

# 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 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:*

- Introduce a Bill to amend the Building Management Ordinance to improve certain provisions in the legislation for the benefit of owners' corporations and property owners.
- Develop a performance-based regulatory system to facilitate modern and innovative building design.
- Solicit the support of the Hong Kong Housing Society to provide assistance to owners of old buildings so as to promote proper management and maintenance of such buildings.
- Develop a programme for implementing Harbour Area Treatment Scheme Stage 2 in the light of the outcome of the public consultation exercise on the way forward.
- Draw up an action timetable for implementing the requirements of the Stockholm Convention concerning regulation of persistent organic pollutants.
- Consult the public and the trades on a mandatory energy efficiency labelling scheme to facilitate consumers to choose energy efficient equipment.
- Review the existing sewage services charging scheme according to the "polluter-pays" principle with a view to achieving an equitable sharing of the funding responsibility in respect of the provision of sewage services.
- Draw up measures to promote and facilitate the development of the recycling industry under the environmental industry policy.

- Roll out a territory-wide source separation campaign (based on the results of pilot schemes on separation of domestic waste) to encourage households to separate waste at source, thereby improving recovery and reducing waste.
- Strengthen cooperation with Guangdong to improve the air quality of the Pearl River Delta Region. In 2005, we will start monitoring jointly the air quality of the region and discuss the introduction of further enhanced emission control measures.
- Introduce a Product Responsibility Scheme for waste tyres to provide an incentive for stakeholders to reuse or recycle waste tyres, thereby reducing the volume of tyres to be disposed of in landfills.

## Ongoing Initiatives

*We are:*

- Implementing a comprehensive greening policy for Hong Kong through the collaboration of different departments and with the input of experts and specialists in the field, and aiming to develop a sustainable greening programme for the urban areas. We have set up a high level Steering Committee on Greening, completed the planting of 16 million trees, shrubs and annuals in 2003-04, and will complete the planting of another 10 million in 2004-05. We also aim to produce greening master plans for Tsim Sha Tsui and Central by around mid 2005 so that works can start. Six community gardens in different districts have been established in 2004. The programme will be extended to cover all districts in 2005-06. We are also organising various greening and horticulture activities to promote public support for a green environment.
- Continuing our efforts to enhance building management and maintenance of private housing through public education, publicity and participation of professional bodies. We are working towards a second stage public consultation focusing on the feasibility of introducing mandatory building inspections in response to public views.
- 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. 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.

- Streamlining the town planning process under the Town Planning Ordinance and enhancing openness of the planning system.
- Undertaking a review of the urban regeneration policy with a view to speeding up urban renewal, including a review of the Urban Renewal Strategy and examination of ways to facilitate private sector participation in urban renewal.
- Drawing up 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.
- Consulting various stakeholders with a view to formulating preliminary proposals on small house policy for more in-depth discussion.
- Reviewing the development intensity in public housing projects to enhance the living environment and cost-effectiveness within permitted plot ratio.
- Establishing an engagement process that facilitates public participation in formulating a sustainable development strategy for Hong Kong.
- Encouraging the power companies to undertake pilot production-scale wind energy projects for public demonstration and evaluation purposes and continue to promote the wider application of renewable energy.
- Identifying the viable technologies to be adopted with a view to developing state-of-the-art, cost-effective and environmentally friendly large-scale waste treatment facilities in Hong Kong. We will consult the public on the options to be adopted.
- Continuing to implement the “polluter-pays” principle. We will introduce a disposal charging scheme for construction and demolition waste. This will provide economic incentives to reduce such waste and carry out sorting to facilitate reuse or recycling.

- Continuing to explore opportunities to reuse inert construction and demolition materials outside Hong Kong. We signed a Cooperation Agreement on Cross-boundary Marine Dumping with the State Oceanic Administration on 31 March 2004 to provide a foundation for the accommodation of inert construction and demolition materials in Mainland waters. We will continue our collaboration with the construction industry and relevant authorities on the identification of land formation projects in the Mainland to reuse our inert materials.
- Working towards the implementation of the Regional Air Quality Management Plan with the Guangdong Provincial Government including studying 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 emissions in the same air shed to improve air quality in the Pearl River Delta region.
- Striving to reduce by 2010 the emission of four major air pollutants in the region by such levels as will enable Hong Kong to achieve the current air quality objectives.
- Implementing an incentive scheme to encourage replacement of diesel light buses with liquefied petroleum gas or electric light buses.
- Implementing the programme to retrofit pre-Euro heavy diesel vehicles with catalysts through provision of financial assistance and introducing legislation to make the installation mandatory upon completion of the retrofit programme.
- Overseeing the implementation of the new nature conservation policy including a pilot scheme on the improvement proposals of management agreement and public-private partnership, with the objective of better achieving the nature conservation objective, in particular enhancing conservation of ecologically important habitats on private land.
- Promoting the use of environmentally friendly buses by adding a provision in new bus franchises on the adoption of the latest commercially available and proven environmentally friendly technologies for acquiring new buses, encouraging bus companies to

deploy cleaner vehicles along busy corridors and including the provision of environmentally friendly measures as appropriate as a criterion in selecting operators for new bus route packages.

- Rolling out the Total Water Management programme to promote water conservation and water resource protection through education and publicity by commissioning a pilot desalination plant in Tuen Mun to collect test data and canvass public acceptance, and by planning two pilot schemes at the Ngong Ping Sewage Treatment Plant and the Shek Wu Hui Sewage Treatment Plant to explore alternative use of reclaimed water.
- Sustaining our efforts to encourage the wider use of recycled construction and demolition materials in public works projects.
- Implementing the flood prevention programme by completing 26 major flood prevention projects since 1997, carrying out 17 and putting 19 under planning and design. We will have substantially minimised the risk of regional flooding in the northern New Territories by 2006 upon the completion of Regulation of Shenzhen River Stage III and Drainage Rehabilitation Works at Ping Yuen River.
- Continuing with the Landslip Preventive Measures Programme which has greatly improved slope safety and visual impact of the built environment. We will upgrade and landscape 250 substandard government slopes as well as conduct safety-screening for 300 private slopes in the coming year.
- Reviewing the Landslip Preventive Measures Programme to identify possible scope for improved cost-effectiveness of the slope upgrading works.