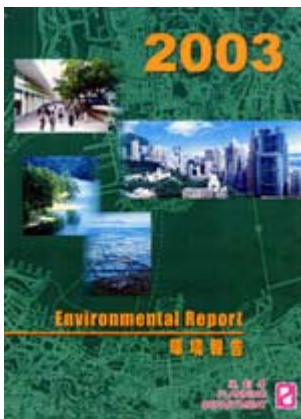


Planning Department Environmental Report 2003

This is the fifth Environmental Report prepared by the Planning Department covering the period from 1st January 2003 to 31st December 2003 inclusive. Our environmental policy and Environmental Management System are clearly shown in the Report as a reference to all stakeholders ranging from individual members of the public to business firms and private/public organizations and institutions. The Report gives a brief description of the Department's organization and outlines its key responsibilities related to various environmental concerns. Our environmental performance in 2003 together with our targets in coming 2004 has also been set out in the Report. A table summarising our actions and targets in 2004 is also prepared for easy reference. The information and data presented in this Report are obtained and compiled using in-house resources.



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Environmental Policy

We seek to promote, working in partnership with the community, sustainable development to simultaneously achieve a vibrant economy, a quality environment and social progress in Hong Kong. To achieve this vision, we have formulated the environmental policy of the Department so as to provide a framework for introducing and implementing new environmental initiatives and programmes.

We are committed to contributing to environmental sustainability and promoting a better environment for the community of Hong Kong through the formulation of planning policies and standards, the preparation and implementation of town plans as well as the promotion of green office practices in the Department. To maintain a high standard of environmental performance, we will:

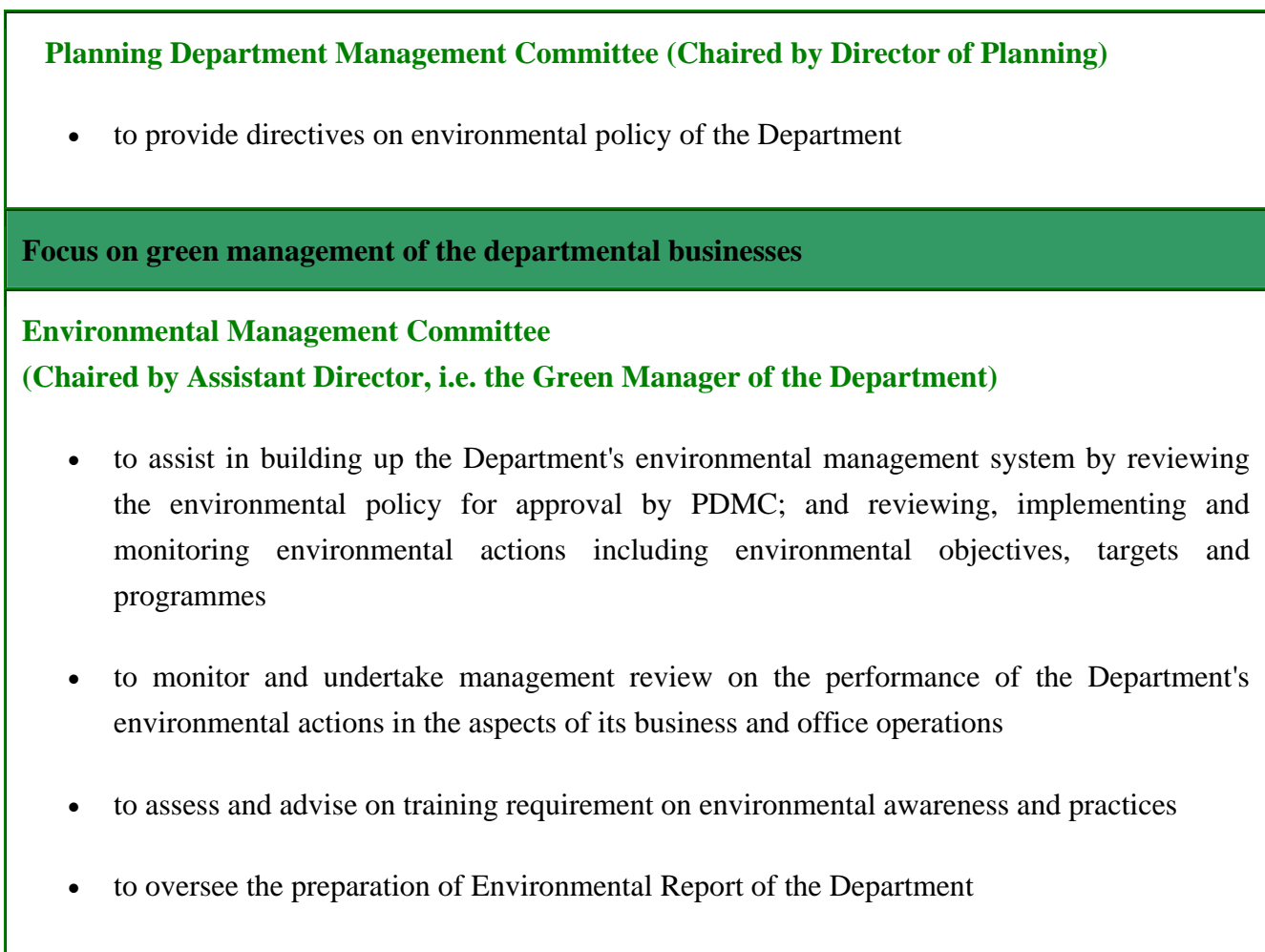
- take full account of the environmental implications of all planning activities;
- facilitate the achievement of a quality built environment and the protection of natural environment; and encourage environmentally responsible development;
- enforce the Town Planning Ordinance against unauthorized developments which result in adverse environmental impacts;
- comply with the requirements of relevant environmental protection ordinances;

