
Chapter 5

Environment and Conservation

Preamble

Sustainable development requires a proper balance among environmental protection, heritage conservation, economic development and providing for social needs.

This Administration has laid a solid foundation for environmental protection in its first year by mapping out clear targets and work plans for air quality and waste management in two published blueprints. We are taking concrete steps to actualize the blueprints through various initiatives and programmes. The challenges to improving air quality and reducing waste are huge. However, in partnership with the public, we are determined to make significant progress during this term of office.

The community is increasingly aware of the impact on their quality of life if we fail to conserve our natural environment. A major effort to address this issue is our work to develop a Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Hong Kong as part of our commitment under the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity.

To meet the concerns of climate change, we have redoubled our efforts on various initiatives to achieve higher energy efficiency and promote a less carbon intensive lifestyle.

To make Hong Kong a better city for all, we will continue to enhance infrastructure to provide a safe and quality living environment. At the same time, we will improve the greening, landscape and tree management regime through the adoption of a holistic and professional approach as well as engaging stakeholders under the “Be Our Greening Partner” Campaign.

We wish to preserve the city’s charm whilst respecting the need for development. Together with the Antiquities Advisory Board, we will consult the public on the way forward for our built heritage conservation policy.

New Initiatives

We will:

Air Quality

- Review the third technical memorandum in 2014 for tightening the air pollutant emission caps on power companies from 2019 onwards. (ENB)
- Starting from the first quarter of 2014, accept applications for ex-gratia grants under the subsidy scheme to phase out some 80 000 diesel commercial vehicles of emission standards at Euro III or those adopted before to improve roadside air quality. (ENB)
- Launch a pilot scheme to enable electric taxi suppliers setting up quick chargers in the car parks administered by the Transport Department to facilitate the expansion of the electric taxi fleet. The Government will also establish 100 medium-speed chargers to shorten the charging time of electric vehicles. (ENB)
- In collaboration with the governments of Guangdong and Macao, enhance the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network with a view to providing more comprehensive air quality information to the public. (ENB)
- Commence a study with the governments of Guangdong and Macao on fine suspended particulates (PM_{2.5}) for the Pearl River Delta region to provide robust scientific basis in mapping out the strategies for further improvement of the regional air quality. (ENB)

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- Explore with Guangdong the co-operation in air pollution forecasting and joint effort in promoting regional air pollution prevention. (ENB)

Waste Management

- Draw up comprehensive strategy and plan for the reduction, recycling and treatment of food waste and yard waste. (ENB)
- Earmark \$1 billion to set up a Recycling Fund in support of the sustainable development of the recycling industry. The Steering Committee to Promote the Sustainable Development of the Recycling Industry will study in depth the specific uses of the fund, and will consult stakeholders in the process. (ENB)
- Develop Community Green Stations in phases in each of the 18 districts. (ENB)
- Earmark \$1 billion to set up a Restored Landfill Revitalisation Funding Scheme for application by non-profit making organisations or “national sports associations” to develop recreational, environmental and other uses beneficial to the community at restored landfills. (ENB)

Energy

- Launch a public consultation on the future fuel mix for electricity generation in Hong Kong. (ENB)
- Commence the review of the future regulatory framework for the electricity market. (ENB)

Water Quality

- Conduct a consultancy study to explore various practicable options to effectively reduce near shore pollution and enhance the water quality of the coastal waters of the Victoria Harbour with a view to improving the environment of both sides of the harbour. (ENB)

Green Construction

- Introduce measures to promote low carbon construction, carbon reduction and the use of recycled materials in public works projects. These include –
 - taking forward the use of electric vehicles in works projects;
 - using biodiesel as fuel for selected construction machineries in some construction sites;
 - promoting the adoption of green site offices; and
 - conducting trials on the use of waste glass as engineering fill materials in site formation, backfilling and reclamation projects. (DEVB)

On-going Initiatives

We are:

