

**Confirmed Minutes of the 184th Meeting of
the Advisory Council on the Environment
held on 16 January 2012 at 2:30 pm**

Present:

Prof Paul LAM, JP (Chairman)
Prof CHAU Kwai-cheong, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Dorothy CHAN, BBS
Mr Oscar CHOW
Ms Betty HO
Mr Michael JEBSEN, BBS
Mr Edwin LAU, MH
Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Dr MAN Chi-sum, JP
Prof Joseph LEE
Miss Yolanda NG
Dr Alfred TAM
Mr TSANG Kam-lam, JP
Mr Simon WONG, JP
Dr Carrie WILLIS, SBS, JP
Dr YAU Wing-kwong
Ms Pansy YAU
Dr Ray YEP
Mr Carlson K S CHAN, JP (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Ms Teresa AU
Prof FUNG Tung
Prof LI Xiang-dong
Prof Ignatius YU

In Attendance:

Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Mr C C LAY	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Mr LAU Sing	Assistant Director/Technical Services, Planning Department

Ms Esther LI	Principal Information Officer, Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Miss Evelyn LEUNG	Chief Executive Officer (CBD), EPD
Ms Joanne CHIN	Executive Officer (CBD), EPD
Ms Daicie TONG	Executive Manager (CBD), EPD

In Attendance for Agenda Item 3:

Mr Elvis AU, JP	Assistant Director (Nature Conservation & Infrastructure Planning), EPD
Mr H M WONG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Strategic Assessment), EPD
Mr LUI Ping-hon	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Infrastructure Planning), EPD
Mr CHENG Tak-kuen	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Infrastructure Planning) 1, EPD

In Attendance for Agenda Item 4:

Mr Samson LAI	Assistant Director (Waste Management Policy), EPD
Dr Alain LAM	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Waste Management Policy), EPD
Miss Libera CHENG	Senior Administrative Officer (Waste Management Policy), EPD

In Attendance for Agenda Item 5:

Mr W C MOK, JP	Assistant Director (Air Policy), EPD
Mr Eric WONG	Environmental Protection Officer (Air Policy)52, EPD

Action

Agenda Item 1 : Confirmation of the draft minutes of the 183rd meeting held on 30 December 2011

A Member advised that he would provide the secretariat with his comments with regard to his reservation on the Government's choice of using

the site near Shek Kwu Chau (SKC) for the Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF) Phase 1 development after the meeting. The secretariat would incorporate such into the confirmed minutes of the 183rd meeting of 30 December 2011 for uploading on the Council website.

Agenda Item 2 : Matters arising from the minutes of the 183rd meeting held on 30 December 2011

2. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Agenda Item 3 : Environmental Impact Assessment on “Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF) Phase 1”
(ACE-EIA Paper 6/2011 and ACE Paper 19/2011)

3. The Chairman said that given the purported “conflict of interest” of a Member of the Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee (EIASC) (“the Member”), in the deliberation of the EIA report on “Development of Integrated Wasted Management Facilities (IWMF) Phase 1” as reported in the media in early January 2012, it was considered prudent for the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) to make use of the current meeting to review the issue and to re-visit its recommendations on the EIA report tendered to the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) following its meeting on 30 December 2011. Members had been informed of the press reports and the response of “the Member” before this meeting by e-mail on 6 January.

4. The Chairman then gave a brief account of the chronology of ACE’s deliberation of the IWMF EIA reports. The EIASC first considered the report in March 2011 and recommended it to the full Council with conditions. The ACE considered the recommendations in April 2011 and endorsed the report with conditions for DEP’s consideration of issuing the Environmental Permit. The process was brought to a halt in May 2011 in the light of the judicial review (JR) of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) EIA reports. Following the conclusion of the HZMB JR case in September 2011, the EIASC was invited to re-consider the revised IWMF EIA report on 5 December 2011 and recommended the report to the ACE for endorsement with conditions on 30 December 2011. There were media reports in early January 2012 that there might be conflict of interest on the part of “the Member” as his employer, the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC), was commissioned by

the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) in September 2011 for an air quality monitoring project for the island areas including Cheung Chau, Shek Kwu Chau and South Lantau. The media reports suggested that “the Member” should have declared interest and excused himself from the meetings of the EIASC and the ACE. The Chairman invited Members to give their views on two broad issues: (i) whether there was sufficient connection between the IWWMF EIA study and the monitoring project being undertaken by HKPC which warranted “the Member” to make declaration before or at the meetings; and (ii) whether “the Member” should have withdrawn from the meetings if he had declared interest.