- promote public awareness on environmental sustainability issues;
- cultivate a clean, tidy, healthy and safe office environment; promote and implement green housekeeping measures; and raise staff awareness of their environmental responsibilities through training and publicity programmes; and
- regularly review the environmental aspects and impacts of our planning activities and office practices; and build up the Department's environmental management system.

Environmental Management System

The main objective of the Environmental Management System (Figure 1) is to co-ordinate well the planning, implementation and monitoring of our environmental initiatives and programme.

Figure 1 : Environmental Management System of Planning Department



- to oversee the work of the Green Housekeeping Committee of the Department

Focus on green office management

Green Housekeeping Committee (Chaired by Chief Town Planner)

- to introduce and oversee the implementation of green housekeeping measures of the Department

Environmental Committees

- to share experiences in green office practices among green executives in the same building and to report green office management matters of offices in the same building and propose green measures to the Green Housekeeping Committee
- to disseminate environmental information of the Green Housekeeping Committee

Organization and Key Responsibilities

The Organization

The organisation chart of the Planning Department as at 31 December 2003 is shown in [Figure 2](#).

Establishment and Strength

The establishment and strength of the different grades in the Department as at the end of 2003 are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Establishment and Strength of the Planning Department at the end of 2003

Grade	Establishment	Strength
Town Planner	240	236
Other Professional (e.g. Engineer, Landscape Architect)	14	16
Survey Officer	181	175
Technical Officer	154	149
General and Others	224	223
Total	813	799

Key Responsibilities

The Planning Department is responsible for formulating, monitoring and reviewing urban and rural planning policies, plans and associated programmes for the physical development of Hong Kong. We deal with all types of planning at the territorial, sub-regional and district levels. We also provide both executive and secretarial services to the Town Planning Board. At the territorial and sub-regional levels, the emphasis is on medium to long-term planning strategies for the whole territory and its five sub-regions. At the district level, the emphasis is on forward planning, development control and planning enforcement.

Significant Environmental Aspects

On the basis of our above key responsibilities, there are broadly four main areas of our activities that would have interaction with the environment. They are Territorial Development Strategy/Planning Standards/Town Plans, Development Control, Planning Enforcement, and Awareness/Protection of Environment.

(a) Territorial Development Strategy/ Planning Standards/ Town Plans

The aspect of environmental planning in terms of air quality, noise pollution, visual impact, water quality, waste management and risks associated with potentially hazardous installations, and the aspect of conservation in terms of the preservation and enhancement of natural landscapes and habitats as well as the protection of heritage features would be taken into account in the formulation of sustainable territorial development strategies and planning standards, and preparation of town plans.

