK of our duty to take care of our natural environment.

Reasonable and Practicable Measures

2. In principle, the University seeks to preserve all the trees on its campus. They are cared for by experienced staff of the Estates Management Office, who provide routine irrigation, trimming, fertilizer application and pest control.
3. The University recognizes its responsibility to prune or fell old or diseased trees whose falling branches might endanger life. It also seeks to achieve a reasonable and practicable balance between the protection of trees and the requirements of campus development. When developing new buildings, the University's policy is to fell as few trees as possible and to minimize damage to nearby trees (particularly trees of conservation value) during construction work. Where felling is unavoidable, the loss of trees is redressed through transplantation or compensatory planting and the incidents will be reported to the Committee on Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development. The University's contractors are required to obtain the necessary statutory permissions before starting work except in the event of an emergency or safety risk.

Implementation

4. A set of Tree Preservation Guidelines developed in consultation with the relevant professional and administrative service units and maintained by the Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Office is provided to inform university members of the details and requirements of the University's Tree Preservation Policy.
5. The Committee on Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development is responsible for steering the implementation and monitoring the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Policy.
6. The Committee on Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development delegates responsibility to the Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Office to:
 - Communicate and implement the Policy;
 - Develop and promulgate relevant guidelines or procedures endorsed by the Committee;
 - Coordinate activities with relevant academic, research, and professional and administrative service units to ensure the successful implementation of the Policy; and
 - Review the Policy, assess its impact and recommend improvement as appropriate.

(March 2023)