Improving Air Quality

(a) Greening Road Transport

- Encouraging the transport sector and non-profit making organisations to test out green and innovative transport technologies through the Pilot Green Transport Fund. (ENB)
- Implementing a one-off subsidy scheme for the replacement of catalytic converters on liquefied petroleum gas taxis and minibuses to reduce vehicular emissions. Remote sensing equipment will be deployed for surveillance purpose. (ENB)
- Providing funding support for franchised bus companies to retrofit Euro II and III franchised buses with selective catalytic reduction devices to reduce roadside air pollution. (ENB)
- Setting statutory emission standards for non-road mobile machinery newly supplied for local use to reduce air pollution. (ENB)
- Continuing to procure more electric vehicles, subject to the availability of suitable models in the market and the operational needs of government bureaux and departments. (ENB)

(b) Reducing Marine Emissions

- Making legislation to mandate the use of low sulphur fuel by ocean-going vessels berthing in Hong Kong waters to reduce marine emissions. (ENB)
- Upgrading the quality of local marine diesel to reduce marine emissions. (ENB)
- Conducting a technical feasibility study on the setting up of an onshore power supply system at Kai Tak Cruise Terminal. (ENB)

(c) Regional Co-operation

- Implementing the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan together with the Guangdong Provincial Government to achieve the emission reduction targets for 2015 and 2020. (ENB)
- Exploring with the Guangdong Provincial Government the feasibility of mandating fuel switch at berth in Pearl River Delta ports. (ENB)

(d) Others

- Implementing the new Air Quality Health Index to provide health-based air quality information to the public. (ENB)
- Banning the import, transshipment, supply and new use of all forms of asbestos to strengthen protection of public health. (ENB)

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- Making preparations for setting up a general air quality monitoring station in Tseung Kwan O to provide air quality information. (ENB)

Enhancing Waste Management

(a) Reducing Waste and Promoting Recycling

- Implementing the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign and various initiatives to promote reduction of food waste. (ENB)
- Supporting the Council for Sustainable Development in conducting public engagement on how to implement quantity-based municipal solid waste charging to promote the reduction of waste. (ENB)

(b) Implementing Producer Responsibility Schemes

- Stepping up publicity and public education in preparation of the extension of the Environmental Levy Scheme on Plastic Shopping Bags. (ENB)
- Developing legislative proposals and the treatment facility for the mandatory Producer Responsibility Scheme on waste electrical and electronic equipment. (ENB)
- Drawing up detailed proposals for the mandatory Producer Responsibility Scheme on glass beverage bottles. (ENB)

(c) Developing Waste Treatment and Disposal Facilities

- Pursuing landfill extensions. (ENB)

- Completing the tendering of the first phase Organic Waste Treatment Facilities for food waste treatment. (ENB)
- Completing the feasibility study for the second phase Organic Waste Treatment Facilities for food waste treatment, and planning for tendering of the project. (ENB)
- Planning for tendering of the first phase Integrated Waste Management Facilities for municipal solid waste treatment. (ENB)

Combating Climate Change and Energy Conservation

- Mapping out implementation strategies and detailed recommendations for promoting green building. (ENB)
- Implementing the Buildings Energy Efficiency Ordinance and reviewing the minimum energy performance standards of lighting installations. (ENB)
- Implementing the district cooling system at Kai Tak Development, which has commenced its initial phase of operation, to meet the demand for air-conditioning of public and private non-domestic developments. (ENB)
- Implementing the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme and reviewing its scope and grading structure. (ENB)
- Continuing the three-year programme initiated in 2012 to carry out carbon audits on major government buildings and public facilities to identify carbon reduction opportunities for managing local greenhouse gas emissions. (ENB)

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- Developing a carbon footprint repository to encourage listed companies to participate in carbon auditing and disclosure, and share best practices in carbon management. (ENB)
 - Developing proposals to address concerns on external lighting in light of the recommendations of the Task Force on External Lighting. (ENB)

Improving Water Quality

- Implementing Stage 2A of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme with the aim of completing the major construction works within 2014. (ENB)

Total Water Management Strategy

- Conducting a review of the Total Water Management Strategy with an aim to ensuring sustainable use of precious water resources and timely introduction of new initiatives to strengthen our resilience and preparedness against uncertainties and challenges. (DEVB)

