

**The Progress of the Key Initiatives in the  
“Policy Framework for the  
Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)”**

**PURPOSE**

This paper briefs Members on the progress of the key initiatives in the “Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)” (Policy Framework).

**KEY INITIATIVES IN THE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

**Source Separation of Domestic Waste Programme**

2. As at end January 2007, we have approached 1,283 housing estates out of which 504 housing estates have signed up to join the programme (covering 679,000 households and some 2,040,000 people). Out of the 504 estates, 215 housing estates have implemented or will soon implement a floor-to-floor mode of waste separation. The remaining 289 housing estates have set up waste separation facilities on ground floor to collect different types of recyclables. Among the housing estates that have implemented floor-to-floor waste separation, some 70 of them have reported encouraging results, with an overall 54% increase in the quantity of recyclables collected. Among the housing estates that have set up waste separation facilities on ground floor to collect different types of recyclables, 124 of them have reported encouraging results, with an overall 36% increase in the quantity of recyclables collected. In general, there is a 3 to 4% reduction in the waste disposed of in the estates that are participating in the source separation programme.

3. We have exceeded the target of enlisting 470 estates to participate in the programme by the end of 2006. Despite our success, we expect considerable challenges in achieving the subsequent targets (i.e. 700, 920, 1140 and 1360 estates by 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively) as the more willing ones have already joined.

## **Producer Responsibility Schemes (PRSs)**

4. For the PRS on plastic shopping bags, the consultancy study commissioned by the EPD is near completion. We will develop a workable and effective scheme, with reference to the findings of the study. Subject to public support and consensus, the relevant legislation, namely the Product Eco-responsibility Bill, will be introduced into the LegCo. On the voluntary front, signatories of the Voluntary Agreement<sup>1</sup> have already over-achieved the 120 million reduction target. Riding on the public support, major supermarkets and retail chains will also continue to conduct “No Plastic Bag Day” at least once a month in 2007.

5. With regards to vehicle tyres, different PRS options are being considered to support waste tyre management and encourage the relevant industry to undertake recovery and recycling of waste tyres. We have been discussing with the industry to ensure their concern is duly considered while the PRS is developed. In parallel, we are running a contract (commissioned in February 2006) to recycle the waste tyres currently handled by the Government so as to gradually establish such local recycling capability to complement the implementation of PRS.

6. For waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), we are examining possible schemes and regulatory measures to introduce PRSs on WEEE and will seek views of the stakeholders on the feasible scheme. Since 2003, we have engaged two charitable organizations to recycle WEEE and computers. So far, over 150,000 items have been collected and processed under the programme. In addition, we engaged the Chamber of Hong Kong Computer Industry (CHKCI) last year to organize a separate pilot computer recycling programme. The main purpose was to verify the cost of recycling computer under a commercial mode of operation. 8,300 items have been collected and processed under the programme. In January 2007, a major computer company launched a free-of-charge computer recycling service for consumers in Hong Kong. We are liaising with other major local computer suppliers to encourage the provision of similar service.

7. The voluntary PRS programme in rechargeable Battery Recycling Programme has been implemented for about 20 months. Over the period, the number of participating companies has increased from 34 to 36 and the number of collection points expanded by more than 70%. The public can now return their used rechargeable batteries to more than 1,800 collection points. Two batches of rechargeable batteries, each of about 13 tonnes was sent to a

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<sup>1</sup> Wellcome, PARKnSHOP, China Resources Vanguard, Watson's, Mannings, Pricerite, DCH Food Marts, A-1 Bakery, Circle-K and City' Super

recycling facility in South Korea in April 2006 and December 2006. The first annual report for the programme was published in November 2006.

### **Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Charging**

8. The proposed MSW charging scheme is a key policy initiative for waste reduction. In accordance with the principle of “polluter pays”, a variable rate charging scheme is preferred. We launched a 3-month trial scheme in mid November 2006 to study the logistical arrangements for waste recovery and disposal in different housing settings for reference in the feasibility study of introducing a variable rate charging scheme. 20 housing estates were invited to join the trial scheme, and “designated bags” were distributed to the households for disposal of non-recyclable domestic waste. We also included the use of “food waste bags” in the trial scheme for a few selected housing estates to examine the feasibility of source separation of food waste.

9. We are collecting views from relevant stakeholders including the residents and the property management companies on the trial scheme. We will, taking into account the observations and the feedback gathered, examine the feasibility of devising a variable rate charging scheme under Hong Kong’s multi-occupant and multi-storey living environment.

10. The MSW charging scheme has territory-wide implications. We plan to consult the public on the practicable options for a variable rate charging scheme before we introduce a Bill into the Legislative Council.

### **EcoPark and Land Policy**

11. The objective of the EcoPark is to provide long term land at affordable costs for recycling and environmental industries with a view to encouraging investment in advanced and cost effective technologies. The construction of necessary infrastructure and common facilities for the EcoPark started in July 2006 and is in progress. We appointed an operator in November 2006 to manage the EcoPark. Invitation for tenders of the first batch of 3 lots in Phase I of the EcoPark was closed on 26 January 2007. More than 10 tender submissions were received and they are now being assessed. We expect to award the tenancies in March 2007.

12. Regarding short-term tenancies (STT), a cumulative total of 36 STT sites with an aggregate area of 7.4 hectares were leased exclusively to the recycling trade.

