

濕地 - 世界文明的搖籃 Wetlands - Cradle of Civilisations

■ 濕地對人類非常重要，既為我們帶來乾淨的食水及生活所需，更提供創作靈感予藝術家及工匠，製成各式各樣的藝術品及工具。現今的文明，實在有賴我們的祖先善用濕地資源，建立良好根基。

Wetlands are important to our lives. They supply us with freshwater as well as other vital resources. Wetlands also inspire artists and craftsmen for creating crafts and tools respectively. Our present civilisation is indebted to our predecessors who laid the foundation of human civilisation in wetlands.

人類文明 Civilisation

長久以來人類聚居於河流兩岸，以獲取穩定的食水供應。

河流為附近的土地帶來肥沃的土壤，有助農業發展。另一方面，穀物、礦石、天然原材料及貨物均可經由河流運送到其他地方。因此，聚居河流兩旁的村落亦慢慢發展成為貿易和商業中心，河流亦成為康樂及宗教活動的社交中心。

古代歷史中的四大文明也是發源自濕地，分別是米索不達米亞的蘇美文明、尼羅河流域的古埃及文明、印度河流域的哈巴拉文明，以及黃河流域的商文明。

Human settlements have been developed around rivers for millennia. They settled along rivers to obtain freshwater.

Rivers bring fertile soil for agricultural activity, and provide watercourses for transport and trade of grains, minerals, materials and products. Communities located along the watercourses gradually became centres of trade and finance. Rivers also function as a centre of social life, offering opportunities for recreation and religious activities.

The four great ancient civilisations were originated in wetlands. The Sumerian Civilisation was originated in the Mesopotamia; the Ancient Egypt Civilisation was originated along the River Nile; the Harappan Civilisation was originated in the Indus Valley, and the Shang Civilisation was developed along the Huang He (Yellow River).



長久以來人類聚居於河流附近(湖南鳳凰古城)
Human settlements have developed around
rivers (Feng Huang Gu Cheung, Hunan Province)



人類利用氾濫平原作耕作場所，種植糧食、及收取魚獲
People developed farming practice on floodplains for
crops and fishes

蘇美文明之源：米索不達米亞

Origin of the Sumerian Civilisation: Mesopotamia

「米索不達米亞」是古希臘文，意思是兩河之間。兩河是指位於伊朗和伊拉克之間的幼發拉底河和底格里斯河。氾濫平原的肥沃土地吸引蘇美人在此處聚居，他們逐漸成為穩定的社區。大約於公元前3500年，在米索不達米亞南部，逐漸發展出蘇美文明。

兩河季節性的氾濫不斷滋潤著米索不達米亞的土地。此處出產多種農作物例如大麥、小麥、芝麻、亞麻和不同的水果。為了在雨季有效控制洪水，蘇美人興建防洪堤並在堤上穿鑿小洞，以便在旱季時引水到水道灌溉農作物。蘇美人懂得將泥土曬乾成泥磚以興建房屋、寺廟和城牆。

據估計，蘇美人更創造了其中一種古老文字。他們利用蘆葦作筆，將文字記錄在未乾透的泥版上，待泥版變硬便成為永久的記錄。

兩河亦是重要的運輸渠道。有助促成米索不達米亞與不同地區的科技和藝術的交流和發展。

"Mesopotamia" is an ancient Greek word meaning "Land between the rivers". The rivers described are the River Tigris and River Euphrates, which flow through the modern Iran and Iraq. The fertile soil in the floodplain attracted Sumerians to settle there. After settling, they developed into stable communities. The Sumerian civilisation was developed around 3500 BC in southern Mesopotamia.

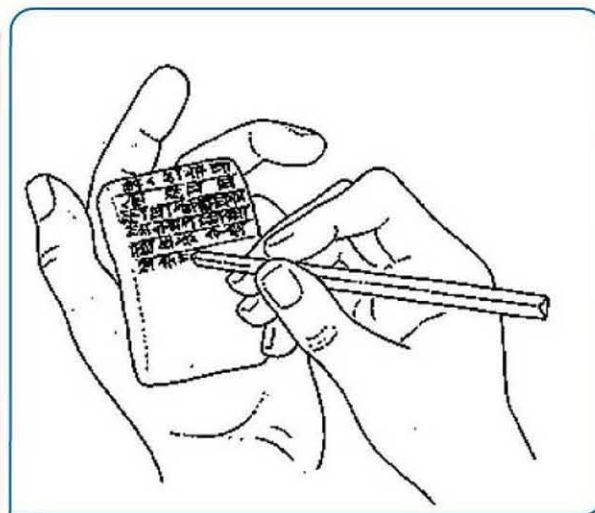
The soil nutrients of Mesopotamia were enriched by the seasonal flooding. A variety of crops such as barley, wheat, flax, sesame and many fruits were produced there. In order to control the flood, Sumerians constructed levees to hold back the flood water in wet season. They made pores on the levees to allow water flowing through canals to irrigate their crops in dry season. People made mud-brick by collecting mud from the river and dried it under the sun. They used these bricks to construct house, temples and city walls.

It is believed that the Sumerians developed one of the oldest written languages. They wrote on clay tablets with long reeds while the clay was still wet. The clay tablet then hardened and become a permanent record. The two Rivers also served as channels for transportation. The convenience in transportation enhanced communication among different communities, thus favoured the exchange of technology and craft among the communities in Mesopotamia.



