

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- i The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is the most popular city tourism destination in Asia. Unfortunately, tourism activity is distributed unevenly throughout the SAR, with the northern New Territories largely excluded from the benefits of international tourism. This area is, however, popular with Hong Kong residents as a place for quality outdoor recreation.
- ii The School of Hotel and Tourism Management (HTM) at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University has been commissioned by the Tourism Commission to examine the tourism potential of the Northern New Territories. Specifically, this study seeks to identify locations that are most likely to succeed in attracting local and international visitors, make recommendations and develop a series of immediate, medium and longer-term actions.
- iii As per the project proposal, the study team's structured work plan included:
  - A situation analysis of the tourism potential, opportunities and constraints of the study area.
  - The identification of a number of zones or sub-regions with tourism potential
  - Detailed site inspections of each of these zones.
  - Identification of a range of options and concept ideas for each zone, including immediate, medium term and longer-term actions.
- iv The study area is defined as follows:
  - The northern limit is the frontier with Mainland China including the full length and width of the Frontier Closed Area (FCA)
  - In the west the study area terminates at the Mai Po Marshes and then follows approximately the KCR railway line, excluding Fanling and Sheng Shui
  - The eastern most point of the area under investigation is the island of Tung Ping Chau
  - The southern extremity of the study area runs to the north of Sheung Shui, along the western side of Tolo Harbour, into the Shing Mun River Channel and along the full length of the southern shores of Tolo Harbour and Tolo Channel including Three Fathoms Cove and Long Harbour
- v A number of localities in the study area already offer a variety of commercial tourism, recreation and food service facilities. Some of these places include: Tung Ping Chau, Sha Tau Kok, Luk Keng, Kat O, Tai Po, Tai Mei Tuk, Tap Mun, Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve, Tin Shui
- vi The area boasts a wide variety of recreational assets, focussing on nature-based and eco-recreation, including: land and water based activities in Tung Ping Chau, hiking trails on Kat O, swimming in Yan Chau Tong Marine Park or in Hoi Ha Wan; Tai Mei Tuk Water Sports Centre, Tai Po as well as hiking and camping in Country Parks. Only a part of one long distance hiking trail is within this area

- vii There are several biodiversity hotspots in the Northern New Territories that should remain protected in perpetuity and be appropriately managed. These include Yan Chau Tong Marine Park, Lai Chi Wo Beach, Tung Ping Chau, Hoi Ha Wan, stream courses together with the 30m buffers on both sides of the streams in Sha Lo Tung.
- viii The area abounds with numerous abandoned and partly abandoned villages. Many are intact or have managed to retain much of their pre-colonial character. In addition, traditional Chinese cultural artefacts are evident, ranging from temples and ancestral halls to cannons, other fortifications and personal belongings left in abandoned houses.
- ix Good public transportation is provided on weekends, although there is a shortage of transport to outer islands and during weekdays.
- x Overall, tourism visitation levels to the New Territories are low. A study conducted by HTM showed that fewer than 5 percent of the visitors surveyed visited the New Territories, with the vast majority of those who did restricting their activities to Sha Tin and Sai Kung. Other HTM surveys reveal that international visitation levels to nature-based attractions is minimal. Little commercial ecotourism occurs, with the majority focussed on dolphin-watching tours.
- xi There is modest interest in cultural tourism, as one in three tourists will participate in some type of cultural tourism activity during their stay in Hong Kong. Interest in cultural heritage is strongest among Western tourists. But, only a negligible number of tourists visit the Northern New Territories for cultural tourism activities, with the majority joining commercial tour groups.
- xii There are few organized tours that international tourists can join comfortably. Many of the existing tours are targeted at the local market, with no promotion to international tourists. Information is unavailable at tourist information centres, hotel lobbies and telephone hotlines. And where information does exist it requires knowledge of the Chinese language.
- xiii More domestic tourism/recreational activity occurs, although the quality is variable. The southern part of the study area offers a wide range of dining facilities, especially in and around Tai Mei Tuk. Likewise, dai pai dongs are available in other villages, such as Luk Keng, and on some outer islands. The sector in the more remote eastern section of the study area is typified by small, often part-time operators who provide low cost services and facilities. Many businesses operate only on weekends and public holidays. Much of the industry in remote areas appears to be informal, unlicensed and unregulated.
- xiv Access to these products and services is primarily by word of mouth and they are offered exclusively in Cantonese. While some operators do provide commercial tours, the public profile of these tours is low.
- xv The study reviewed the legislative framework for tourism in the region. Specific details of relevant legislation are available on the web.