## **Green Procurement**

13. The Government has long adopted a green procurement policy. As early as year 2000, the Stores and Procurement Regulations were amended to require all bureaux and departments to take environmental consideration into account when making procurement decisions. Over the years, the Government has also adopted mandatory “green” specifications for some 30 types of products. More recently, the Government has also incorporated the requirements of "energy label" under the Energy Efficiency Labeling Scheme as part of our tender specifications for office equipment. In the arena of public works, the Government has placed primary emphasis on waste reduction, and recycled materials, such as recycled aggregates and recycled asphalt, are commonly used in public works contracts. The Administration has reported the green measures in the Government to the LegCo EA Panel in December 2006. The Government will further advance the practice of green procurement, particularly in the areas of energy-efficient office equipment, fuel-efficient vehicles and recycled construction materials.

## **Funding for Recycling Technology Projects**

14. The Waste Management Subcommittee has issued letters to the vetting committees of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Fund, the Innovation and Technology Fund, the Environment and Conservation Fund, the Sustainable Development Fund and the Quality Education Fund to appeal for their support on waste management projects.

## **Landfill Extensions and Landfill Disposal Bans**

15. The feasibility/EIA studies for North East New Territories (NENT) and South East New Territories (SENT) Landfill extensions are in progress. For NENT Landfill extension, the study is at its late stage and the EIA Report will be ready for public exhibition and ACE's consideration in early 2007. As regards the SENT Landfill extension, the EIA Report will be ready for public exhibition and ACE's consideration in mid-2007. The consultant selection exercise for the feasibility/EIA study for West New Territories (WENT) Landfill extensions has also commenced in September 2006. It is envisaged that the study can be commissioned in March 2007. The introduction of landfill disposal bans for specific types of waste and untreated municipal solid waste will tie in with the implementation of PRSs and the commissioning of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities respectively.

## **Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF)**

16. To achieve bulk reduction of unavoidable MSW, we plan to develop the IWMF in phases, with a view to commissioning the first phase in mid 2010s. A delegation of the ACE conducted a study tour in the Netherlands and Germany in March 2006 to obtain first hand knowledge on the experience of those countries in MSW management and treatment. Based on the recommendations of the delegation, we have refined the multi-technology approach for developing the IWMF. The treatment technologies will include biological treatment for source-separated biodegradable waste, mechanical sorting and recycling of clean mixed recyclables, and thermal treatment with state-of-the-art incineration and energy recovery.

17. In September 2006, we initiated a site search exercise to identify suitable sites for the IWMF on the basis of a phased development approach. For the purpose of conducting the site search, the ACE Waste Management Subcommittee endorsed the planning parameter for the first phase of the IWMF, which comprises three component facilities : 500 tpd biological treatment, 500 tpd mechanical sorting and recycling, and 2 600 tpd thermal treatment. The site search exercise will take some 12 months to complete.

### **Public Education Programme and Partnership**

18. To promote government's initiatives on MSW management, we have been organizing a wide variety of publicity programmes and activities for different stakeholders. Roving exhibitions, talks, workshops, out-reach visits, and other publicity events such as the World Environment Day and the Hong Kong Environmental Protection Festival, etc. were held in the community to raise public awareness on various issues such as source separation of waste, recycling of WEEE, charging on MSW, landfill extension, etc. 'Waste Management' has also been adopted as one of themes of our major educational programmes for schools including the Student Environmental Protection Ambassador Scheme and the Hong Kong Green School Award where activities such as 'Stop Using Plastic Bags Campaign', 'Green Lunch Campaign', etc. were organized. We have also been promoting the public awareness on waste reduction through the Announcements in the Public Interests.

19. To encourage businesses in Hong Kong to voluntarily reduce the amount of waste generated within their establishments or through their services and products, we have launched the Wastewi\$e Scheme. Businesses participating in the Scheme have to set and implement waste prevention and reduction targets whereas Government give free technical advice and monitor the progress. Each year, we present Wastewi\$e logos to the participants to honor their contributions to waste reduction and recycling. The number of

participating organizations has increased to over 1,300 since the establishment of the Scheme in 1999. Many large organizations, prominent listed companies and public utilities are members of the Scheme and recipients of Wastewi\$e logo.

20. In addition, we have been working closely with green groups and local organizations to organize specific waste reduction activities such as the 'No Plastic Bags Day' Campaign. Recently, we have also reserved \$10 million in the Environment and Conservation Fund to support a public education programme under the Policy Framework. We will set out clear themes and well-defined objectives for this programme to ensure that they will closely tie in with the Policy Framework. Subject to ECF Committee's agreement, we will be inviting funding applications from non-profit organizations in the first half of 2007.

21. To reach out to the wider community, an on-line computer game is being developed to educate the public on the 4R's principle (Responsibility, Reduction, Reuse & recovery) and the key policy initiatives of the Policy Framework. The computer game adopts the idea of a SimCity with 6 characters in a family setting, and through a series of mini-games, the public will be able to appreciate the growing waste problem and how they can play a role in addressing the problem through waste reduction, reuse and recovery. The mini-games will also be distributed in the form of CD-ROMs to all schools, youth centres and elderly centres, as well as through the district offices.

## **CONCLUSION**

22. Members are invited to note the progress of the key initiatives in the Policy Framework.

**Environmental Protection Department**  
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