We make use of the following major planning tools in performing our responsibilities.

(i) Computer Aided Sustainability Evaluation Tool (CASET)

A computerized decision support system known as CASET has been developed to assist the Government's evaluation of the sustainability implications of major strategic policies and projects. The outputs of CASET would provide information on the effects of policies or projects across a numbers of sectors for decision makers to consider. CASET is also employed by the Planning Department as one of the means to conduct sustainability assessment on major strategic policies and projects that may bring about significant or prolonged implications on the economic, social and environmental conditions of Hong Kong. A total of 9 assessments have been made in 2003.



(ii) Planning Studies

Planning studies play a vital role in the formulation of development strategies and planning standards and preparation of town plans. They serve primarily as a means to investigate, substantiate or verify planning issues, intentions or concepts, and provide a basis for formulating and evaluating proposals. Major planning studies undertaken by the Department in 2003 are highlighted below.

Formulation of a Territorial Development Strategy

The Territorial Development Strategy is to provide a long term planning framework covering both the whole territory and its hinterland, and integrating government policies on land-uses, transport infrastructure development and environmental matters

Hong Kong 2030 : Planning Vision and Strategy

The study commenced in November 2000 to provide an integrated land use-transport- environmental planning strategy for guiding future developments in Hong Kong. The study adheres to the principle of sustainable development with a view to balancing social, economic and environmental needs to achieve a better quality of life for the present and the future generations.

As an integral part of the study, a strategic environmental assessment with the following main tasks was commissioned in October 2001 and is expected to be completed in 2005 :

- to review and update the environmental baseline conditions of Hong Kong;
- to assess the environmental and related infrastructures' carrying capacity and the demand that would be generated from future developments;
- to propose environmental targets for Hong Kong to maintain a sustainable development;
- to integrate environmental considerations in the generation, evaluation and refinement of development options; and
- to evaluate the strategic environmental impacts of the preferred option(s) and to identify any environmental mitigation measures and follow-up investigations required.



Formulation of Planning Standards

The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) is a Government manual of criteria for determining the scale, location and site requirements of various land uses and facilities. It is applied in planning studies, preparation/revision of town plans and development control.

Urban Design Guidelines for Hong Kong

On the basis of the recommendations of the consultancy study "Urban Design Guidelines for Hong Kong" completed in early-2003, a new Chapter 11 in Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines on urban design guidelines was promulgated in November 2003. It echoed one of the Team Clean's initiatives to disseminate the urban design guidelines for wide application in future planning and development proposal for improvement of the environment.

The urban design guidelines in the new chapter cover massing and intensity in urban fringe areas and rural areas, development height profile, waterfront sites, public realm, streetscape, heritage, breezeways and view corridors, stilted structures and specific major land uses.

Landscape Value Mapping of Hong Kong

Development pressures have been increasingly affecting the landscape conditions and environmental quality of Hong Kong. The study aims at establishing the baseline conditions of the landscape resources in the territory thereby providing a systematic reference framework to facilitate landscape assessment and broad environmental assessment of major projects at territorial level.

The study, including the following main tasks, commenced in October 2001 and is expected to be completed by end-2004 :

- developing a landscape classification system and establishing criteria and indicators to evaluate and map the landscape resources of Hong Kong;
- conducting field surveys to gather and analyse relevant information on the conditions of the urban and rural landscape; and

- producing a digitized landscape map on a computer-based geographical information system and a representative landscape indicator for future monitoring of the baseline changes.



Tai Long Wan Beaches, Sai Kung



Long Ke Wan, Sai Kung

Study on Planning for Pedestrians



Streetscape Enhancement in Causeway Bay

The Study aims at formulating a broad planning framework setting out the principles, concepts, guidelines and standard for better pedestrian planning for Hong Kong.

The Study recognizes the importance of walking as a sustainable mode of transport and proposes a number of environmental friendly planning concepts for pedestrian planning :

- the creation of vehicle-free walking environment;

- provision of local facilities and services within walking distance in residential and employment areas;
- concentrating housing and employment centers around railway stations and main public transport termini to encourage walking; and
- introducing a street furniture zone in footpath design to allow for tree planting and landscaping.