- xvi Ten (10) clusters were identified for detailed assessments. These can be grouped into four geographic regions. Detailed recommendations for each cluster are included in Appendix A. From this group, the study team further identified five clusters with the greatest tourism potential. Specific Actions for the high potential clusters are identified in Chapter 6.

Main Region	Cluster
<b>Inner Tolo Harbour</b>	1 Tolo Harbour
<b>Intensive Use Region</b>	2 Plover Cove Reservoir and North Shore of Tolo Channel
	3 South Shore of Tolo Channel
	4 Ap Chau and Kat O villages
<b>Protected Areas</b>	5 Yan Chau Tong Marine Park and Plover Cove Country Park
	6 Tung Ping Chau
	7 Luk Keng and Country Parks
<b>Frontier</b>	8 Wetlands and surrounds
	9 Frontier Closed Area Corridor
	10 Sha Tau Kok

- xvii The **Tolo Harbour** cluster includes the only urban centres in the study area (Tai Po and Ma on Shan), as well as the highly modified inner Tolo Harbour (Tai Po Hoi) area and the entrance to the Shing Mun Channel. This area is characterized by urban and industrial development. Tai Po New Town is easily accessible by KCR trains. Ma On Shan is accessible by bus and will be accessible by KCR train from 2004 onwards. With the exception of some historical attractions, the urban areas have limited appeal for international tourists. However, the surrounding natural areas including Tolo Harbour are attractive. Domestic day-visitors will find the Tai Po Waterfront Park of some attraction.
- xviii The **Plover Cove Reservoir and North Shore of Tolo Channel** is an area where high intensity land and water-based recreation activity already occurs. Hong Kong residents constitute the dominant user group. This area encompasses the north shore of Tolo Channel, including the Ting Kok Rd, Tai Mei Tuk and the Plover Cove Reservoir. Tai Mei Tuk is the focal point of this node, with well-established recreational and dining facilities. It is accessible by road from nearby Tai Po (private car, public light bus, KMB bus, plus a bicycle trail). Plover Cove Country Park attracts about 2 million visitors a year.
- xix The physical state of the assets in this area is good and the environmental quality of the sub-region is still largely intact. Much of the area is protected and the scenery around Plover Cove is very attractive. Parts of the foreshore area have a large, remnant mangrove stand and any additional use of the waterfront must take the conservation of the mangroves into account. This cluster is rich in tourism and recreational assets and is ideally suited for increased use including water sports such as windsurfing, sailing and

canoeing as well as fishing. The opportunity also exists to connect Tai Mei Tuk by ferry to Ma on Shan, thereby creating additional demand for the restaurants and recreational facilities available in the village. Plover Cove Reservoir is currently an under-utilised resource and can be considered to be opened-up for non-motorized aquatic activities such as boating and fishing.

- xx The **South Shore of Tolo Channel, including Tap Mun and Hoi Ha Wan** is a very interesting and scenic area. It is flanked on both sides by attractive mountain and forest scenery. Hoi Ha Wan is a Marine Park that is formed by a sheltered bay situated along the northern coastline of the Sai Kung Peninsula. Tap Mun (Grass Island) is located north of the Sai Kung Peninsula at the northern end of Tai Tan Hoi (Long Harbour) near the entrance to the Tolo Channel. The environmental quality of the assets in this zone is high. The area has some tourist appeal, but will largely continue to serve the local market.
- xxi **Ap Chau and villages on Kat O** are a popular, low-cost day trip destinations. Commercial tour operators offer cruises targeted at the local population, and in many instances are targeted specifically at residents of different housing estates. On a busy weekend, over 1000 people will visit the area on this type of tours. Generally, the amenity of the villages in Kat O is poor. They are in a poor state of repair, with many abandoned and rapidly decaying structures. The harbour is dirty with refrigerators, batteries, beds and other garbage discarded there. Concerns are also raised about the hygiene in some of the restaurants.
- xxii Access remains an obstacle. A strong informal access network exists using charter boats and local tour operators. Without local knowledge and a working knowledge of Cantonese, it is difficult to visit these islands. Some ferry access is provided from Sha Tau Kok, but it is infrequent and access to Sha Tau Kok is restricted. A substantial informal tourism network exists. No formal accommodation exists, but informal accommodation can be found by talking to local residents. The quality is low and accommodation houses are unlicensed. These islands have limited additional tourism potential. Their niche seems to be to appeal to the Hong Kong market as a day trip destination.
- xxiii The **Yan Chau Tong Marine Park and Plover Cove Country Park** cluster encompasses the north eastern part of the study area, including Plover Cove Country Park and the adjacent Yan Chau Tong Marine Park. This area is characterized by wilderness or near wilderness areas offering a variety of eco- and nature based recreational opportunities, plus potential for cultural heritage recreation and tourism. The village of Lai Chi Wo has been identified as the focal point for this area. A second focal point is the villages around Sam A Tsuen. The natural and cultural values of the area are largely intact. In addition, both villages are evocative of traditional lifestyles, with paddy fields, fishponds, etc. Both areas were last re-constructed in the late 1950's to early 1970's using traditional design.
- xxiv Access currently is difficult and should remain restricted. At present, ferries connect from Sha Tau Kok; however, access to Sha Tau Kok is highly restricted. High-speed