米索不達米亞位於幼發拉底河和底格里斯河之間

The map shows the location of Mesopotamia, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates



蘇美人利用蘆葦作筆，將文字記錄在未乾透的泥版上
Sumerians wrote on clay tablets with long reeds while the clay was not fully dried



宋人與汴河 Song People and the River Bian

除了蘇美人，古代的中國亦有人聚居河流附近。從香港濕地公園人類文化展覽廊的「清明上河圖」中，可以看到居住在北宋首都汴京（即現今的河南省開封市）的人民，在日常生活中如何善用濕地的資源。畫家描繪了各種與河流有關的活動，例如耕作、洗衣、抽取河水灌溉、運送重型的貨物、划船等。

Apart from the Sumerians, ancient Chinese also chose to settle near rivers. From the scroll - "Qingming Shanghe Tu" which is being displayed in the Human Culture Gallery in Hong Kong Wetland Park, we can see how people lived in the riverside city of Bian. Bian (now known as Kaifeng City in Henan Province) was the capital of the Northern Song Dynasty. The artist recorded the wide range of activities that closely connected with the river. For example, farming, washing clothes, extracting freshwater for irrigation, transporting massive and bulky goods along the river, as well as boating.



訪客可以在清明上河圖中看到許多關於利用河流生產糧食、運輸等活動

Visitors can see many activities including farming or transportation associated with the river in Qingming Shanghe Tu

近代文明 Modern Civilisation

荷蘭的阿姆斯特丹和美國的紐約兩個港口，分別於17世紀和20世紀發展成為繁榮的貿易中心。

12世紀時，阿姆斯特丹因靠近阿姆斯特河一個水壩而興建。這水壩和河口的水閘之間形成了一個港口（即現時的水壩大道）。這個港口促進了魚類和其他產品的貿易。更促進了荷蘭與毗鄰德國的北海和波羅的海沿岸國家的貿易發展。在公元1400年，由於急促的商業發展，阿姆斯特丹等幾個荷蘭城市出現貿易糾紛，阿姆斯特丹派出戰船保障貨物運送的安全，更於15世紀成功控制波羅的海的貿易，並於17世紀進入了貿易的黃金時期。

鄰近紐約的主要河道包括哈德遜河、摩霍克河和傑納西河，該地區的發展主要由哈德遜河這個通往大西洋的通道展開。在1624至1664年期間，荷蘭人在該處建立殖民地長達40年，並命名為新荷蘭。期後，英國征服了該殖民地，並以約克公爵之名把它易名為新約克（即紐約）。1776年，美國宣佈獨立，而紐約更成為美國立國初期的13個州之一。在1901年，當時美國政府所採用的國旗上，可以看到兩隻船在哈德遜河上航行。



Amsterdam of Netherlands and New York of the United States had been developed into prosperous trade centres in the 17th Century and the 20th Century respectively.

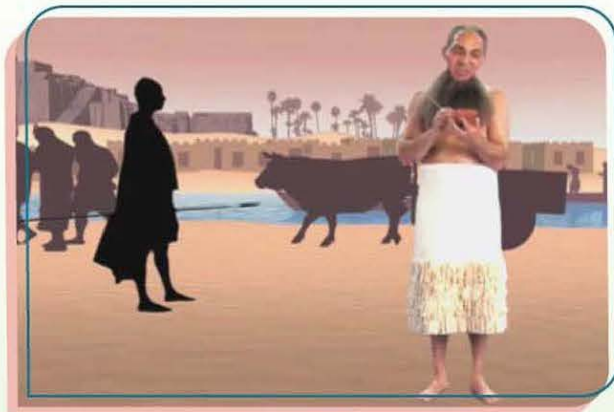
Amsterdam was developed around a dam in the Amstel River in the end of the 12th Century. The water channel between the dam and the sluices at the mouth of the Amstel River turned into a harbour (the present Damrak). In due course, it facilitated the trading of surplus of fish to foreign markets and the transportation of good cargoes. The rise of Amsterdam resulted from active trading among coastal area near Germany. Around 1400, conflicts arose due to the rapid commercial expansion, several Dutch cities including Amsterdam sent warships to secure free passage, which enabled Amsterdam to control the Baltic trade from the end of the 15th Century. All these led to the Golden Age of Amsterdam in the 17th Century.

The main rivers of New York include the Hudson, Mohawk and Genesee rivers. All developments started around Hudson Bay, the gateway to the Atlantic Ocean. The Dutch settled for 40 years as they named it the New Netherland between 1624 and 1664. Then it was conquered by the English and then named New York in honor of the Duke of York. The United States declared its independence in 1776 and New York became one of the original 13 states of the Federal Union. The official flag adopted in 1901 contained the picture of two boats sailing on the Hudson River.

人類文化展覽廊的「時光機」 “Time machine” in the Human Culture Gallery

透過人類文化展覽廊的「時光機」，你有機會回到公元前3500年的米索不達米亞、12世紀的吳哥窟、17世紀的阿姆斯特丹和1920年的紐約，讓你感受濕地如何孕育人類文明，成為文化的搖籃。

The videos showing in “Time machine” in the Human Culture Gallery take you back to the past. You will see how people utilise valuable wetland resources at Mesopotamia circa 3500 BC, at Angkor circa 12th Century, at Amsterdam circa 17th Century and at New York in 1920.



設於人類文化展覽廊的「時光機」帶你回到公元前3500年的米索不達米亞
“Time machine” in the Human Culture Gallery take you back to Mesopotamia circa 3500 BC