

## Lantau Conservation Fund

### Research Project

Project Number	RE-2024-30
Recipient Organisation	The University of Hong Kong
Project Title	Lantau Island Seagrass Rescue: The 'Halophila ovalis' nursery and restoration initiative
Project Description*	<p>Seagrasses are vital components of Hong Kong's marine biodiversity, providing fundamental ecosystem services. However, our monitoring program has shown a significant decline in these ecosystems, particularly those associated to the seagrass 'Halophila ovalis' in Lantau Island and Western Hong Kong. This species is listed among the 100 rare species of Hong Kong, and its alarming declining trend necessitates urgent attention for effective management and conservation efforts.</p> <p>Focusing on Lantau Island, our project aims to restore 'Halophila ovalis' populations by partnering with the local community to set up a seagrass nursery in Tai O's abandoned fishponds and mudflats, serving as a source of seagrass for transplantation all across Lantau Island. The restoration of seagrass meadows will bring numerous benefits to Lantau, enhancing biodiversity, improving water quality, mitigating coastal erosion, and increasing carbon sequestration. Moreover, the revival of these seagrass meadows will contribute to the overall marine ecosystem, including commercially important fish species, which will, in turn, benefit the local community.</p> <p>Our team has a wealth of seagrass restoration experience, having witnessed and documented</p>

	the decline and extirpation of seagrasses in Lantau. We've learned valuable lessons from past restoration attempts and gained insights into improving our restoration techniques and strategies. Our project will leverage this knowledge to restore and conserve the essential seagrass ecosystems in Lantau through a comprehensive, scientifically grounded approach.
Project Period	24 months
Approved Grant	\$1,941,700

\*The project description is provided by the project proponent