water taxis can transport people from Sha Tau Kok to Lai Chi Wo in 10 minutes. No regular ferry service is available from Sai Kung or Tai Po.

- xxv The robusticity of the ecology of the Marine Park and its ability to withstand significantly higher boat traffic, especially when boats do not have holding tanks for wastewater, is unknown. Concern is also raised about the ability of tides to flush Sam A Wan Bay. Diesel fuel and other oily residues were noted floating at the surface at 7 am. Core assets are tightly grouped, with easy access to many other assets, providing opportunities to bundle a variety of experiences to create destination attractions. The area is unique within Hong Kong and has the potential to become a cultural/ecotourism destination with international appeal.
- xxvi This area has the highest potential of the 10 clusters identified to become a significant nature based and cultural tourism attraction with international appeal. The lack of suitable overnight accommodation and the lack of suitable commercial nature based water recreation represent current impediments to the achievement of its potential. However, with proper encouragement these obstacles can be overcome. A range of products can be developed and packaged to provide high quality experiences for both the domestic and international market place, using Lai Chi Wo and Sam A Tsuen as the focal points.
- xxvii As a medium to longer-term strategy, the study team recommends that Lai Chi Wo be developed as the focal point for heritage resort-style nature-based and cultural tourism, with Sam A Tsuen developed as a service centre for the region also providing some accommodation. Sam a Tsuen (Sam a Wan Bay) is identified as a possible centre for commercial eco-water recreation, such as sea kayaking.
- xxviii **Tung Ping Chau** is located in Mirs Bay in the north-eastern side of Hong Kong SAR. This crescent-shaped outlying island is at the most eastern end of Hong Kong's waters and is only 1 km from the Mainland. It has a unique geology and also has two important ecological habitats including coral communities and seaweed beds. The area is included in the Plover Cove Extension Country Park. There is little or no permanent population (variously reported as 2 people or no permanent residents). Villages are largely abandoned.
- xxix Tung Ping Chau is a popular weekend day trip destination. Ferries and charter boats visit, disgorging at times over 1000 people on busy weekends. Some informal, low-cost and low quality commercial accommodation is available. The central area of the island has a small number of restaurants providing food and beverage services. Chau Tau village offers some accommodation and also some food services. The area is physically remote and psychologically distant from the main tourist areas of Kowloon and Hong Kong Island and from the major residential areas of Hong Kong SAR. There is generally poor access to the island, with ferry service offered only on weekends.
- xxx The physical remoteness of the island, coupled with its proximity to Mainland China, interesting geology and coral reef are its most appealing assets. In addition, the cultural

heritage of the area has some appeal. However, at present, Hong Kong people need an excuse to visit Tung Ping Chau. At present, it will appeal to the local, low-cost market.