The Study has selected Causeway Bay, Central, Kwun Tong and Tai Po Market as Action Areas, where pedestrian plans would be prepared to test the application and implementation of the pedestrian planning framework. The Study is scheduled for completion by end-2004.

Feasibility Study for Establishment of Air Ventilation Assessment System

As an initiative to identify measures to improve the living environment, the Team Clean has proposed to examine the practicality of stipulating air ventilation assessment as one of the considerations for all major development and redevelopment proposals and in future planning; including in particular, the standards, scope and mechanism for application of the assessment system.

On this basis, the Planning Department has commissioned a consultant to undertake the "Feasibility Study for Establishment of Air Ventilation Assessment System" in October 2003.

The primary objective of the Study is to explore the feasibility of establishing some protocols to assess the effects of major planning and development proposals on external air movement for achievement of enhanced macro wind environment.

The study will examine the methodology, standards, scope and mechanism for carrying out such assessment and the practicality, prime-facie reliability, cost-effectiveness or any limitations of adopting the assessment protocols for general application in future planning and development proposals if necessary.

Preparation of Town Plans

There are broadly two types of town plans, namely, statutory and non-statutory plans. Statutory plans include outline zoning plans (OZP) and development permission area plans (DPA Plan) prepared and published by the Town Planning Board under the provision of the Town Planning

Ordinance. Non-statutory plans are prepared within the framework of statutory plans and development strategies and used mainly within the Government. Town plans give an indication of the future land use pattern and provide a basis for planning control and development guidance for public and private developments in planning scheme areas.

Conservation-related uses zoned/rezoned on OZPs/DPA Plans

Designation of conservation-related uses on statutory plans would be more effective to achieve the aim of protecting and conserving the natural characters of ecologically/landscape sensitive sites. As at end-2003, there are approximately 8,847 hectares of land in the New Territories zoned for conservation-related uses under the relevant statutory plans, including "Conservation Area" ("CA"), "Site of Special Scientific Interests" ("SSSI"), "Country Park", "Coastal Protection Area" ("CPA"), and "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Wetland Park", "Comprehensive Development to include Wetland Restoration Area", "Comprehensive Development and Wetland Enhancement Area" and "Comprehensive Development and Wetland Protection Area".

In 2003, approximately 192 and 12 hectares of land were newly zoned and rezoned for conservation-related uses on new and amended statutory plans respectively (Table 2).

Table 2 : Areas of Conservation-related Uses Newly Zoned or Rezoned on Statutory Plans in 2003

	Area Newly Zoned/Rezoned for Conservation-related Uses (ha)
New Plan	
Tai Mong Tsai and Tsam Chuk Wan OZP	191.77
Sub total	191.77
Amended Statutory Plans	
Ma On Shan OZP	11.86
Sub total	11.86
Total	203.63

A brief description of these new and amended statutory plans are given below:

Tai Mong Tsai and Tsam Chuk Wan OZP

Surrounded by Country Parks and overlooking Inner Port Shelter, the Tai Mong Tsai and Tsam Chuk Wan area has high landscape and scenic value. The general planning intention of the Tai Mong Tsai and Tsam Chuk Wan OZP is to conserve the natural environment and the rural character by protecting the natural landscape, topographical features and ecologically sensitive areas from encroachment by development. Natural features in the Area include wooded hillslopes, uplands, knolls, streamcourses and natural coastline. Some of these are important ecological habitats sustaining a diversity of flora and fauna. It is of paramount importance that the ecological and high quality landscape areas should be protected from encroachment by development. The undisturbed woodland on hillslopes and the long shoreline are zoned "CA" and "CPA" respectively.



Scenic coastal area at Tai Mong Tsai

Ma On Shan OZP

Amendments to the OZP have been made to rezone the coastal areas in the eastern and western parts of the Whitehead headland, along Starfish Bay and at To Tau from "Undetermined" to "CA" in recognition of their ecological and archaeological values.

The coastal areas of the Whitehead headland include patches of dense, undisturbed and mature plantations which support a number of bird species. Starfish Bay has long been recognized as a site of ecological interest for academic investigation of inter-tidal habitats and associated fauna and is important both as a natural resource asset and educational and scientific values. The "CA" zone at Starfish Bay together with the Nai Chung "SSSI" would form a continuous conservation belt along the coastline.