5. In response to a Member’s enquiry, Mr Elvis Au explained that the work of HKPC was to gather ambient air quality data in the areas around Cheung Chau, Shek Kwu Chau and South Lantau to provide EPD with supplementary information for general reference and long-term planning.

6. Replying to the enquiries from two Members on his involvement in the project, “the Member” confirmed that he was not personally involved in the monitoring project. The HKPC was awarded with the contract through open tender. His knowledge of the project was limited to some figures and the fees in the tender document which he had to approve in his management capacity in HKPC when the organization bid for the project.

7. A Member considered that the air quality monitoring work in the island areas would inevitably encompass the IWWMF project. Besides, he drew comparison with another Council Member, whose company was involved in the public engagement exercise for the IWWMF EIA study. He pointed out that the Member had declared interest and was excused from the meetings of both the Subcommittee and the Council. Mr P H Lui explained that the Member was the sub-consultant of the IWWMF consultant AECOM for the EIA study. The Member had participated personally in the EIA study. It was not appropriate to draw any analogy between the Member’s involvement in the IWWMF EIA study and HKPC’s air quality monitoring project which did not form part of the IWWMF EIA study.

8. In response to a Member’s enquiry, Mr Elvis Au said that the tendering of the air quality monitoring project took place in August 2011. The contract was awarded in September 2011 and the monitoring would last for 12 months. He confirmed that none of the data collected by HKPC had been used

in the current IWMF EIA report.

9. A Member considered that at the EIASC and the ACE meetings in December 2011, Members made reference to the data in the EIA report that were collected on previous studies conducted by AECOM, whereas the air quality monitoring project undertaken by HKPC only commenced in September 2011 to collect data for future planning purposes. No specific reference had been made for the IWMF project. He considered that even if “the Member” had declared interest, it would not have affected his objective and impartial comments he had made on the IWMF project.

10. A Member noted that many members of advisory bodies occupied senior managerial positions in their employing or associated organizations. It was common for them to sign contracts or agreements on behalf of their organizations which they had no personal involvement or detailed knowledge of such. It may be too onerous to require Members to declare interest of this kind. This concern was echoed by another Member. He considered that Members had to exercise good common sense and judgement in deciding on the need of declaration, as Members had to protect themselves from unwarranted queries from the public over the integrity issues.

11. In this regard, the Chairman drew Members’ attention to the set of guidelines on declaration of direct personal interest (Guidelines) which were last circulated in December 2010 when the new term of appointment of ACE Members commenced. Particular attention was drawn to point (2) of the Guidelines regarding conflict of interest situations. He said that it would be prudent to take a more conservative approach to declare, and to let the meeting decide whether there might be any potential conflict of interest. In the current case and with hindsight, had “the Member” been aware of HKPC’s air quality monitoring project for the island areas and able to draw a possible connection between it and the IWMF project, it would have been more prudent for “the Member” to declare an interest. However, a Member would not have declared interest if he/she had no knowledge of or did not make any connection on the possible conflict of interest.

12. A Member said that given the community’s interest in the IWMF project, Members should declare interest no matter how remote the connection might be. Another Member said that while it would have been prudent for “the Member” to declare interest, the crux of the matter was that he was not

personally involved in the monitoring project, and the recommendations of the Subcommittee on the IWMF EIA report had in no way been affected by his presence at the meeting. A Member suggested that another way of considering whether a member should be allowed to continue participation at the meeting was whether the organization to which he/she belonged would be benefited with business opportunities in future by his/her presence and/or the stance at the meeting.

