

Progress Report on Actions Taken in Respect of the Motion on “Developing Environmental Industries to Create Job Opportunities” Moved by Hon KWONG Chi-kin at the Legislative Council Meeting on Wednesday, 4 July 2007

At the Legislative Council Meeting on 4 July 2007, Members passed the motion on “developing environmental industries to create job opportunities”. The latest position of follow-up actions taken in respect of the recommendations put forward by Members in the motion is summarized as follows:

Initiatives	Responses of the Administration and the Progress of Work
(a) Expeditedly implementing the Producer Responsibility Scheme to develop the work processes relating to the recovery, disassembling, and recycling and reuse of resources	<p>It was suggested in the Policy Framework the introduction of the “Producer Responsibility Scheme” (PRS) on plastic shopping bags, vehicle tyres, electrical and electronic equipment, beverage containers, packaging materials and rechargeable batteries, requiring producers, importers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers to share the responsibility of waste treatment. The PRS can on the one hand minimize the impact of waste products on the environment and on the other, ensure proper treatment of waste products.</p> <p>For this, we announced the proposed producer responsibility scheme for plastic shopping bags in May this year, which involved an environmental levy. The objective of the proposal is to reduce the indiscriminate use of plastic shopping bags through an economic disincentive. EPD completed the public consultation on 31 July and released the public consultation report on 3 September. The result of the public consultation indicates that there is a broad-based support from members of the LegCo, ACE, DC's, as well as the public, to the proposal. We will proceed with the drafting of the Product Eco-Responsibility Bill (PER Bill), with a view to submitting it to the LegCo in the 2007/08 legislative year.</p> <p>We are also considering the methods of implementing PRS on other products (including electrical and electronic equipment, waste tyres, etc.). We would encourage and</p>

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	assist the trade concerned to share the responsibilities of recycling and reusing these products.
(b) Strengthening publicity and education to enhance public awareness of waste separation, so as to increase the types and amount of recovered waste	<p>Over the years, we have been actively instilling the habit of waste separation and recovery into the public through a series of publicity and education programmes to enhance the rate of recovery.</p> <p>Continued efforts have been made to publicize the messages of waste reduction and recovery to the public through different media such as TV, radio stations, newspapers and public transportation etc. We have launched the “Hong Kong Green School Award” and the “Student Environmental Protection Ambassador Scheme” to foster students’ participation in waste reduction and recovery in school and community level. Talks, exhibitions, road shows, and community outreach programmes and other activities such as education programmes of the Environmental Resource Centres and the annual “World Environment Day” and “Hong Kong Environmental Protection Festival” have been organised to enhance public awareness of waste reduction. Besides, funding has been provided to various non-profit-making organisations through the Environment and Conservation Fund for related programmes to encourage waste reduction in community level.</p> <p>To encourage active participation in source separation of domestic waste, every year we organise competition for housing estates and buildings to bring out their best in source separation. Seminars are also held so that property management companies and stakeholders can share their experience in source separation of waste.</p>
(c) Comprehensively implementing separation and recovery of wet and	We have been trying different methods of domestic waste separation and recovery with a view to finding the most cost-effective mode that is most convenient to the public

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dry waste so as to pave the way for the recycling and reuse of commercial and domestic food waste; for example, the Government procures fertilizers converted from locally recovered food waste for used on plants grown in gardens and on roadsides	<p>and can best suit our local needs. This includes providing waste separation bins in public places and public / private housing estates, so as to make it easy for the public to practise waste separation. The use of waste treatment facilities has also been explored to facilitate waste recovery.</p> <p>In 2003, the “Dry and Wet Waste Separation Pilot Programme” was conducted in four housing estates in the Eastern District on Hong Kong Island. Participating households disposed of their dry waste (i.e. recyclables) separately which was then collected and delivered to the Waste Separation Pilot Facility at the Island East Refuse Transfer Station for further sorting by type. The sorted recyclables were sold to recyclers. Notwithstanding the increase in the amount of waste collected by participating housing estates, a number of problems arose, including the replication of procedures for processing recyclables that led to extremely high cost. As the housing estates or their cleansing workers could not enjoy the benefit from the recycled waste sold, there was no economic incentive for them to participate in waste separation and recycling. In view of the above reasons, the dry and wet waste separation was not sustainable.</p>
(d) Retaining and setting up recovery stations and complementary facilities for wet and dry waste in various districts to facilitate the waste collectors' midway collection, sorting and transportation of waste	<p>With the valuable experience gained in the “Dry and Wet Waste Separation Pilot Programme”, we have launched a territory-wide “Programme on Source Separation of Domestic Waste” since 2005. The pilot programme aims to make it more convenient for residents to separate domestic waste at source by encouraging and assisting property management companies to provide waste separation facilities on each floor of the building. The programme also aims to expand the types of recyclables to be collected, thereby increasing the recovery rate of domestic waste and reducing waste. Under the Programme, housing estates or their cleansing workers can sell the</p>