The "CA" zone at To Tau covers a mature coastal woodland and a prehistoric archaeological site identified on the raised beach south of To Tau, which are of ecological and archaeological values respectively.

Urban Renewal Projects

With a view to improving the environmental quality of old and run-down urban areas, we work closely with the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and relevant government departments to facilitate the planning and implementation of urban renewal projects.

During the year, we actively involve in monitoring and co-coordinating the planning works of nineteen URA redevelopment projects. Upon completion of these development schemes, the built environment and social environment of these areas will be significantly improved with the provision of additional community facilities and public open space.

(b) Development Control

Development control is one of the key tools for implementing development strategies and town plans and ensuring that development projects are undertaken in an environmentally responsible manner. A significant part of the Department's development control work involves the processing of planning applications submitted under the Town Planning Ordinance and proposed amendments to town plans, and providing comments on proposals submitted under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, conditions for land allocations/grants/exchanges and building plans. Throughout the development control process, pollution issues and the impacts of development projects on visual amenity and natural/cultural heritage are taken into account. The risk implications of potentially hazardous installations on existing and new developments are also monitored.

In 2003, the Department prepared and revised a total of 103 town plans, planning briefs and planning proposals. The Department also processed 883 planning applications and reviewed 139 planning applications, and provided comments on 1,124 development/redevelopment proposals of varying scale and complexity.

From time to time, guidelines and practice notes would be prepared and promulgated to assist practitioner to prepare their development/redevelopment proposals. In 2003, seven guidelines have been revised and one joint-practice note has been promulgated.

(c) Planning Enforcement

Unauthorized developments (UDs) contribute to environmental degradation in the rural areas causing nuisances to local community and damage to habitats of ecologically sensitive areas, and in particular, have created a number of problems such as flooding hazard, air and water pollution,

traffic congestion and safety problem; and even threat to life and property. Planning enforcement and prosecution of unauthorized developments are therefore essential in order to protect the rural environment from further degradation.

Subsequent to the enforcement and prosecution actions undertaken by the Department, 197 UD's (occupying about 55 hectares of land) were discontinued in 2003, and another 226 UD's (occupying about 80 hectares of land) were regularized through the planning application system in the same year. A total of 574 unauthorized development cases were handled in 2003 and the total area involved was about 184 hectares.



Unauthorized open storage site in Shan Ha Tsuen, Yuen Long before taking enforcement action



Open storage site cleared after enforcement action

(d) Awareness/Protection of Environment

Public awareness and participation in green environment are essential components of achieving a sustainable development. Apart from implementing programme on promoting public awareness on environmental sustainability issues, we have also implemented green housekeeping measures in the Department. Some of the programmes and measures are highlighted for general reference.

The Hong Kong Planning and Infrastructure Exhibition Gallery



The Gallery official



y opened by the Chief Executive on 2 July 2002 is to highlight the major planning and infrastructure projects in Hong Kong. The theme and contents of the Gallery are specially designed to cover four major topics, namely, urban planning, tourism, transport and logistics, and environmental protection. In 2003, the Gallery has undertaken extensive outreach and community education programme with schools, community/elderly

centres, housing estates, and local and overseas tour agents. Joint-educational programmes have also been undertaken with professional institutes such as the Hong Kong Institute of Architects and the Hong Kong Institute of Planners. Special guided-tours are conducted for overseas and Mainland delegates. The Gallery received some 48 000 visitors this year.

Outreach Programme

Since 1996, we have organized annual Outreach Programme (OR) for secondary schools to introduce the students the planning system and the services we provide. In 2003, we visited a total of 23 schools and 5 institutes of tertiary education with the theme of OR revolving around the concept of sustainable development. During each visit, we would stage an exhibition and provide the school with a package of information materials. Students were also briefed on a town planning topic of their choice. Starting from this year, exhibitions are also staged in shopping centers to provide opportunities for the general public to learn more about the Department and the work we do.

The Mobile Exhibition Centre

The Mobile Exhibition Centre (MEC) is a LPG vehicle with an eye-catching bright yellow exterior to support the Outreach Programme. The MEC equipped with plasma monitors for audio-visual presentations and touch-screen computers to provide a wealth of planning information. There is also a fold-down platform on one side of the vehicle to function as a stage for out-door events. During 2003, the MEC has visited 15 public housing estates and provided support for 23 school visits.