13. A Member said that there did not seem to be any direct connection between the air quality monitoring project undertaken by HKPC and the IWMF project. Another Member shared the view that HKPC's project was a general background study on air quality whereas the IWMF EIA study was a very specific one. Both Members indicated that they would not have objected to the presence of "the Member" at the meetings of the EIASC and the ACE even if he had declared interest regarding HKPC's undertaking of the monitoring project.

14. In response to a Member's enquiry, "the Member" replied that the tender for the monitoring project was approved by his supervisor, and he had only been notified of the project and the tendering according to HKPC's established procedures. As he was not personally involved in the project, he had no knowledge on when the project actually commenced. In response to a Member's follow-up question, he replied that he was not aware of any studies or projects undertaken by HKPC related to the IWMF in the past.

15. Ms Anissa Wong said that the ACE would have to decide on the following: (a) whether there was any association of the IWMF and the air quality monitoring projects based on the established facts; (b) whether any declaration would have been required if "the Member" had made such a connection between the two projects before or at the meetings in December 2011; (c) whether "the Member" should have been excused from the meetings should that declaration have been made; and (d) whether the ACE should re-affirm or adjust the recommendations which the Council had made on the IWMF EIA report on 30 December 2011, having regard to the supplementary information as provided.

16. Mr Elvis Au said that the air quality monitoring project was to gather baseline information in the island areas for waste incineration projects in general. The data collected would provide additional information for reference by EPD for mapping out plans for waste facilities. In response to the question

from a Member, Mr Au explained that the data so gathered would be used for long-term general planning. It followed that waste incineration projects, being an integral part of the comprehensive waste management strategy in Hong Kong, would be included. This baseline information for waste incineration projects could provide an objective database for projects in future, where necessary.

17. A Member accepted that “the Member” was not aware of the details of the monitoring project. It was reasonable that he did not make that linkage when the IWMF EIA report was discussed at the EIASC and the ACE meetings in December 2011. The Member considered that the two projects should serve different purposes. There appeared no potential conflict of interest that necessitated “the Member” to make the declaration then. Further, taking into consideration of point (5) of the Guidelines, “the Member” was not obligated to report as there was no evidence that his advice at the meetings might have been motivated by any personal interest that could have affected his impartial advice.

18. The Chairman invited “the Member” to leave the meeting at this juncture as Members would be invited to express their views on the matter and review the validity of the recommendations on the IWMF EIA report made at the meetings in December 2011.

[“The Member” left the meeting at this juncture.]

19. The following Members expressed their views on the issue –

- (i) A Member recalled that the EIASC meeting was conducted in an objective and impartial manner, and “the Member” made a fair summary of the discussions at the meeting. This incident should not have affected the recommendations tendered at the meeting. Nevertheless, he considered it more prudent for “the Member” to declare interest and withdraw from the meeting. This would help remove any possible perception of bias in the eyes of the public.
- (ii) A Member considered that the discussions and recommendations at the Subcommittee meeting were open and thorough. The Member stood by the recommendations of the Subcommittee which were endorsed by the Council. This position was shared by three other Members.

- (iii) A Member maintained his views on the IWFMF project at the EIASC and the ACE. He also maintained his comments that it would have been more proper for “the Member” to declare interest and withdraw from the meeting to avoid possible queries from the public over the decision-making process of the case.
- (iv) A Member did not see any impropriety on the part of “the Member” in chairing the EIASC on the discussion of the IWFMF report. He pointed out that “the Member” had been very critical and raised many questions on the project. He maintained his stance to support the recommendations at both meetings.
- (v) A Member said that the EIASC meeting deliberated on the facts of the report covering the two possible sites. All Members had the opportunity to give their views. The data were solely provided by the project proponent and “the Member” had not provided any supplementary information of his own. Besides, the open session of the meeting was broadcast live which the visiting public could view in the Public Viewing Room. The recommendations were made on the basis of all the facts available. It was a decision of the entire Subcommittee and not “the Member” as the Chairman. She considered that the whole process had been undertaken professionally.
- (vi) A Member considered that “the Member” chaired the meeting very fairly. All Members examined the report and addressed all the questions raised by the public before coming up with the recommendations and conclusion.

