

Environmentally Responsible Development

Preamble

Environmentally responsible development is about the delivery of a better quality of life for every one of our citizens, for now and for generations to come. We will support environmental protection and promote sustainable development. We must tackle immediate problems – air pollution from power plants and vehicle emissions, and water pollution in the harbour – with renewed vigour and determination. We owe it to future generations to act now and preserve the environment through the promulgation of sound policies on nature conservation, waste reduction and recycling, total water management and greening as well as the implementation of effective programmes. The community, the business sector and the Government are stakeholders as much as they are partners in the protection and improvement of our environment. It is incumbent upon all parties to take up this responsibility to collaborate fully, working together with commitment to Hong Kong – a place where we and our children build our sustainable home.

New Initiatives

We will:

- Encourage owners of old diesel commercial vehicles to replace their old vehicles by offering one-off grant.
- Consult the public on legislating on whether to introduce a law to ban idling vehicles from running their engines.
- Provide tax incentives to encourage the use of environment friendly cars.
- Launch in 2007 a comprehensive study to review Hong Kong's Air Quality Objectives and to develop a long-term strategy on air quality management, followed by a thorough public engagement process.
- Prepare legislation for the introduction of producer responsibility schemes in Hong Kong to encourage waste reduction, recovery and recycling.
- Upgrade the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre in 2008-09 to meet the latest air-emission standards of the European Union.
- Request the Central Government to make arrangements for applying the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade to the HKSAR after the enactment of the Hazardous Chemicals Control Bill to regulate non-pesticide hazardous chemicals.

- Initiate a study on the general strategy for replacement of aged electrical and mechanical services assets on government premises to meet modern day requirements, including the wider use of environment friendly installations.
- Introduce legislation to mandate the installation of catalysts by long-idling pre-Euro heavy diesel vehicles.
- Commence the drafting of the relevant legislation on a mandatory building inspection scheme and a mandatory window inspection scheme to require private building owners to inspect their buildings and windows regularly, and to carry out the necessary rectification works in order to prevent the problem of building neglect, as well as put in place support measures.

Ongoing Initiatives

We are:

- Continuing the public engagement process for the Sustainable Development Strategy for Hong Kong, with the aim of encouraging greater public awareness of and participation in this process.
- Implementing a comprehensive greening strategy to improve the living environment of Hong Kong as well as make it a green model for Asia. Apart from continuous efforts to meet annual planting targets and review current government procedures and guidelines, we are actively pursuing the development and implementation of Greening Master Plans (GMPs). Our intention is to develop GMPs for the vast majority of urban areas in around four years. In developing the GMPs, we will adopt an Enhanced Partnering Approach which involves consultation with District Councils and the local community at the early stage. In 2006-07, we will organise 40 garden courses for the Community Garden Programme in 18 districts and will continue to organise various greening and horticultural activities to promote greater public awareness and support for a green environment.
- Continuing to achieve the objective of decking 16 sections of nullahs by 2014 to improve the living environment. We have completed three sections and expect to complete another five by end 2007 and the remaining in phases. The land obtained from decking of the nullahs will be used for public purposes such as greening, amenity and road widening.

- Actively proceeding with the Total Water Management programme. Water conservation and water resource protection are promoted through various educational and publicity means. Further to the completion of the one-year pilot study on desalination in Tuen Mun, we are now conducting another study in Ap Lei Chau. On the side of exploring uses of reclaimed water, we have commissioned the pilot scheme at Ngong Ping in March 2006 and are currently proceeding with the second one in Shek Wu Hui.
- Promoting the wider use of energy efficient devices and adoption of renewable energy systems in public works projects.
- Implementing the flood prevention programme to enhance the protection level in flood prone areas. We have completed 36 major flood prevention projects since 1997 and effectively minimised the risk of regional flooding. At present, there are 17 projects under construction. The Drainage Rehabilitation Works at Ping Yuen River were completed in early 2006. With this and the completion of the Regulation of Shenzhen River Stage III scheduled for end 2006, the risk of flooding in the northern New Territories will be greatly reduced. In addition, 14 projects are under planning including those six which aim to alleviate the flooding risk of urban areas at northern Hong Kong Island, East Kowloon and West Kowloon.
- Continuing with the Landslip Preventive Measures Programme which has greatly improved slope safety and visual impact of the built environment. We will upgrade another selected batch of 250 substandard government slopes as well as conduct safety-screening for another 300 private slopes in the coming year.

- Reviewing the Landslip Preventive Measures Programme to identify possible scope for improving the cost-effectiveness of slope upgrading works, as well as developing a risk-based priority ranking system for dealing with natural terrain susceptible to potential landslips, and formulating a strategy to deal with slopes formed with old technologies.
- Continuing to pursue the phased implementation of Stage 2 of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme with the aim of completing Stage 2A by 2013-14, and advancing the provision of disinfection at the Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works with a target completion of 2008-09. However, this is subject to the acceptance by the community of the need for the full recurrent costs to be recovered through the sewage services charging scheme. The timing for Stage 2B will be subject to further review in 2010-11.
- Implementing “the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Implementation Plan” for meeting the obligations under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, which was submitted to the Central Government in September 2006.
- Continuing to monitor the progress of the power companies in implementing pilot commercial-scale wind energy projects for public demonstration and evaluation purposes and promoting the wider application of renewable energy, following the commissioning of the first commercial-scale wind turbine on Lamma Island in February 2006.
- Continuing to review the existing sewage services charging scheme according to the “polluter-pays” principle and devise measures to rationalise the schemes so as to achieve an equitable sharing of the funding responsibility in respect of the provision of sewage services.