- xxxii The **Luk Keng and Country Parks** cluster encompasses Pat Sing Leng and Plover Cove Country Parks. The focal point for the region is Luk Keng with the Bride's Pool Road offering access to the area. The region combines high quality nature based tourism potential along with cultural and heritage tourism potential. Bride's Pool Road and environs offer high intensity outdoor recreation opportunities. Luk Keng and surrounds, including the village areas of Luk Keng and Nam Chung, has one of the few remaining freshwater marshes in Hong Kong. This is an excellent area for land birds and wetland species, especially kingfishers and bitterns.
- xxxiii The villages in and around Luk Keng are typical of many villages in the area. There is a small permanent population with a larger number of people using village houses during the weekends. Many of the buildings, especially in the older villages are abandoned and decaying. Personal effects of the previous occupants can still be found in some of the structures. Interestingly, a number of the abandoned houses appear to have been converted to temples, shrines or ancestral halls. Visitors to Luk Keng can access eight or 10 such shrines.
- xxxiiii For the most part, the quality of the natural and recreational asset is strong. Different parts of this cluster evoke different values. The Country Park and abandoned villages within the Country Park evoke feelings of wilderness appreciation, isolation and an understanding of past life styles. The Luk Keng area evokes memories of a rapidly disappearing agricultural lifestyle. Bride's Pool Road is a high intensity recreational use area line with BBQ areas. The utility value of these sites could be increased if a mobile food and information vending service was introduced.
- xxxiv The area has potential for high intensity recreation, nature based tourism and heritage tourism. High intensity recreation will be concentrated along existing access roads and can include such activities as picnics, nature walks and fishing. Quality nature based tourism experiences are available in the more remote areas of the country parks. Heritage tourism activities can be concentrated in and around Luk Keng.
- xxxv The **Wetlands and surrounds** cluster encompasses the area to the west of the Lo Wu border crossing, with a primary focus on the wetlands and fishponds. The primary attraction in the region is the Mai Po Nature Reserve (MPNR), managed jointly by the World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong (WWF-HK) and AFCD. A new Hong Kong Wetland Park is being built to the west of the MPNR at Tin Shui Wai. This \$450 million development will accommodate up to 400,000 people annually when its final phase opens in 2005. At present, a small interpretive centre has been constructed. The area within the FCA is largely intact and represents the largest remaining wetland in Hong Kong comprising intertidal mudflats, mangrove stands, traditionally operated shrimp ponds (*gei wai*), reedbeds, and commercial deep water fishponds. The amenity within the FCA is quite spectacular.



- xxxvi Access remains a critical issue. This area is sensitive ecologically and politically. Many of the potential sites for promoting tourism are spoilt by polluting land uses, such the illegal discharge of waste from pig farms. These need to be controlled before the area can be made attractive for tourists to visit. Maintaining the ecological values must drive all management actions.
- xxxvii The MPNR is a high quality, internationally recognized natural asset. At present, the first phase of the Hong Kong Wetland Park has limited appeal. Once the full development is completed, it is hoped that a new wetland area capable of accommodating the needs of mass tourists will be created. The need to maintain the essential character of the area and to manage it primarily for its ecological values places a limitation on the amount of tourism.
- xxxviii The **FCA Corridor**, excluding Sha Tau Kok encompasses the Frontier Closed Area between the Lo Wu KCR Station and Sha Tau Kok. The area is about 16 km from east to west and is bounded by Mainland China on the north and the designated closed area line to the south. The area to the west of Lo Wu has a substantially different character than that to the east and also has less tourism potential. The area to the east of Lo Wu encompasses a number of small village complexes that have retained their traditional character and possess significant cultural and heritage tourism potential.
- xxxix This area is scenically very attractive. Some farming still occurs and much remnant farmland exists. The villages are still largely intact, with many of the older buildings either still in use or structurally sound. Visitors can appreciate the traditional lifestyle of the region as well as the cultural heritage of the area. In addition, proximity to China presents a contrast to the rural feeling of the region.
- xl Access to the FCA is restricted. Unless and until access restrictions are eased, little or no tourism activity can occur. Access inside the FCA is moderate to strong but only if you count walking and cycling. The patrol road along the border is sealed and provides an ideal opportunity for bicycle tours. A limited number of hiking trails exist, but none connect the villages.
- xli The area has the potential to develop a critical mass of recreational and cultural heritage assets. One could spend a day in a vehicle or bicycle exploring the villages and traditional farm life. One could probably spend a weekend doing gentle village-to-village walks (providing trails were provided). Further, opportunities exist to link natural (west) and cultural heritage (east) assets to create an appealing day or overnight destination. The greatest appeal of the area is that its essential character has remained largely unchanged. Any future tourism activity must be managed to retain the traditional character of the area, including limiting the vehicular access, new building construction, the destruction of farmlands urbanization and industrialization.
- xlii **Sha Tau Kok** was most adversely affected by the return of Hong Kong to China. Prior to 1997, it was a vibrant market community with broad access provided from the Mainland. Access by Mainland Chinese has been restricted since the Handover to Chung Ying

Street. Chung Ying Street is the area's unique feature. The Sino-British Agreement in 1898 split Sha Tau Kok Village but allowed indigenous villagers of both sides freedom of movement across the Sino-British boundary - now the Shenzhen-Hong Kong boundary - at Chung Ying Street.