20. The Chairman summarized Members’ views as follows –

- (a) HKPC was not involved in the EIA study of the IWFMF project. Further, the air quality monitoring project awarded to HKPC in September 2011 was to collect baseline information for long-term reference and planning purposes. None of the air quality monitoring data had been used in the IWFMF EIA report. There was no direct connection between the IWFMF EIA report and the monitoring work being undertaken by HKPC;
- (b) it would have been prudent for “the Member” to declare interest

had he been aware of HKPC's air quality monitoring project and able to draw a possible connection between it and the IWWMF project. Having said that, some Members expressed understanding that "the Member" did not have detailed knowledge of or personal involvement in the monitoring project undertaken by HKPC, and therefore was unable to make any association between the two projects. A few Members considered it more prudent for "the Member" to make a declaration even if there was only the slightest connection between the two projects as viewed from the public's perspective. They would have requested "the Member" to withdraw had he declared interest at the meetings;

- (c) Members who had attended the EIASC and the ACE meetings in December 2011 re-affirmed unanimously that the Subcommittee deliberated the IWWMF EIA report in a fair and objective manner; and
- (d) the Council decided to stand by the recommendations tendered to DEP on the IWWMF EIA report following the meeting on 30 December 2011 which should remain valid.

["The Member" re-joined the meeting at this juncture.]

Agenda Item 4 : Public Consultation on Municipal Solid Waste Charging
(ACE Paper 1/2012)

21. Mr Samson Lai briefed Members on the public consultation document on municipal solid waste (MSW) charging entitled "*Strengthening Waste Reduction: Is Waste Charging an Option?*". He emphasized that waste charging was not a tax initiative by nature but a policy tool to introduce an economic incentive to encourage people to reduce waste generation and disposal. As one of the initiatives committed under the updated action plan announced in January 2011, the consultation was also an integral part of the Government's multi-pronged waste management strategy, under which waste reduction at source was a priority task.

22. A Member supported the Government's initiative to help reduce municipal solid waste (MSW). However, he would be disappointed if the

Government's inclination was to first target at the commercial and industrial (C&I) sector for implementing the charging. He opined that the catering industry for instance would be penalized under such an approach as the food waste they disposed of were actually the leftovers by their customers who should be the primary waste producers. The catering industry had endeavoured to reduce food waste and had been working closely with the Government on various food waste programmes. He was also concerned about the level of waste charges to be levied and would like to know how the charges so received would be put back to the community.

23. A Member said that while there were successful experiences elsewhere in reducing waste at source through the implementation of MSW charging, the Government had to consider its practicability in the context of Hong Kong, including how to ensure fairness in the actual implementation. While such charging could entail behavioural changes in the community on the handling of waste over time, the waste problem should continue be dealt with in a holistic manner. In respect of C&I waste, waste generation pattern in different businesses could differ from one to another. They should be engaged in considering how best the waste could be separated at source in their respective sectors. It would also be useful for the Government to look into the situation in specific industries which produced high volume of waste.

24. A Member was interested to know whether MSW charging was meant to recover the waste treatment cost and the Government's preferred option among the four approaches as mentioned in the consultation document.

25. In response to these comments and enquiries, Mr Samson Lai reiterated that the objective of the current consultation was to consolidate community consensus as to whether MSW charging should be implemented in Hong Kong for introducing an economic incentive on waste reduction to our community; issues like the level of charges or the use of revenues so generated were not the focus of this consultation exercise. The four charging approaches were generalized from the experiences of other cities, and these approaches differed in their effectiveness in waste reduction, in the changes required of their community in terms of behaviour in waste generation and disposal, as well as in their waste collection system. Since Hong Kong people were becoming increasingly green conscious, the Government would like to take the opportunity of this consultation to engage the community in an informed discussion on how waste charging could help achieve sustainable waste management in Hong

Kong, including the implications and concerns that might arise from a charging system. In the cases of Taipei City and Seoul, where quantity-based charging system was implemented, there were discernible changes in their waste collection system as well as the habits of their citizens. Similar changes, when implemented in Hong Kong for the purpose of a charging system, might require some re-prioritization of the objectives of the current waste collection system for which the current emphasis was environmental hygiene and efficiency. These implications had to be clearly deliberated at this consultation stage in order to obtain strong community consensus. As for the partial charging approach, Mr Lai clarified that its inclusion in the consultation document was to reflect that internationally, charging the C&I sector was more common than charging the domestic sector, leading to cases where some cities only imposed waste charges on selected group of waste producers. For the C&I sector in Hong Kong, despite a high recycling rate, there should be room to do more given that an increase in waste generation was witnessed in the past few years. While efforts on implementing the recycling programmes would continue, the Government intended to collect further public feedback for a clear consensus on whether and how the waste charging system should be introduced in Hong Kong.

