

**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06**

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Session No.: 17

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Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(E)01

Question Serial No.

S60

Head : 44 Environmental Protection
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (6) Nature Conservation

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) /
Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : The Government is launching a pilot scheme for 12 identified priority sites for enhanced conservation. As the development scheme concerned is related to the overall nature conservation planning of the Government, please inform us:

- (1) How much resources have been earmarked by the Government for transforming the pilot conservation scheme from a trial basis to its full implementation?
- (2) Will the Government provide free technical support on nature conservation matters to the landowners participating in the scheme concerned?
- (3) Will the Government set up a trust fund to ensure that the land development projects under the scheme concerned would not end up halfway unfinished?

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply : (1) Under the new nature conservation policy announced in November 2004, the Administration will implement a pilot scheme for the two new conservation measures, viz. management agreements and public-private partnership (PPP), to enhance conservation of the 12 priority sites. A sum of \$5 million has been allocated from the Environment and Conservation Fund for implementing the pilot scheme for management agreements. Proposals submitted under the PPP option will be examined on their individual merits. The resource implications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

We will review the effectiveness of the implementation of management agreements and PPP in two to three years' time. We will take into account the review findings and the corresponding resource implications before deciding the way forward.

- (2) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will be involved in the selection of projects for the pilot scheme. AFCD will also oversee their implementation and provide professional advice to the project proponents of the pilot scheme.
- (3) In selecting projects for the pilot scheme, we will evaluate the sustainability of the projects, taking into account factors such as the participation of landowners and local communities, as well as the reliability and enforceability of the agreements. We will formulate appropriate provisions according to the nature of individual management agreements and PPP projects to ensure their enforceability. Proper monitoring mechanism will be put in place to oversee the implementation of these projects. As such, we do not consider it necessary to set up a conservation trust at this stage.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Post Title _____

Date _____

K. K. Kwok

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Environment) / Director
of Environmental Protection

18 April 2005

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(E)02

Question Serial No.

S61

Head : 44 Environmental Protection
Department

Subhead (No. & title): 700
General non-recurrent (Item
548 – Consultancy study on
the air pollution problems in
the Pearl River Delta Region)

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works
(Environment) / Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : Due to the geographical tie between Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region, our air quality has been affected by air pollution sources from PRD in recent years with the New Territories being worst affected and thus having become the air pollution “black spot” of Hong Kong. Please advise

- (1) the progress of the study on the air pollution problems in the PRD region,
- (2) when concrete pollution control measures are expected to be made, and
- (3) whether allocation of additional resources or resource reallocation will be considered to expedite the study as well as the implementation of the air pollution control measures.

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply : The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) of Hong Kong and the Environmental Protection Bureau of Guangdong Province completed a joint study on regional air quality in 2002. Based on findings of the study, the governments of the Hong Kong SAR and Guangdong reached a consensus in April 2002 to aim at cutting emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, respirable suspended particulates and volatile organic compounds by 40%, 20%, 55% and 55% respectively in 2010, taking 1997 as base year. Upon the achievement of these targets, the air quality in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta (PRD) will significantly improve.

Under the regional air quality management plan, both sides will continue to make joint efforts in 2005-06 to reduce emissions from various pollution sources. In Hong Kong, we are discussing with power companies about further reducing their emissions, making preparations for tightening vehicle emission standards to the Euro IV level from January 2006, and working out a proposal for reducing volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from certain VOC containing products. In Guangdong, efforts are being made to retrofit its power stations with flue gas desulphurisation systems by 2007, to construct four liquefied natural gas power plants by 2006 and to further tighten motor vehicle emission standards by 2005. These measures are making progress as scheduled.

To monitor the effectiveness of the measures, both governments are working together on the setting up of a regional monitoring network for the PRD region and are preparing a regional emissions inventory. The regional monitoring network has been on trial since January 2005. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the trials, a joint data centre will be set up to announce the monitoring results to the public as soon as possible.

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S-ETWB(E)02

Question Serial No.

S61

We are implementing the regional air quality improvement measures by the current staff and resources. Additional expenditure in 2005-06 is not required. However, two permanent directorate grade posts have been created in EPD from 1 April 2005 to strengthen the work related to cross-boundary environmental issues. Tackling the regional air pollution problem will be one of the priorities of this team.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>K. K. Kwok</u>
Post Title	<u>Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) / Director of Environmental Protection</u>
Date	<u>18 April 2005</u>

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(E)03

Question Serial No.

S62

Head : 44 Environmental Protection
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) /
Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : With respect to "work jointly with the Guangdong authorities to set up an emissions trading pilot scheme among power stations in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta region" as stated by the Government, please advise

- (1) the number and names of the power stations in Hong Kong and the Mainland participating in the pilot scheme,
- (2) the quantity of the air pollution sources involved,
- (3) the amount of money involved,
- (4) the progress of the scheme, and
- (5) whether the air pollution level of Hong Kong will be aggravated.

Asked by : Hon. LAM Wai-keung, Daniel

Reply : Details of the emissions trading pilot scheme are being developed. The Hong Kong/Guangdong Joint Working Group on Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection agreed in December 2004 to provide a study report to the two governments by mid-2006 and present in the third quarter of 2006 the details of the Pilot Scheme to the power plants in Hong Kong and Guangdong so that the prospective participants can identify their trading partners and draw up the emissions trading agreements. More details will be available by then. The work will be carried out by existing staff of the Environmental Protection Department and no additional resources will be required.

With the cooperation of Guangdong, we are implementing the regional air quality management plan which comprises a number of measures to improve air pollution including the emissions trading pilot scheme. We expect the air quality of the Pearl River Delta Region and Hong Kong to improve significantly when all the measures are fully implemented.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	K. K. Kwok
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) / Director of Environmental Protection
Date	18 April 2005

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2005-06
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-ETWB(E)04

Question Serial No.

SV38

Head : 44 Environmental Protection
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (2) Air

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) /
Director of Environmental Protection

Director of Bureau : Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Question : (Follow up to reply serial no. ETWB(E)060)

The Administration to provide a breakdown on the number/nature of complaints received by the Environmental Protection Interactive Centre and the follow-up actions taken.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Kin-yee, Miriam

Reply : The Environmental Protection Interactive Centre (the Centre) has been in operation since April 2004. To phase in the operation, the centre handled only complaints against smoky vehicles in the first year and there were 1420 complaints received through the Centre in 2004-05. On receipt of these complaints, the Environmental Protection Department would issue advisory letters to the vehicle owners requesting them to fix the vehicle smoke problems. Starting from April 2005, the service of the Centre has been extended to all environmental complaints.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

K. K. Kwok

Permanent Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Environment) / Director
of Environmental Protection

18 April 2005