- xliii Sha Tau Kok has two possible roles to play in tourism in the Northern New Territories: an access and supply point to the outer islands and the more remote parts of the study region. A 500 m long pier abutting the border juts into Sha Tau Kok Hoi (Starling Inlet). This pier is currently being rebuilt, with renovation scheduled for completion in 2005. It is currently an under-utilised resource, which could become the focal point for water-based access to outer islands and the east coast of the study area. High-speed water taxis can provide access to most of the outer islands and Lai Chi Wo in 10 to 15 minutes. The other opportunity is to develop the village itself as a shopping and day trip destination for Hong Kongers and Mainland Chinese.
- xliv Access is the critical issue for this area. It is situated inside the FCA, which precludes most Hong Kong residents from entering the community. New access restrictions since the Handover allow Mainland visitors to walk along Chung Ying Street but they are not allowed to enter the Hong Kong side of the village proper. Indeed, many Mainland shoppers were observed having their picture taken at the frontier. Any prospect of future economic growth depends on addressing the access restrictions.
- xlv Sha Tau Kok is different from any other part of the study area and, therefore, the range of tourism options will be different from those for the rest of the study area. It is an urban centre, whose tourism future relies on the provision of urban tourism opportunities, such as shopping and food services. In addition, its advantageous position coupled with strong infrastructure positions it uniquely to be the service centre for the Northern New Territories. However, access restrictions exclude most people from visiting, thus effectively denying the area from benefiting from tourism.



xlvi The study team identified over 50 policy and administrative issues, as well as product development issues that must be addressed to achieve the tourism potential of the area. These are summarised in the following table, indicating which recommendations pertain to specific clusters.

Recommendation No.	Recommendation	Tolo Harbour	Plover Cove Reservoir & N Shore Tolo Ch	S Shore Tolo Ch	Ap Chau and Kat O	YCTMP and PCCP	Tung Ping Chau	Luk Keng and CP	Wetlands	FCA Corridor	Sha Tau Kok
1	Develop formal tourism master plan	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2	Undertake study of domestic tourism in HK	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3	Maintain essential cultural, heritage and ecological character of the area		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
4	Prepare comprehensive conservation plans for villages				x	x	x	x	x	x	
5	Interpretation		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	Signage at access points to study area	x									
7	Environmental clean-up and visual amenity improvement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
8	Establish Northern N.T. Tourism Advisory Group (District Councils)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9	Establish Northern NT Tourism Working Group (HKSAR Government)										
10	Recognise different carrying capacities across study area and act accordingly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
11	Manage carrying capacity	x	x	x	x						
12	Manage carrying capacity for low intensity, high yield tourism					x	x	x	x	x	x
13	Management plans to limit/control activity in protected areas		x			x	x	x	x		
14	Cautious approach to promotion (HKTB)										
15	Sha Tau Kok and FCA be considered as distinct areas								x	x	x
16	Sha Tau Kok as gateway centre										x
17	Ease access restrictions to STK										x
18	Access to Chung Ying St from Hong Kong										x
19	Controlled tourist access to FCA								x	x	
20	Intense, day trip recreational use	x	x	x	x						x
21	Low intensity usage					x	x	x	x	x	
22	Designate gateway centres	x									x
23	Licence and control informal tourism sector				x	x	x	x			
24	Non-local involvement in facility development					x	x	x			
25	Improve product quality (specific reference)		x		x		x				x
26	Information provision for both HK residents and tourists (HKTB)										
27	Establish commercial boat operators association										
28	Improve water, sewage and electricity infrastructure				x	x	x	x			
29	Boat mooring and pier infrastructure improvements	x	x		x		x				
30	Water taxis and motorised sampans		x		x	x	x				x
31	Circle bus tour	x	x			x		x			
32	Bicycle path extension		x					x			
33	Cruise terminal feasibility study	x									