Environment Awareness

To upkeep the Department's effort in sustaining staff's consciousness in environmental protection, we nominated a number of staff to attend conference/seminars and training courses on topical issues in 2003. These include:

- Seminar on Green Office Management;
- Environmental Awareness Workshop; and
- Seminar on "Working Smart - How to Make a Green Office".

In 2003, 79 staff members (9.7% of Department's establishment) attended environmental training course and seminar. The Green Housekeeping Committee will continue to conduct regular reviews on the Department's training needs in this regard and to identify training opportunities to promote internal staff awareness in environmental management.

Apart from the established programmes to minimize paper consumption, electricity consumption and waste generation, the following activities and new measures were organized and implemented to strengthen green office management and promote staff's environmental awareness in the year:

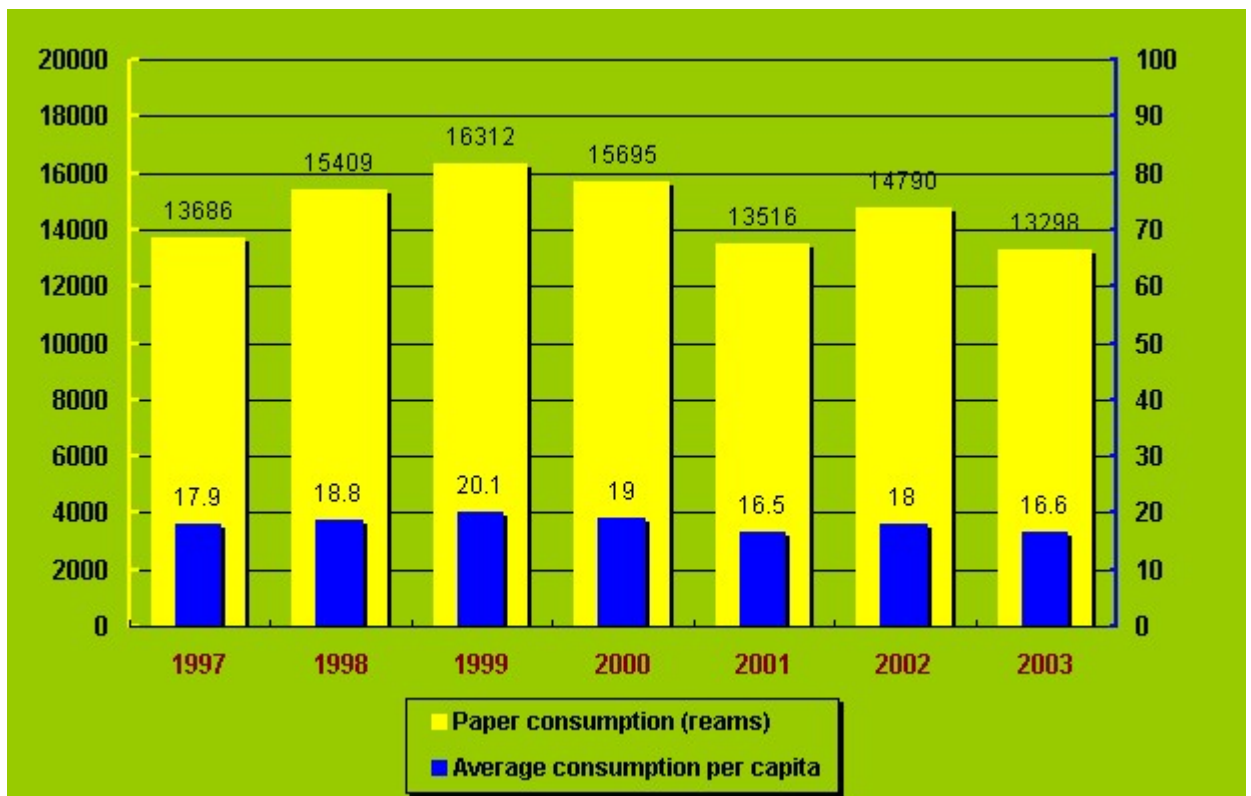
- Staff actively participated in the environmental events held by other organisations, such as the "Walking for a Green and Healthy Hong Kong" by the Environmental Campaign Committee and "The Community Chest's Green Day" by the Hong Kong Community Chest;
- To enhance staff's awareness and participation in implementing green office practices within their sections, a "Green Office Management Inter-sectional Competition" was organised between October and mid-December 2003. Funded as a Staff Motivation Scheme activity, the competition was successful in channeling all staff's support to green office;
- To promote waste reduction and material reuse practices, the Department, as in the last year, organised a Collect-for-Reuse Programme in October 2003. Used clothes, toys, house ware, electrical appliances and computer equipment were collected from staff and channeled to charity agents directly or through the "Trial Recovery Programme for Computers and Electrical Appliances" of the Environmental Protection Department. Staff showed high motivation in working together to help the needy through the green activity;
- A "Green Tips" week was organised in July 2003 during which six short messages with artwork on how to "green" the office were disseminated to staff on Lotus Notes. The Green Tips were also reproduced as memo tags in the staff newsletter, "Planning Voice", for office use. Besides, publicity posters on the Green Tips were distributed to all Sections / Offices to further promote the messages;
- Guided tours to the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden and the Produce Green at Hok Tau, jointly organized with the Planning Department Staff Recreation Club, were held in August and November 2003 respectively to promote green activities and enhance staff's awareness in environmental protection. Both were well received by participants; and

