

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why Now

Hong Kong has an imminent waste problem. At present, we rely solely on our landfills to dispose of our waste. Although we are recovering 40% of our waste for recycling, our landfills will be full in 6 to 10 years if we do not substantially reduce the generation of waste and cut down the amount of waste we send to the landfills.

The Government Acts

We must address the waste problem in a holistic manner. This Policy Framework sets out a comprehensive strategy consisting of a series of tried and proven policy tools and measures to tackle our waste problem head on and achieve the following targets:

Target 1: To reduce the amount of municipal solid waste (MSW) generated in Hong Kong by 1% per annum up to the year 2014.

Target 2: To increase the overall recovery rate of MSW to 45% by 2009 and 50% by 2014.

Target 3: To reduce the total MSW disposed of in landfills to less than 25% by 2014.

Tackling the Problem at Source

Waste avoidance and minimization are our top priorities. We introduced a territory-wide waste recovery programme in January 2005 to facilitate waste separation at the household level. We aim to expand the scheme to cover **80%** of the population by **2010**, and significantly increase the recovery of our domestic waste. To make proper use of the recyclables recovered, we must have a robust recycling industry locally. In addition to the existing policy of providing land on short-term tenancies, we are setting up the EcoPark for the recycling industry. The EcoPark will come into operation in

late **2006**. Additionally, we will continue to encourage the development of recycling technology through the Environment and Conservation Fund and the Innovation and Technology Fund. In doing so, we will not only reduce pressure on our waste facilities, but also conserve resources and jump-start a circular economy.

Throw less, Pay less

The core of our comprehensive strategy is the “polluter-pays” principle. We propose to introduce producer responsibility schemes (PRs) that hold the manufacturers, importers, retailers and consumers responsible for what they produce and consume. We aim to introduce to the Legislative Council the Product Eco-responsibility Bill in **2006** to provide a legal framework for PRs. With PRs in place, we can consider introducing landfill disposal bans so as to make better use of our landfills as the final repository of unavoidable and properly treated wastes. We also propose introducing legislation on waste charging by **2007** as a direct economic incentive to avoid and reduce waste.

State-of-the-art Treatment

While our proposed policy measures would have substantial impact on waste reduction and recycling, we must face up to the reality that there will still be unavoidable waste that we must handle. We propose to develop state-of-the-art Integrated Waste Management Facilities with incineration as the core technology for final waste treatment. In developing the Facilities, we will adopt the most stringent emission standards to minimize their impact on the environment.

Community Participation

Our comprehensive strategy can only work in partnership with the public. We urge the community at large to fully support this Policy Framework.