

Press Release
3 October 2011

“Hong Kong Global Geopark of China – Prehistoric Story Room” fully supported by Bank of China (Hong Kong) is open to public

Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited (“BOCHK”) is pleased to join hands with the Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (“AGHK”) to establish the first-ever “Hong Kong Global Geopark of China – Prehistoric Story Room” (“Prehistoric Story Room”), featuring life on earth in the Bank of China Tower. This is to celebrate the recent designation of Hong Kong National Geopark as a global geopark by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Prehistoric Story Room will be open to the public starting from 4 October 2011. Nearly 100 pieces of valuable fossils and models are displayed in an interactive way, allowing the public to learn about the 4.6 billion years of history on the Earth and raising their awareness of environmental conservation.

The Prehistoric Story Room is fully supported by the BOCHK Charitable Foundation and organised by AGHK whereas the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”) Government is the consultant of the project. The officiating guests of the Opening Ceremony held today (3 October 2011) include Mr He Guangbei, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive of Bank of China (Hong Kong); Mr Edward Yau Tang Wah, Secretary for the Environment of the HKSAR Government; Ms Monica Yeung, Member of the Age of Fishes Museum’s Professional Advisory Committee in Australia; Professor Zhang Jianping, Director of Research Centre for Geopark (Geoheritage) Investigation and Evaluation, China University of Geosciences; and Dr Ng Chun Yeong, Chairman of AGHK.

The Prehistoric Story Room tells the tale of life from its origins to the ancient oceans and forests and from the evolution of fish to dinosaurs and birds. The exhibits that are on display in seven sections with different themes, include the Hong Kong ammonite and *Hongkongichthys youngi* (a primitive fish species), the fossils discovered in and named after Hong Kong, and the Placoderm, the fish fossil which serves as a proof of Hong Kong’s 400 million years of history. Unlike traditional exhibitions, the Prehistoric Story Room allows the public to have close contact with some of the exhibits and participate in interactive educational activities.

Mr Edward Yau Tang Wah, Secretary for the Environment of HKSAR Government, said, “Hong Kong Geopark has just been accepted into the Global Geoparks Network. The global status of Hong Kong Geopark will not be achieved without the wide support from a number of organisations in the community and the general public on top of the efforts of the government. The Prehistoric Story Room is a good example of the cooperation between private institutions and non-governmental organisations in popularising earth science knowledge and promoting nature conservation. I am very pleased with the establishment of the Prehistoric Story Room in the Bank of China Tower, allowing the geopark to reach out to the city centre and helping the public to have a better understanding of earth science.”

Mr He Guangbei, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive of BOCHK, said, “The establishment of the Prehistoric Story Room in the Bank of China Tower, a world renowned landmark, echoing with the global status of Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. This is also in line with our commitment to undertaking corporate social responsibility, and promoting ecological conservation and sustainable development of the society. The evolution of the Earth reflects the interdependent relationship between human beings and nature as well as the importance of the scientific development. One of the significant elements of sustainability is to ensure that our

future generations can enjoy the existing resources of the Earth. We hope that through the establishment of the Prehistoric Story Room, the general public will join us to strive for the sustainability of the society and build a better and greener future for our generations.”

Located at the East Wing of the Bank of China Tower, 1 Garden Road, Hong Kong, the Prehistoric Story Room is open to the public free of charge starting from 4 October 2011. Recommended Geopark Guides, the first geopark docent system introduced in global geoparks, will provide on-site interpretation from November. Advance booking for visits will also be accepted from organisations. The Prehistoric Story Room is open from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, Wednesdays to Mondays (including public holidays) and closed on Tuesdays (except for public holidays), the first and second days of Chinese New Year. For details, please visit www.geopark.gov.hk/phsr.

BOCHK continues to raise the awareness of the public on environmental protection through different new initiatives, which include the first Global Geopark E-Classroom sponsored by the Bank to provide local and overseas students with an online platform to broaden their horizons and learn more about geo-conservation from world-class experts.

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About Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong

Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (AGHK), established in 2006, is a charitable institution of a public character recognized by the Hong Kong Government. At present, it has around 1,200 members with the executive committee members being all volunteers. The association aims at promoting the importance of geoconservation, popularizing earth science knowledge and facilitating sustainable geotourism and ecotourism. Mr. Young Ng, the Chairman, is an authoritative geoconservation specialist. In addition to recurring geoconservation works (include promoting the Code for Rocks Appreciation, organizing talks and seminars and initiating the volunteers working as Rock Cleaning Angels to educate the general public about the importance of conserving rocks naturalness), the Association also comments on conservation policies and strictly monitors development plans and works which would affect Hong Kong's landform and geology. These activities of AGHK are widely publicized by the press. AGHK has long been closely and amicably co-operating with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. Examples of which are the setting up of Lai Chi Wo Geoheritage Centre and Kat O Geoheritage Centre. Moreover, the Association has been sparing every effort in promoting the geoconservation activities of Hong Kong Geopark. In 2010, AGHK had pioneered the Recommended Geopark Guide (R2G) system to encourage existing guides to enhance their skills and knowledge and to be in line with international standards. The strict assessment principles, criteria and guidelines are based on the assessment standards of The International Ecotourism Society and Ecotourism Australia. Currently, there are a total of 39 R2Gs.

About Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited

Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited ("BOCHK"), established on 1 October 2001, is a leading listed commercial banking group in Hong Kong. With over 260 branches, nearly 540 ATMs and other distribution channels in Hong Kong, BOCHK and its subsidiaries offer a comprehensive range of financial products and services to individual and corporate customers. BOCHK is one of the three note issuing banks in Hong Kong. In addition, the BOCHK Group (comprising BOCHK, Nanyang Commercial Bank and Chiyu Banking Corporation) and its subsidiaries have 26 branches and sub-branches in the Mainland of China to provide cross-border banking services to customers in Hong Kong and the Mainland. BOCHK is appointed by the People's Bank of China as the Clearing Bank for Renminbi business in Hong Kong. On 13 July 2010, BOCHK was authorised as the Clearing Bank of RMB banknotes business for the Taiwan region.

BOC Hong Kong (Holdings) Limited, BOCHK's holding company, began trading on the main board of the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong on 25 July 2002, with stock code "2388", ADR OTC Symbol "BHKLY".

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Mr He Guangbei, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive of Bank of China (Hong Kong) (second from left); Mr Edward Yau Tang Wah, Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (centre); Ms Monica Yeung, Member of the Age of Fishes Museum's Professional Advisory Committee in Australia (first from left); Professor Zhang Jianping, Director of Research Centre for Geopark (Geoheritage) Investigation and Evaluation, China University of Geosciences (first from right) and Dr Ng Chun Yeong, Chairman of Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (second from right), officiated at the opening ceremony of the *Hong Kong Global Geopark of China – Prehistoric Story Room*.



The officiating guests toured around the *Hong Kong Global Geopark of China – Prehistoric Story Room* guided by Dr Yeung Ka Ming, Senior Geopark Officer of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (first from left of the front row).