- Two ammonia-free digital plan copiers were purchased to replace the diazo machines for film development.

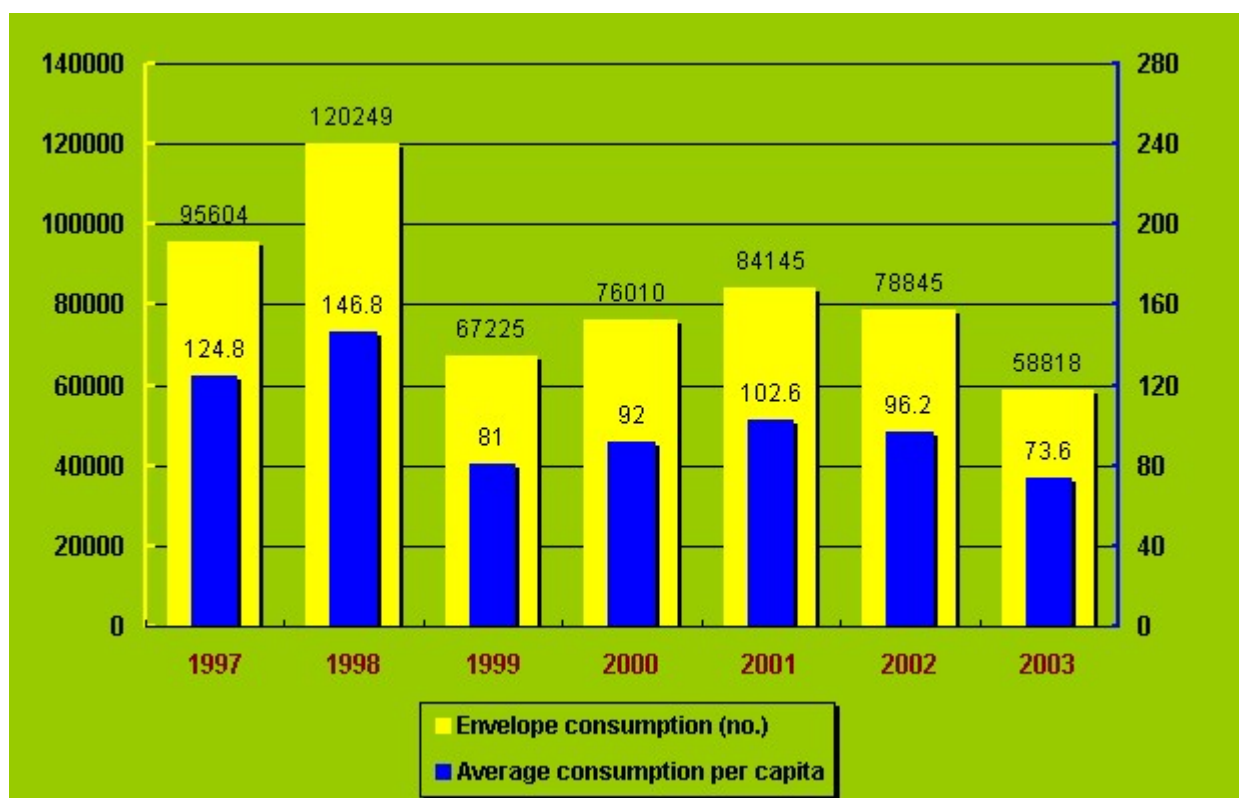
Green Office Management - Performance in 2003

