

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

“Loving Green” is an intuitive response to nature, and NParks’ role is to make available to all Singapore residents the opportunity to do so. We cannot, however, accomplish this alone. As we reflect upon our achievements in financial year 2009-2010, this Annual Report reiterates the importance of partnership for maintaining and developing our Garden City.

The Garden City concept challenges NParks to balance conservation, urban development and individual enjoyment of and engagement with nature. This unique combination is relevant beyond Singapore and crucial for global sustainable development. In October 2009, NParks partnered with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity to co-host the first ASEAN Conference on Biodiversity. We are currently in collaboration with the Secretariat of the United Nations’ Convention for Biological Diversity to set up a City Biodiversity Index that will help cities benchmark and better conserve their biodiversity.

Conservation within urban areas must be bolstered by education and research, a principle we practise rigorously at NParks. The Sembcorp Forest of Giants, for example, will not only protect over 600 giant native tree species, but will also host ongoing research and outreach programmes. Situated in the Southern Ridges, this arboretum is funded by Sembcorp Industries’ generous \$1 million donation to the Garden City Fund.

In addition to crucial donor relationships, functional partnerships allow us to realise ambitious projects. Singapore’s first Eco-Link, an ecological corridor spanning the Bukit Timah Expressway, demonstrates how innovation can literally bridge the needs of development and nature. Due to be completed in early 2014, the Eco-Link will allow genetic interaction between flora and fauna from Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and Central Catchment Nature Reserve. Ongoing consultation with the Land Transport Authority and Nature Society (Singapore) is crucial to this project’s fruition.

As a statutory board, NParks works for the public good. Not only are our parks one of the most visible aspects of our work, they are also one of Singapore’s hallmarks. Every year, we see increases in regular use of our parks by Singapore residents, and we remain committed to continually respond to park users’ lifestyles and interests. This year, we collaborated with the National Youth Council and the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports to build the Xtreme SkatePark @ East Coast, the first competition-standard skate park in Singapore. In addition to bringing people to the parks, we also work to foster individual appreciation and care for the environment. Our participation in the Green Wave campaign resulted in nearly one-third of all schools in Singapore planting trees on the International Day for Biological Diversity in 2010. Meanwhile, the Plant-A-Tree Programme is already in its third successive year, with over 9,000 trees pledged and planted by individuals and organisations to date.

Transforming Singapore into a City in a Garden is a concerted, collaborative affair, and NParks is proud to lead this effort. Our work is made possible by the enormous contributions of all staff, friends, sponsors and partners of NParks. Thank you for your time, resources, expertise and support.



Mrs Christina Ong
Chairman
National Parks Board
August 2010