34	Resort development	x	x	x	x						
35	Hostel accommodation			x	x	x	x				
36	Conversion of unused government buildings to accommodation					x	x				
37	Bed and breakfast development					x	x	x	x	x	x
38	Establish bed and Breakfast Association										
39	Adaptive re-use of historic buildings as tourist accommodation					x	x	x		x	
40	Designation of historic tourist villages						x	x		x	
41	Establish property management firm										
42	Provision of fee paying tourism (commercial and not-for profit)					x	x	x	x	x	
43	Tour product focus on cultural heritage and ecology		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	
44	Establish house museums					x	x	x		x	
45	Oral histories of villages					x	x	x		x	
46	Develop festivals and events				x		x	x		x	
47	Integrated, thematic tours (culture and ecology)					x	x	x		x	
48	Provision of information	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
49	Extend hiking trail network		x			x		x			
50	Open Plover Cove Reservoir		x								
51	License mobile food and information vendors		x					x			

xlvi The study identified five clusters with the highest tourism potential. The potential of some clusters could be achieved relatively quickly and easily, while some other clusters with high potential may require greater amounts of time and effort to achieve that potential.

Cluster	Reason for Identification as a Priority Cluster	Vision
Plover Cove Reservoir and North Shore of Tolo Channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular area with well established recreation services and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High intensity recreational area targeted at local residents,</li> <li>• Plover Cove Reservoir for fresh water recreational activities</li> </ul>
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park and Plover Cove Country Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional potential to become a nature-based and cultural tourism destination of international significance</li> <li>• Longer term project, but the potential is worthy of inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An internationally recognised nature-based and cultural tourism destination, focusing around Lai Chi Wo and Sam A Tsuen.</li> <li>• Commercial accommodation in Lai Chi Wo and Sam A Tsuen</li> <li>• Water-based ecotourism</li> </ul>
Tung Ping Chau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique geological and biological assets</li> <li>• Popular day trip destination</li> <li>• Potential to develop cross border ecotourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique, small scale ecotourism destination. Continuation of day trip visitation</li> <li>• Commercial accommodation through the sensitive adaptive reuse of existing structures.</li> <li>• Visa free access for non-intrusive ecotourism from mainland resorts.</li> </ul>
Luk Keng and Country Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to be the cultural and heritage tourism focal point for the Northern New Territories</li> <li>• Critical mass of easily accessible natural, cultural and remnant agricultural assets</li> <li>• Outstanding nature based tourism potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature based and cultural heritage tourism centre for the Northern NT.</li> <li>• Luk Keng as the focal point</li> <li>• Linked, thematic cultural hikes between villages in Country Parks</li> </ul>
Sha Tau Kok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for cross border tourism</li> <li>• Access and service point for outer island tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Open’ district for shopping, dining and cross border tourism</li> <li>• Access and service centre for tourism to the outer islands</li> </ul>

xlviiii Priority actions are identified for the high potential clusters that can be implemented quickly and at relatively little expense to enhance the awareness and appeal of the clusters, improve the quality of services provided and broaden the product base. Implementation issues are also identified where relevant. These actions include:

- better interpretation and explanation of the natural and cultural landscapes
- improved signage
- establishment of hop on/hop off circle bus service
- extension of bicycle paths
- development of water taxi service
- moving PLB stop at Luk Keng
- develop a variety of fee paying tours to be offered by commercial tour operators and non-profit societies and associations
- establishment of house museums to conserve remnant cultural heritage
- creation of festivals and events
- provision of mobile food service vendors
- glass bottom boat tours
- environmental cleanup and visual amenity enhancement
- maintenance of hiking trails

xliv In addition, a number of policy and/or administrative actions need to be undertaken to achieve, in the longer term, the tourism potential of the study area. Some of these recommendations can be implemented fairly quickly. Others, however, could take a number of years to implement because of their complex nature and the need for co-operative solutions from different government departments at many levels. Policy and administrative actions include:

- develop a formal tourism master plan for the Northern New Territories
- prepare comprehensive conservation plans to identify and conserve the cultural heritage assets of villages
- establish a Northern New Territories Tourism Advisory Group with membership from all District Councils.
- establish a Northern New Territories Tourism Working Group among Government Departments at an SAR wide level.
- Create a central clearing house of information for both local and international tourists
- liberalise access restrictions to FCA
- expand the range and type of water-based public transport services
- improve water, sewage and electricity infrastructure where needed
- Open Plover Cove Reservoir to recreational use is strongly recommended.
- facilitate the development of alternative types of roofed accommodation, including bed and breakfasts, hostels and country inns.