The environmental performance of the Department in terms of paper and envelope is indicated below:

- There was a considerable 10.1% decrease in paper consumption in 2003 which was the lowest over the last seven years. This was mainly attributed to the collaborative efforts of staff on the effective implementation of various implementation of various paper saving measures and the completion of a number of study projects and activities. The Green housekeeping Committee will closely monitor and review the paper requirement for 2004, with a view to sustaining the Department's performance in saving paper.



- There was a considerable 25.4% decrease in respect of consumption of envelopes. The consumption rate was the lowest over the last seven years. This was mainly attributed to staff's prudence in increasing usage of reused envelopes and electronic means for transmitting documents and correspondence. We will upkeep our efforts in seeking continuous improvements.



Regarding electricity consumption, as the building management company of the North Point Government Offices, where about half of the Department's offices are located, has adopted a new basis in recording the electricity meter readings in the building starting from 2003, the 2003 electricity consumption of the Department could not fairly compare with those of previous years and could not reflect our performance on reducing electricity consumption. We will continue to closely monitor the energy consumption in the Department and to encourage colleagues to practise green measures.

Summary of Action and Targets

Development Strategy/Planning Standards/Town Plans

Action	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To undertake the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) to review and update the environmental baseline conditions of Hong Kong thereby assessing the environmental and related infrastructures' capacity and the future demand so as to propose environmental targets for Hong Kong to maintain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To complete the SEA by 2005.

sustainable development.

- To develop a new sustainability indicator on landscape resources and a consistent and systematic framework for assessing broad landscape impacts of individual studies and projects.
- To formulate standards and guidelines for pedestrian planning for reference of government departments and development professionals with a view to promoting better pedestrian planning in the development process.
- To explore the feasibility of establishing some protocols to assess the effects of major planning and development proposals on external air movement for achievement of enhanced macro wind environment.
- To complete the Study of Landscape Value Mapping by end-2004.
- To complete the Study on Planning for Pedestrians by end-2004.
- To complete the Feasibility Study for Establishment of Air Ventilation Assessment System by end-2004.

Planning Enforcement

Action	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To conserve the natural environment and the ecological resources.• To effectively control the spread of unauthorized developments in the rural New Territories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To regularly prepare and revise the statutory town plans in order to provide statutory planning protection to the environment and the natural resources.• To effectively take enforcement actions and instigate prosecution proceedings against unauthorized developments.

Awareness/Protection of Green Environment

Action	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To continue to organise training courses/workshops/seminars to promote staff's consciousness in environment protection and green office management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To implement the initiative in 2004.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To continue to identify and upload Government/departmental forms on the Intranet for staff's easy retrieval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To implement the initiative in 2004.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To continue to organise collection activities to collect used items, such as clothes, toys and electrical appliances from staff for donation to voluntary organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To implement the initiative in 2004.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To organise a "Green Photo Competition" aiming at raising awareness of importance of achieving green environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To implement the initiative in 2004.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To co-organise with the Planning Department Staff Recreation Club an outing to promote environmental awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To implement the initiative in 2004.

Feedback

We will issue the Environmental Report annually and strive to seek continual improvement of the environmental management and performance of the Department through regularly reviewing the

environmental impacts of our activities and closely monitoring the progress of our environmental initiatives.

Comments and suggestions on the Environmental Report are welcome as a way to improve our environmental performance. Please send your suggestions and comments to our Green Manager at the following address or e-mail to tspd@pland.gov.hk. You may also contact us at telephone number 2231 5000 and by writing to the Green Manager, Planning Department, 17/F North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong.