

PREFACE

In an affluent and developed society such as Hong Kong, environmental issues are rightfully among the top concerns of the community. Since the air we breathe and water we drink directly affect our health, the concerns voiced on these areas are often louder than those on waste management, which is an equally important and perhaps even more imminent problem. Unless we change our consumption-led lifestyle, our landfills will be rapidly filled up in 6 to 10 years. It is clearly not sustainable to keep throwing all our waste to the landfills. A viable set of solutions is high on the agenda of the Government and the community as a whole.

It is therefore my pleasure to publish “A Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)” at this opportune time. This Policy Framework advocates what we plan to do to tackle our waste problem head-on. Its core message is clear and simple: we must be responsible for what we consume and what we dispose of. We must all be responsible for avoiding, reducing, reusing, recycling and treating waste, and use our landfills as a final repository only for the unavoidable waste after waste treatment.

True to our belief in “big market, small government”, the Policy Framework proposes simple, yet effective, economic tools based on the “polluter-pays” principle that would create incentives for us all to recycle more and throw less. They include measures tried and proven effective in other jurisdictions. We ask you to help make such waste reduction decisions that make sound economic and environmental sense.

We sincerely invite you all to thoroughly discuss and comment on the initiatives and milestones set out in the Policy Framework. Only with your full support can we turn this Policy Framework into reality. We must work together to tackle our waste problem now so that our future generations will not be burdened with cleaning up the mess we leave behind.



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