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	<p>sorted recyclables directly to recyclers instead of transporting them to a central point for further sorting. Hence, they can enjoy the benefits gained from the sale of recyclables which provide an economic incentive for them to participate in waste separation and recycling.</p> <p>As at the end of July 2007, over 650 public/private housing estates have signed up to join the Programme, covering more than 30% of the population in Hong Kong. We will continue our promotional efforts to encourage and attract more housing estates to participate in the scheme.</p> <p>We plan to launch a pilot scheme on the composting of organic waste. Under the scheme, the organic waste from the trade (such as hotels, restaurants, food processing workshops and the Vegetable Marketing Organization) will be processed by composting. We are inviting tenders for the supply of facilities in the pilot composting plant.</p>
(e) Expediting the vetting and approval work of the tendering of the EcoPark to facilitate the development of recycling industries and expeditiously taking forward Phase II of the EcoPark development plan	<p>Open tender will be invited for the other three pieces of land under Phase I of the EcoPark in September and the tender will be awarded within this year.</p> <p>EcoPark is a pioneer concept in Hong Kong. We intend to develop it in a gradual manner so that adjustments and improvements can be made. Having noted the response to the tender of Phase I, we will consider the need to expedite the development of Phase II. In order to vacate the site needed for Phase II, we will also consider whether the clearance of inert construction and demolition materials stored at the temporary fill bank can be advanced with reference to the practical situations.</p>
(f) Establishing a high-level inter-departmental industries facilitation council to formulate more	The re-organized ENB is a department focused on the promotion of environmentally related matters like the environmental recovery industries. If necessary, we will be glad to discuss with other relevant departments so that

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effective strategies to support environmental recovery industries	the most appropriate support can be provided to the environmental industry.
(g) Implementing a green procurement policy and requiring all departments and contractors to comply with it, so as to provide a steady outlet for green products and services; and implementing a green certification system for such products and services to facilitate the Government, private organizations and the public to identify those green products and services that meet the certification requirements when making procurement	<p>At present, we have already adopted the requirements set out in the Stores and Procurement Regulations to add in green specifications for the procurement of governmental working stores. The implementation of green procurement has generated market demand for green products. We will also consider the suggestions of Members to review, on a regular basis, the green items to be procured so as to add in new products. Besides, seminars and workshops will also be organized with a view to enhance the awareness of departmental green managers and procurement staff on green procurement. Recommendations for enhanced procurement of green products will also be made.</p> <p>For green certification, there is presently active response from the commercial sector and organizations in encouraging the adoption of green procurement and green product labels. With the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Label Scheme by the EMSD and the certification programmes run by overseas, much information are already available for consumers in the procurement of green products.</p>
(h) Subsidizing the research and development of environmental industries, upgrading the technology, as well as improving the production environment of such industries, and building up a professional image for the industries, so as to attract more people to	Through the Environment and Conservation Fund, we provide financial support to non-profit-making bodies in implementing “Environmental Research, Technology Demonstration and Other Projects”, “Community Waste Recovery Projects” and “Environmental Education and Community Involvement Projects”, with a view to promoting education on environmental protection and conservation, research, technology demonstration and other activities. We also encourage local communities to organise waste reduction and recovery programmes at

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take up the related work	district level.
(i) Assisting small and medium enterprises to participate in those environmental industries with prospects, and allowing social enterprises to join in, on the premise that they do not compete with the private sector for profits	We agree that we can facilitate participation of the vulnerable by combining the efforts of environmental industries and social enterprises. We will make reference to the suggestions of Members. In developing social enterprises, we will keep in mind the need to maintain a ground for fair competition, where all enterprises (private or social ones alike) can join in.

Environment Protection Department

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