26. A Member said that the waste problem had to be dealt with in a multi-pronged manner. Proper treatment of waste for disposal was equally important as the 3Rs, i.e. "Reduce, Re-use, Recycle". He cited that public litter bins had been extensively withdrawn as a complementary successful measure to waste charging. In Seoul's case, there was a special division under the Ministry of Environment to promote the concept of "green growth" among the next generation, and a permanent centre was established to provide training and educational facilities for voluntary organizations in promoting green concepts to the younger generation. He pointed out the importance of education for successful implementation of waste charging and was confident that Hong Kong citizens would be able to follow the above examples. He was also optimistic that waste charging would not necessarily lead to illegal dumping. He considered that it would be fairer to impose waste charging for the whole community in view of the success stories in neighboring areas. Hong Kong people would accept the initiative with proper public education.

27. A Member enquired if reference could be made to the sewage treatment/charging system in Hong Kong when examining the MSW charging initiative. He agreed that MSW charging should aim for changing the behaviour of the public but not for recovering cost. The Government should

take the lead to engage the community in the discussion and to involve the District Councils. In response, Ms Anissa Wong said that the sewage charge was introduced when the Government launched the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme (HATS). The charge was directly linked to water charge. That experience could provide little reference for the current discussion as MSW collection and disposal was a standing component of the municipal services. The public had an increasing awareness of the need to manage our MSW in an environmental acceptable manner. The proposed MSW charging was to identify means to better achieve sustainable waste management in Hong Kong.

28. A Member pointed out that illegal dumping was common in districts such as in Yau Tsim Mong and Wanchai where there were many upstairs bars and restaurants. As the implementation of waste charging could aggravate the problem, she suggested that relevant government departments (including in particular the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)) should work together to engage the 18 District Councils to handle the waste problems. In addition, the Government might have to consider introducing a bonus system to entice support from the public for the proposed waste charging.

29. A Member agreed with the holistic approach in dealing with the waste problems. However, she considered that it might be difficult to implement the charging across the board in one go. Instead, MSW charging should be introduced as soon as possible to the C&I sector first. With the experience gained, the charging should be extended to the domestic sector in the next stage. Since the objective of MSW charging was to reduce waste at source, the quantity-based system would be preferred over the proxy system. She also emphasized that the concerted efforts of different government departments was important. While EPD should take the lead in this policy area, the support and cooperation from other departments such as the Buildings Department (BD) and the Housing Department (HD) were also required to incorporate the recycling collection facilities in the building plans such as those for public housing estates. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) could also provide composting facilities in public parks and related venues to help reduce organic waste.

30. A Member supported the adoption of the quantity-based system for MSW charging for implementation as quickly as possible for the C&I sector in the initial phase. Enhancing civic education in Hong Kong would be required for achieving results comparable to those in Taipei and Seoul. The

revenue generated from the charging should be ploughed back to the educational work on waste reduction. As food waste was a key area for concern, he suggested that the catering industry should consider offering meals in different portions and marking the price proportionately.

31. A Member said that it was timely to launch the public consultation on MSW charging to raise public's awareness of the waste management issue. He commented that, as a District Councilor, it was important for the Government not only to consult but to get the Councils in action. Drawing on the success of a recycling center which he helped to set up in Tai Po, the Member urged the Government to provide more support to these local recycling centres which faced with space shortage problems.

32. A Member agreed with other Members' views on adopting the quantity-based charging system in order to reduce the quantity of waste at source and release the burden on the three existing landfills. He pointed out that the success of Seoul and Taipei in reducing substantially the volume of municipal waste was attributed to the provision of a well-structured organic waste recycling system. The Government should draw on their experience for achieving similar results in Hong Kong.

33. A Member recalled that the Waste Management Subcommittee reached a consensus in October 2010 that a proper recycling system for treating food waste had to be established prior to the implementation of MSW charging. He commented that apart from plastic shopping bags and waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), many manufacturers had produced waste through excessive packaging. All the initiatives with respect to Producer Responsibility Scheme (PRS) on plastic shopping bags and WEEE, waste charging and development of waste facilities should be implemented in tandem as complementary policies to tackle the waste management problem facing Hong Kong.

34. A Member expressed his full support for the initiative. He considered that the quantity-based system was the only approach that would be effective in waste reduction at source. It was important to establish proper channels and alternatives for citizens to reduce and recycle their waste such as food waste and packaging materials, lest the waste charging policy would become merely a revenue-generating initiative without achieving its original objective in reducing waste at source. He further suggested implementing

waste charging in phases by applying it to a specific sector first so as to garner successful experience before extending the charging to other sectors.

35. A Member estimated a drop of 44% in waste disposal after implementing waste charging. He considered that the Government should plough back the revenue from waste charging for education and enhancement of the recycling system at the community level. As rates paid by households had already covered the cost of waste collection, the amount of rates payment should be reduced correspondingly following introduction of waste charging under the “user pays” principle. Government should make known its position as to which waste charging option was preferred.

36. A Member supported the initiative but was concerned about how the Government could mobilize support from the community. He suggested the Government to convey a key message to the public that the society had to pay for the waste they produced. Given that the intention of waste charging was not for raising revenue, the Government should pledge to use part of the revenue collected for research, education, use by district councils and other related initiatives. He agreed in principle that while waste charging should be applied to all sectors, it could be applied to the C&I sector first to serve the educational and reference purposes. He further suggested that restaurants might require their customers to pay for the leftover so as to reduce food waste. Consideration could also be given to exempting low income groups from waste charging.

37. A Member supported the quantity-based approach for MSW charging and agreed with the Government’s holistic approach on waste management. She suggested implementing MSW charging not only to the domestic and C&I sector, but also to manufacturers who were responsible for excessive packaging. She further suggested that waste charging could first be implemented in public housing estates as well as large private estates where waste recycling policies had already been put in place by the property management. It could then be introduced to other types of buildings with the experience gained. For the catering sector, restaurants could consider offering dishes in different portions. Customers should be encouraged to bring the leftovers home which would help reduce food waste.

38. A Member supported the waste charging initiative and agreed with other Members that the quantity-based approach was a fair option and easier to

justify under the “user pays” principle. She considered that waste charging should be levied on both the domestic and C&I sector from equity point of view. However, taking into account the various practical difficulties for introducing waste charging in the domestic sector, there were merits for implementing the policy in the C&I sector first with clear indication that it would be applied across the board in Hong Kong in the long run.

39. A Member suggested that, from a macro point of view, the Government should consult the relevant authorities of the Pearl River Delta Region, which was the single largest producer of different categories of waste, to exchange information, experience and policies on the way forward. The objective would be to develop a joint approach to deal with waste recycling and treatment in the region to achieve economy of scale.

40. Ms Anissa Wong said that the purpose of setting out the general approaches on waste charging instead of proposing any charging level in the consultation document was to focus the discussion on the merits of waste charging and forge a consensus on the option best suited to Hong Kong. There appeared a strong support for the quantity-based approach from the environmental perspective. She emphasized that waste charging was implemented not for cost recovery. The Government had stepped up public education on waste reduction at source. She cited the environmental levy scheme on plastic shopping bags, which had proved to be effective in inducing a fundamental change in behaviour among the public in bringing their own shopping bags. In addition, EPD had coordinated the efforts of different departments and District Councils in rolling out various environmental initiatives. For instance, the Buildings Regulations had been amended with the support of the ACE to require all new domestic buildings to have dedicated space for waste separation on each floor of the building. The source separation programme on domestic waste had already covered over 80% of Hong Kong’s population. EPD was also working with HD to establish recycling programmes in all public housing estates to further enhance residents’ participation in waste separation and recycling. Further, LCSD was now installing composters in the holiday camps under its management. EPD was collaborating with District Councils in organizing waste reduction programmes at the districts. Collaboration with local organizations and the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) for coordinated efforts to promote environmental activities at the community level would also be made. Over 100 community recycling points had been set up at district level through the ECC funding support as well

