

## **Advisory Council on the Environment**

### **A Position Paper on the “Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)”**

The Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) welcomes the publication of and fully supports the initiatives in the “Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)”.

2. The ACE discussed the “Policy Framework” at its regular meeting on 21 December 2005 and expressed strong and unanimous support to the “Policy Framework”. The ACE commended the Administration’s determination to tackle the municipal solid waste (MSW) problem in a comprehensive and holistic manner. In particular, the ACE endorsed the principle of “polluter pays”, and considered that members of the public should all share the responsibility of solving the MSW problem. The ACE lauded the Administration for taking the lead and setting the right direction for the public in this regard.

3. Given the seriousness and imminence of the MSW problem, the ACE urged the Administration to implement the key initiatives in the “Policy Framework” in accordance with the proposed timetable. Yet, the ACE understood that there were still many challenges ahead to turn the key initiatives in the “Policy Framework” into concrete policies. The Administration needed to work out the implementation details of the key initiatives with the stakeholders and the public in a timely manner, in particular, on the producer responsibility schemes (PRS) and MSW charging.

4. The ACE considered that the success of the initiatives in the “Policy Framework” would ultimately depend on the full support and participation of the public. Therefore, public education should underlie all policy initiatives, and measures should be taken to positively engage the public in tackling the MSW problem. In particular, the ACE urged the Administration to expedite the rollout of the territory-wide source separation scheme and engage the public in support of measures on waste avoidance, reduction, recovery and recycling. To cater for the increasing amount of recyclables recovered and to complement PRS and MSW charging, the support measures to promote the local recycling industries, such as the establishment of the EcoPark, should be further enhanced and expedited.

5. Given the limited remaining capacity of landfills, the ACE considered that the integrated waste management facility was urgently needed. As such, the Administration should establish a timetable for implementing the initiative, and start its groundwork as soon as practicable. Having said that, the ACE would emphasize that waste treatment and disposal should only be a last resort for truly unavoidable waste.

6. The ACE has tasked its Waste Subcommittee to further look into the “Policy Framework” and come up with advice and recommendations for the Administration. The ACE will also host an open forum on 21 January to gather views from stakeholders and the general public.