

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

**Notes of the 17th Meeting
Held on 3 March 2008 at 2:30 pm**

Present

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

Absent with Apologies

Prof. Howard Huang
Mr. Simon Wong

In Attendance

Mr. Raymond Fan	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection
Mr. Alfred Lee	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Waste Management Policy)
Dr. Ellen Chan	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Environmental Infrastructure) [Item 2]
Mr. Patrick Lei	Principal Environmental Protection Officer [Item 3]
Ms. Heidi Yung	Senior Environmental Protection Officer [Item 3]
Dr. Cherie Lee	Environmental Protection Officer

Action

Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes of the Last Meeting

1. The draft minutes of the 16th meeting held on 3 December 2007 were confirmed without amendment.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising

EcoPark

2. Regarding the recent press coverage, Dr. Ellen Chan informed Members that the EcoPark was an on-going project. Given that the local environmental industry had mostly been engaged in recyclable collection and baling operation in the past, it would take time for them to gear up for high value-added recycling process as required in the EcoPark. The Government had been providing assistance to the industry as far as practicable. Dr. Ellen Chan noted that the Government was inviting tenders for the second batch of lots in the first phase of the EcoPark, and the response should be positive. Regarding the first batch of lots, two tenants were unable to comply with the tenancy conditions, and their tenancies had been terminated. The lots concerned would be opened for re-tender.
3. Mr. Raymond Fan reiterated that the Government was committed to providing long-term and affordable land for the environmental industry in the EcoPark. The Chairman supported the establishment of the EcoPark and considered that producer responsibility schemes could complement the development of the environmental industry. A Member considered that producer responsibility schemes should be backed up by legislation to provide a level-playing field for all. A Member added that economic incentives could perhaps be given to those who moved into the EcoPark. Two Members agreed that economic incentives could improve the appeal of the EcoPark to the environmental industry.

Agenda Item 3: Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Charging (Paper WMSC 01/08)

4. Mr. Patrick Lei briefed Members on the proposed study to review the waste generation pattern and the current waste management practice, with a view to devising a practicable charging scheme for both domestic waste and commercial and industrial (C&I) waste. In the light of the difficulties in implementing a designated-bag system as observed through the previous trial scheme, the study would explore other alternatives, including the use of proxies such as electricity or water consumption to provide the basis for calculating the

MSW charge. Regarding C&I waste, a volume-based charging scheme would also be explored.

5. The Chairman noted that MSW charging was a key initiative in the “Policy Framework” and should be studied expeditiously but in details. Two Members considered that a volume-based charging scheme was essential to provide the right economic incentives for waste reduction, recovery and recycling, and the proposed study should involve property management companies, who had first-hand knowledge and experience in handling MSW. A Member considered that reference could be made to the successful construction waste charging scheme in developing MSW charging. A Member was of the view that a scheme based on fixed charge could be implemented first to make the public aware of the environmental cost of waste disposal, while variable charge based on volume or other proxy variables could be introduced at a later stage. To take this important waste management initiative forward, the Chairman suggested that the proposed study should be fast-tracked and carried out in phases. In particular, consideration could be given to focus first on the volume-based charging for C&I waste as early harvest.

Agenda Item 4: Progress of Key Initiatives in the “Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)” (Paper WMSC 02/08)

6. Mr. Alfred Lee briefed Members on the progress of key initiatives in the “Policy Framework”. In particular, he noted that the disposal of domestic waste at landfills had dropped for three consecutive years since the publication of the “Policy Framework”. Nevertheless, the generation of C&I waste increased in 2007, probably as a result of robust economic growth. To contain this trend, the Administration would strengthen the efforts on reducing C&I waste. Aside from the proposed MSW charging, the Administration had recently extended the source separation of waste programme to C&I buildings. The response had been positive with some 300 C&I buildings joining so far. The Administration’s target was to recruit 600 C&I buildings by the end of this year.
7. To complement the source separation of domestic waste programme, Mr. Alfred Lee informed Members that the

Building (Refuse Storage and Material Recovery Chambers and Refuse Chutes) (Amendment) Regulation (Cap.123H) was supported by the LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs. The amendment regulation would mandate the provision of refuse storage and material recovery room on every floor of new domestic buildings and the domestic part of composite buildings. The Administration would table the amendment regulation to the LegCo within this legislative session, with a view to bringing the new requirement in force by the end of this year.

8. On the development of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF), Mr. Alfred Lee informed Members that the site search study was completed and two potential sites, namely Shek Kwu Chau and Tsang Tsui Ash Lagoons, were identified. The Administration would carry out detailed engineering and EIA studies for both sites to ascertain their ultimate suitability.
9. Members noted the progress of the key initiatives. In response to the Chairman's enquiry on packaging waste, Mr. Alfred Lee said that a consultancy study was being conducted and voluntary schemes to minimize packaging waste would be launched in parallel. A Member opined that the three-coloured waste separation bins programme had been in place for some years, and it could be a right time to review it. A Member added that the programme could be complemented by proper signage to let the public know where the bins were to be found. Regarding the recent injection of \$1 billion to the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF), A Member considered that certain capital works should be funded, such as the renovation necessary for implementing the green school lunch programme. Mr. Alfred Lee responded that the funding guidelines were being reviewed.

Any Other Business

Public Education Programme under the "Policy Framework"

10. The revised "Save Food Project" proposal by the Greeners Action was discussed. Members noted the participation of 64 food outlets, but were disappointed that no major fast food chain was willing to participate. While agreeing to recommend the proposal for further consideration by the ECF

Committee, Members would like the Greeners Action to confirm that major fast food chains had been approached but declined to take part.

[Post-meeting Note: Greeners Action confirmed that it had approached major fast food chains through e-mails, as well as telephone calls, but no positive response was received. The proposal was considered by the ECF Committee in March. The Committee was of the view that the proposal should cover more food outlets, particularly major fast food chains, to bring about more significant impact.]

Agenda Item 5: Date of Next Meeting

11. The next meeting had been scheduled for 2 June 2008.

ACE Waste Management Subcommittee
Secretariat
April 2008