as in collaboration with other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). In addition, the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) had been providing subsidies to schools to install the necessary facilities to adopt the “On-site Meal Portioning Projects in Schools” to help reduce food waste and use of disposable utensils. Composting facilities for food waste had also been introduced in schools and housing estates under ECF schemes. Support of school authorities, building management companies, parent-teacher associations and local residents alike were all vital for the success of the scheme. These community involvement programmes could be further explained to Members in the coming ACE Retreat.

41. The Chairman summarized Members’ views as follows –
- (a) the Council was supportive of MSW charging in encouraging waste reduction at source;
 - (b) the quantity-based charging system was the preferred option in order to induce behavioural change in the community to reduce MSW waste at source;
 - (c) consideration could be given to adopting a phased implementation of the MSW charging in specific sectors first and extending the charging to other sectors to ensure a smooth implementation of the new initiative; and
 - (d) the Government should step up efforts in promoting and educating the public on the importance of waste reduction at source.

Agenda Item 5 : Revised Proposal for Controlling Emissions from Non-road Mobile Sources
(ACE Paper 2/2012)

42. Mr W C Mok briefed Members on the revised proposal for controlling emissions from non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) and sought Members’ views on the proposed way forward. The revised proposal aimed to control the sale, lease and supply of NRMMs for local use. All NRMMs for use in the territory must be approved by EPD and properly labelled in future. Existing NRMMs in use before introduction of the control regime would be

exempted from the new emission requirements but had to affix appropriate exemption labels prescribed by EPD for easy identification. Operators of specified activities had a duty to ensure that all NRMMs used in their operations were approved by EPD and be properly labelled. The emission standards for each category of NRMMs remained the same as those set out in the original proposal. They were comparable with the prevailing standards in the European Union, Japan and the United States.

43. In response to a Member's enquiry on whether vessels were included in the definition of NRMM and the term "specified processes" stipulated in the Air Pollution Control Ordinance, Cap. 311 (APCO), Mr W C Mok explained that NRMM referred to land-based non-road mobile machinery, which was the target of the proposal. There was a separate proposal put forward in the 2011-2012 Policy Address to raise the fuel standard for the marine sector. The term "specified processes" referred to the list of works in Schedule 1 of the APCO. Such works included power plant, cement plant and metal works, etc. which were more polluting and specific licences were required for their operation.

44. In answering a Member's enquiry on the control and upgrading of existing NRMMs, Mr W C Mok said that the revised proposal under discussion was the first step to control NRMMs. Once the proposal was in place, the Government would examine the feasibility of imposing further control of in-use NRMMs as suggested by the ACE Members earlier. Meanwhile, the Government noted that some container terminal operators were upgrading their cranes to models powered by electricity that could reduce emissions and operating cost. This could be a win-win situation for both the community and the concerned operators.

45. In response to the Chairman's further enquiry on the types of machinery to be included in the revised proposal, Mr W C Mok said that the revised proposal would require those NRMMs used in areas such as airport, port facilities, construction sites and designated waste disposal facilities to bear a label approved by EPD.

46. The Chairman concluded that all Members were in support of the revised proposal for controlling emissions from non-road mobile machinery.

Agenda Item 6: Any other business

Retreat

47. The Chairman informed Members that a retreat would be held in the afternoon of 20 February 2012 for exchanging views on the EIA issues arising from the HZMB JR case as well as waste reduction and waste management strategies. The secretariat would inform Members on the details of the retreat in due course.

Tentative items for discussion at the next meeting

48. The Chairman informed Members that the agenda was being compiled. Members would be informed in due course.

Agenda Item 7 : Date of next meeting

49. The Chairman informed Members that the next meeting was scheduled for 7 February 2012.

ACE secretariat
January 2012