- Continuing to make possible the reuse of inert construction and demolition materials outside Hong Kong. After a tendering exercise, the first batch of public fill is scheduled to be delivered for use in Mainland reclamation projects by the first quarter of 2007.
- Continuing with the implementation of the Regional Air Quality Management Plan with the Guangdong Provincial Government including efforts to reduce the emission of four major air pollutants in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) to reach the agreed levels by 2010, through the retrofit programme of desulphurisation plants, upgrading of vehicle standards (National III (on a par with Euro III) for Guangdong, Euro IV for Hong Kong), adoption of cleaner production technologies for industries and the introduction of a pilot emissions trading scheme among power plants in Hong Kong and Guangdong to optimise the use of resources in the reduction of air emissions under the same air shed. The PRD regional air quality monitoring network was commissioned on 30 November 2005, with the daily release of the Regional Air Quality Index, thereby allowing the public to understand the regional air quality situation.
- Continuing to impose caps on the total emissions of power companies and requiring them to maximise the use of natural gas in power generation. Emission caps have been imposed onto Castle Peak, Black Point and Lamma Power Stations through their renewed licences.
- Overseeing the implementation of the pilot scheme on management agreement and Public-Private-Partnership promulgated under the New Nature Conservation Policy, with the objective of enhancing conservation of ecologically important habitats on private land.

- Promoting the use of environment friendly buses by implementing the provision added in the new bus franchises on the adoption of the latest commercially available and proven environment friendly technologies for acquiring new buses, encouraging bus companies to deploy cleaner vehicles along busy corridors, including the provision of environment friendly measures as appropriate as a criterion in selecting operators for new bus route packages and enhancing bus service rationalisation to reduce roadside air pollution, noise nuisance, traffic congestion and energy consumption.
- Introducing a new statutory regulation to impose maximum limits on the volatile organic compound content of paints, printing inks and selected consumer products, with the limits to be enforced in phases from 2007 to 2010.
- Consulting the stakeholders on a proposal in 2007 to strengthen the control of emissions from petrol and Liquefied Petroleum Gas vehicles including the use of roadside remote sensing equipment and the use of dynamometers for emission testings.
- Tightening vehicle emission standards to Euro IV in tandem with the European Union.
- Working towards the implementation of “A Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste in Hong Kong (2005-2014)”, which adopts the “polluter-pays” principle to induce behavioural changes to ultimately reduce waste. Major policy initiatives include introducing producer responsibility legislation, establishing the EcoPark, introducing municipal solid waste charging, extending the capacities of the existing landfills, and developing long-term plans for state-of-the-art large-scale waste treatment facilities. These initiatives are being pursued in partnership with the public and the industry and through

enhanced community educational efforts. We will continue to work closely with the estate management and the residents to implement the territory wide source separation of waste programme. Phase I of the EcoPark in Tuen Mun Area 38, designated for the development of recycling and environmental industries, will be available for leasing towards the end of 2006. The feasibility and environmental impact assessment studies on landfill extensions are ongoing.

- Securing the early passage of the Hazardous Chemicals Control Bill (i.e. legislation to regulate non-pesticide hazardous chemicals, including those covered in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade) by the Legislative Council.
- Introducing new legislation for a mandatory energy efficiency labelling scheme help consumers to choose energy efficient electric appliances.
- Refining the Building Management Ordinance to improve certain provisions in the legislation for the benefit of owners' corporations and property owners.
- Continuing to closely work with the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority to assist owners of older buildings to properly manage and maintain their buildings. We are also continuing our efforts to enhance building management and maintenance of private buildings through public education, publicity and participation of professional bodies.
- Ensuring that our planning and land use objectives are geared towards our mission to protect the Victoria Harbour and enhance it for the enjoyment of our residents and visitors alike, with the

participation of the community. Apart from Central, Wan Chai North and Kai Tak, the Government will not undertake any further reclamation in the Harbour. Our policy will be reflected in relevant town plans.

- Developing a land use, transport and environment strategy under the Hong Kong 2030 Study to guide the long-term development of Hong Kong.
- Developing a performance-based regulatory system to facilitate modern and innovative building design.
- Finalising the proposals on a minor works control system to streamline statutory procedures for processing such works in order to improve the legislative framework for building control and building safety. We will introduce amendments to the Buildings Ordinance to implement the minor works control system.
- Consulting various stakeholders with a view to formulating preliminary proposals on the review of small house policy for more in-depth discussion and implementing a set of streamlined procedures to speed up the processing of small house applications.