

**Advisory Council on the Environment  
Waste Management Subcommittee**

**Notes of the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting Held on 8 December 2008**

**Present**

Prof. Poon Chi-sun           (Chairman)  
Mr. Edwin Lau  
Dr. Man Chi-sum  
Dr. Ng Cho-nam  
Mr. Tsang Kam-lam  
Dr. Yau Wing-kwong  
Mr. Te Chi-wang           (Secretary)

**Absent with Apologies**

Mr. James Graham  
Prof. Howard Huang  
Mr. Simon Wong

**In Attendance**

Mr. Albert Lam	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (2)
Mr. Alfred Lee	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Waste Management Policy)
Dr. Lawrence Wong	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Waste Reduction and EcoPark) [Agenda Items 3 & 4 ]
Dr. Derek Wong	Environmental Protection Officer (Waste Management Policy Division)
Mr. Lai Wing-chi	Chief Health Inspector, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department [Agenda Item 3 only]

**Action**

**Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting**

1. The draft minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 13 October 2008 were confirmed without amendment.

**Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising**

***Recovery Statistics***

2. The Subcommittee noted that the recovery statistics could not be further broken down into domestic sources and commercial

and industrial sources. That notwithstanding, the Chairman suggested, and Members concurred, that further studies on waste recovery could be explored so as to better monitor and evaluate the outcomes of waste management initiatives in the domestic sector and the commercial and industrial sector respectively.

### ***EcoPark***

3. In response to the enquiry by the Chairman, Dr. Lawrence Wong said that after consultation with the trade, one of the lots in the Phase I of the EcoPark was designated for the recycling of waste metals. Preference would be given to tenders which involved value-added re-processing.

### **Agenda Item 3: Three-Coloured Waste Separation Bins (Paper WMSC 07/08)**

4. Dr. Lawrence Wong briefed Members on the background and the latest development of the 3-coloured waste separation bin system. In particular, he highlighted that the types of recyclables collected from the waste separation bin system had been expanded to cover all paper, metals and plastic materials. In addition, the Administration had recently re-designed the waste separation bins so as to facilitate easier and better utilization by the public. The newly-designed waste separation bins would be distributed to housing estates to facilitate their participation in the territory-wide programme on source separation of domestic waste (SSW programme).
5. Regarding the collection mechanism, all housing estates enrolled into SSW programme were encouraged to provide waste separation facilities on each floor and to arrange periodic collection of other types of recyclables such as old clothes, old computers and used electronic and electrical equipment, in addition to regular collection of paper, metals and plastic materials. Aside from housing estates, the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) would shortly commission a study to examine the effectiveness of waste separation by placing waste separation bins on each floor in schools.
6. Mr. Lai Wing-chi of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) further gave a presentation on the

recyclable collection service provided by FEHD. Mr. Lai said that FEHD had hired a contractor to provide recyclable collection service for public places, schools and some Government venues. The collection points had been increased progressively from some 200 in 2000 to about 2,140 in November 2008. The contractor would collect recyclables from the waste separation bins on a regular basis or when the bins were 70% full.

7. The Chairman thanked Dr. Lawrence Wong and Mr. Lai Wing-chi for the briefing and the presentation.
8. A Member asked whether recyclables collected from Mass Transit Railway (MTR) stations were covered by FEHD's collection service and whether waste separation bins could be placed near every refuse bin. Mr. Lai Wing-chi responded that there were over 20,000 refuse bins in the territories and placing waste separation bins beside every refuse bin might not be practicable due to the constraint of physical space. Instead, waste separation bins were placed at convenient and conspicuous locations for public use. Dr. Lawrence Wong supplemented that MTR Corporation arranged its own recycling initiatives and had particularly provided facilities to recover free newspapers distributed to commuters.
9. A Member noted that there were rumours every now and then that recyclables collected from waste separation bins were not properly recovered and recycled. Mr. Lai Wing-chi responded that the contractors had to deliver the recyclables collected from waste separation bins to approved Recyclables Collectors under the service contracts. While there were sporadic complaints of not sending recyclables to approved Recyclable Collectors, none of them were substantiated so far.
10. A Member suggested that a hotline number could be shown on waste separation bins so that members of the public could contact FEHD for arrangement of collection from full bins. A Member also suggested that the number of the rural collection points could be increased. Mr. Lai Wing-chi agreed that both suggestions could be further explored.
11. A Member noted that the amount of recyclables collected from public place remained rather stable, even though the number of

FEHD

collection points had been increased. Dr. Lawrence Wong responded that the amount of recyclables collected by the contractor at public places might not reflect the actual recovery situation since scavengers might have collected the recyclables from waste separation bins for sale, before regular collection by the contractor. Similar phenomenon occurred in other cities as well. The effectiveness of waste separation bin system should not be evaluated by the amount of recyclables collected alone.

12. A Member suggested that FEHD's recyclables collection service should cover schools as well so that schools would be more willing to join ECC's Waste Separation and Recycling Scheme in Schools. This Member further suggested that waste separation bins could be placed at some easily memorable locations, such as in front of all post offices or public toilets, so that the public could more easily locate waste separation bins. The Chairman and a Member commented that District Councils could also be consulted regarding the placement of the bins.

FEHD

13. A Member noted that old waste separation bins were made of fibreglass, which might not be recyclable. Dr. Lawrence Wong said that the newly-designed waste separation bins were made of either plastic or metal. Both types of materials were recyclable. The newly-designed waste separation bins also came with different sizes so as to accommodate both indoor and outdoor placement.