Water Conservation and Reclamation

- Implementing the “Let’s save 10L water” campaign and the “Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme” to promote public awareness of water conservation and facilitate users’ choice of water efficient plumbing fixtures and appliances. (DEVB)
- Exploring the use of reclaimed water for toilet flushing and other non-potable uses in Sheung Shui, Fanling and the new development areas in the north-eastern part of the New Territories. (DEVB)

Supporting Community Green Actions

- Enhancing community participation in waste reduction, energy and water conservation through district-based education, promotion and publicity programmes as well as activities organised or sponsored by District Councils. (ENB)
- Providing long-term and sustained support for green actions initiated by the community through investment returns generated from the injection of \$5 billion into the Environment and Conservation Fund. (ENB)

Promoting Green Economy

- Actively applying green specifications in government procurement as well as cleansing and vehicle hiring service contracts. We are also seeking to widen the scope of green procurement in public works projects. (ENB)
- Supporting the local environmental industry to participate in environmental exhibitions, trade missions and related events to promote the industry and explore business opportunities in the Mainland and overseas markets. (ENB)
- Implementing the “Cleaner Production Partnership Programme” to assist Hong Kong-owned factories in Hong Kong and Guangdong in adopting cleaner production technologies and practices. (ENB)

Promoting Nature Conservation

- Implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. We are formulating the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Hong Kong to enhance the conservation of biodiversity. (ENB)
- Implementing measures to better protect country park enclaves, in particular those found suitable to be included as part of the country parks. (ENB)
- Taking forward the proposal to improve marine ecosystems and providing better protection for marine organisms. (ENB)
- Taking forward initiatives including the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund and the issue of new marine fish culture licences in fish culture zones to support the fisheries industry following implementation of the trawl ban. (FHB)

Greening, Landscape and Tree Management

- Improving the greening, landscape and tree management regime through –
 - embracing quality landscape planning and design in the upstream and professional vegetation management and maintenance in the downstream;
 - better co-ordination across departments;
 - enhancement of professional expertise; and
 - increased community involvement. (DEVB)

- Engaging stakeholders in wider promotion of greening, landscape and tree management, through the “Be Our Greening Partner” Campaign. (DEVB)
- Reviewing the existing arrangements for tree risk management and enhancing manpower development to protect public safety. (DEVB)
- Developing Greening Master Plans for the New Territories. (DEVB)

Heritage Conservation

- Reviewing the policy on the conservation of built heritage in Hong Kong and preparing for consulting the public on the way forward. (DEVB)
- Working closely with the selected non-profit making organisations to implement projects in the first three batches of buildings under the “Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme”. (DEVB)
- Proceeding with the launch of the fourth batch of historic buildings under the “Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme”. (DEVB)
- Taking forward the conservation and revitalisation of the Central Police Station Compound in partnership with the Hong Kong Jockey Club. (DEVB)

Safe and Quality Living Environment

- Implementing measures to enhance building design to foster a quality and sustainable built environment and to control the problem of “inflated buildings”. (DEVB)
- Continuing the Landslip Prevention and Mitigation Programme to –
 - upgrade and landscape Government man-made slopes;
 - mitigate the landslide risk of natural terrain with known hazards; and
 - conduct safety screening studies for private slopes. (DEVB)
- Conducting studies to –
 - assess the flood risk levels of rivers in rural areas; and
 - develop flood warning systems and mitigation measures for flood prone rivers. (DEVB)
- Constructing an underground stormwater storage tank to relieve the flooding risks in Happy Valley and adjacent areas. (DEVB)
- Reviewing the Drainage Master Plans in East Kowloon, West Kowloon, Shatin, Tai Po and Sai Kung to assess the flooding risks in these districts and propose improvement measures. (DEVB)

- Reconstructing and revitalising the Kai Tak Nullah into a green river corridor through the urban areas, namely the Kai Tak River. The project will be completed by phases starting from 2016. (DEVB)

- Continuing with the programme of decking and/or landscaping of 16 sections of nullahs to improve the living environment of adjacent areas. Of these, 14 sections were completed and the remaining will be completed in stages from 2015 onwards. (DEVB)

- Carrying out the design of the improvement work for the Yuen Long Town Centre Nullah to enhance the local environment quality and the ecological value of the nullah. (DEVB)