14. To sum up, the Chairman noted that the 3-coloured waste separation bin system had undergone rather significant developments over the past years. That said, the system should be continuously monitored and reviewed so as to ensure optimal utilization by the public.

**Agenda Item 4: Progress of Key Initiatives in the “Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)” (Paper WMSC 08/08)**

15. Mr. Alfred Lee briefed Members on the progress of key initiatives in the “Policy Framework”. On the EcoPark, a Member would like to know when the tenants would start their operation. Dr. Lawrence Wong replied that some of the existing tenants had gone through the building plan approval process and could commence their plant construction in the

coming months.

16. A Member opined that the progress of implementing producer responsibility schemes could be speeded up. Mr. Alfred Lee said that the Administration had rolled out a number of producer responsibility schemes with the support of the trade in the past years, covering rechargeable batteries, computers, florescent lamps and glass bottles. Statutory schemes were also being developed and implemented in parallel, with the environmental levy on plastic shopping bags as the first statutory scheme. In addition, while the development of producer responsibility schemes was accorded high priority, the support of the trade and the public buy-in were also factors to consider.
17. A Member noted that many large-scale infrastructure projects would be carried out shortly. He suggested that more recycled materials could be used for public works. Mr. Alfred Lee said that our Works Departments would endeavour to make use of recycled materials in public works wherever feasible, subject, of course, to the satisfaction of technical requirements and market availability.
18. The Chairman was concerned about the situation of the recycling industry under the current economic turmoil. That notwithstanding, the Chairman considered that the recycling industry should also be required to operate in a safe and environmentally responsibility manner. Dr. Lawrence Wong said that for recycling operations in government short-term tenancy sites, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), the Lands Department and the Fire Services Department were examining some fire safety concerns. The EPD was liaising closely with the recycling industry to consider possible means to assist the trade during this economic downturn. The Chairman commented that long-term planning would be desirable to ensure long-term sustainability of the recycling trade.
19. The Chairman asked about the recent Audit Report on the reduction and recovery of municipal solid waste. Dr. Lawrence Wong responded that the observations set out in the Report were primarily about the means to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of various waste recovery programmes. The Administration generally agreed with the

assessment in the Report and would follow up on the recommendations accordingly.

**Agenda Item 5: The Third Round of Funding Applications under the Public Education Programme of the “Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)” (Paper WMSC 09/08)**

20. The Chairman noted that eight funding applications had been received, and the applicants had been invited to attend the meeting to present their proposals.
21. A Member of Tai Po Environmental Association and A Member of Friends of the Earth (HK) declared interests as their respective organizations had submitted funding applications. Both of them withdrew from the meeting.
22. Representatives of Tao Po Environmental Association, Greeners Action, Green Sense, Christian Action and Friends of the Earth (HK) made presentations on their respective proposals. Members’ comments on the proposal were summarized at **Annex**. After deliberation, it was agreed that three applications (*PEP 017, 023 & 024*) were recommended for further consideration by the Environment and Conservation Fund Committee, while one application (*PEP 0021*) would need appropriate revisions and re-submission for Members’ further consideration.

**Agenda Item 6: Any Other Business**

***Implementation details of the environmental levy on plastic shopping bags***

23. The Secretary made a brief presentation on the implementation details of the environmental levy scheme on plastic shopping bags. In particular, he noted that the implementation details were worked out in consultation with the trade, and certain facilitating measures had been agreed upon to ensure ease of compliance, while not compromising the integrity of the regulatory regime. The Subcommittee supported the early implementation of the environmental levy scheme as the first producer responsibility scheme under the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance. The Subcommittee also noted

that there were calls for postponing the scheme due to the economic downturn, but the Subcommittee considered that the environmental levy scheme would not cause undue hardship to the public as the levy could be easily avoided by bringing our own bags at all time.

***Public Education Programme under the “Policy Framework”***

24. The Chairman noted that funding applications under the Public Education Programme might be submitted by the Members of the Subcommittee. To further minimize the potential or perceived conflicts of interests, it was agreed that preliminary assessment on funding applications would not be made known to Members who were connected with such funding applications.

**Agenda Item 7: Date of Next Meeting**

25. It was the last meeting within the current term of the ACE. The Chairman thanked Members for their contributions in the past two years.

ACE Waste Management Subcommittee  
Secretariat  
December 2008

**Comments on Funding Applications**

<b>Titles</b>	<b>Applicants</b>	<b>Comments*</b>
Hong Kong Plastic Bag 3R Campaign (Ref. PEP 017)	Greeners Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Supported for further consideration.</li></ul>
Advanced Recycling Community (Ref. PEP023)	Tai Po Environmental Association Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Supported for further consideration.</li></ul>
Weekly No Plastic Bag Day at Pharmacies (Ref. PEP024)	Greeners Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Supported for further consideration.</li></ul>
E-waste Life (Ref. PEP021)	Friends of the Earth (HK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Re-submitted to the Subcommittee for further consideration after appropriate revisions</li></ul>
Primary School Lunch Arrangement Rationalisation (Ref. PEP018)	Greeners Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Not supported.</li></ul>
Plastic & Glass – Give Them Regenerative Lives (Ref. PEP019)	Green Sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Not supported.</li></ul>
An Education Magazine for Waste Reduction	Green Sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Not supported.</li></ul>

(Ref. PEP020)		
TV Take Back (Ref. PEP022)	Christian Action	• Not supported.

\* The reasons for supporting or not supporting an application will be made known to the project proponent only.