

**Progress Report on Actions Taken in Respect of the
Motion on “Proactively Promoting Waste Recovery and Recycling” at the
Legislative Council Meeting of 2 July 2008**

At the Legislative Council Meeting of 2 July 2008, the motion on “Proactively promoting waste recovery and recycling” was carried. The follow-up actions taken in respect of the recommendations put forward by Members in the motion are summarized below:

Wording of the Motion	Follow-up Actions
(a) review the effectiveness of the relevant Ordinance one year after the imposition of levy on plastic bags, including the quantity of plastic bags reduced, recovered and recycled;	The Administration has undertaken to review the effectiveness of the environmental levy scheme on plastic shopping bags after one year of implementation. Should the scheme be proven effective (i.e. significant reduction at source), the amount of plastic shopping bags recovered and disposed of should be reduced.
(b) establish a dedicated department and allocate more resources to consolidate an administrative framework related to waste handling and recovery which will be responsible for running a follow-through work process from source separation, material recovery, waste collection to waste disposal, and at the same time enhancing the efficiency of waste handling and recovery;	The Environmental Protection Department is the dedicated department under the Environment Bureau responsible for the development of waste management policy, which encompasses waste reduction at source, waste recovery and recycling, as well as proper disposal of unavoidable waste. The Environmental Protection Department, together with other relevant Departments, would jointly implement the waste management policy under the leadership of the Environment Bureau.
(c) expeditiously implement the legislative work for other products mentioned in the Product Eco-responsibility Bill so as to reduce waste generation and increase incentives to recover waste, and promote the industrial	The Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance (Cap. 603) was enacted in July 2008. The Ordinance provides the legal basis for implementing producer responsibility schemes (PRSs). The environmental levy scheme on plastic shopping bags is the first scheme under the Ordinance, with a view to reducing the indiscriminate use of plastic shopping bags. The Ordinance also provides the

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<p>activities relating to the recovery and reuse of resources;</p>	<p>basis to introduce new statutory PRS for other products where necessary.</p> <p>Meanwhile, we launched the Computer Recycling Programme (CRP) and the Fluorescent Lamp Recycling Programme (FLRP) in January and March 2008 respectively. CRP is funded and operated by 20 major computer equipment manufacturers and suppliers, while FLRP is jointly organized by 15 major suppliers. Together with the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Programme launched in 2005, the three programmes are all funded and organized voluntarily by the respective trade with the support of the Government, which is in line with the concept of “producer responsibility”. We would continue to develop new PRSs for other products so as to address the environmental problems they create.</p>
<p>(d) expeditiously implement the ‘variable rate charging scheme for refuse’ to fully achieve the polluter-pays principle, so that the public would undertake their own eco-responsibilities, and through economic incentives, encourage the public to proactively participate in waste separation and recovery, with a view to ultimately pursuing the objective of waste avoidance at source;</p>	<p>EPD completed a 3-month trial scheme in 2007. The findings of the trial scheme indicated considerable constraints in introducing a variable rate charging scheme in Hong Kong’s multi-storey, multi-tenant household setting.</p> <p>On the advice of the Waste Management Subcommittee of the Advisory Council on the Environment, we will conduct a baseline study to collect key information on MSW generation and waste management practices for the development of a practicable MSW charging scheme in Hong Kong. Preparations are being made for the baseline study to commence shortly.</p>
<p>(e) devise an effective mechanism for bulk recovery of food waste, set up more facilities for recovery and reuse of food waste, review the present land use restrictions to encourage private organizations to engage in industries related</p>	<p>Food waste can be recycled to compost product or renewable energy by biological treatment technology. Treatment of food waste not only reduces waste disposal, it also recovers useful resources in accordance with the principle for sustainable development.</p> <p>However, Hong Kong has little local experience in collecting and treating sizable quantity of food</p>

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<p>to the recovery and reuse of food waste, and procure fertilizers converted from locally recovered food waste by the Government for use on plants grown in gardens and on roadsides;</p>	<p>waste. Therefore a pilot food waste treatment plant project is being implemented to gather such information for the planning of larger treatment plants, as well as the promotion of food waste recycling and gathering of market response on the use of compost derived from food waste. The pilot food waste treatment plant is now being installed in the Kowloon Bay Waste Recycling Centre. It would be operated to treat source-separated food waste from the commercial and industrial sectors later this year.</p> <p>In the longer term, we plan to develop the first phase of an organic waste treatment facility in Siu Ho Wan, Northern Lantau Island. The facility, which would be commissioned by mid 2010's, would adopt biological treatment technologies such as composting and anaerobic digestion to recycle food waste to useful compost and renewable energy. We also plan to develop and commission the second phase of the organic waste treatment facility in Shaling, North District by late 2010's.</p>
<p>(f) provide incentives or appropriate assistance to waste collectors, and proactively examine the feasibility of implementing a licensing regime for waste collectors, so as to regulate the recovery trades, thereby minimizing the disturbance of the trades to the public and promoting the development of the recovery trades;</p>	<p>The establishment of the EcoPark in Tuen Mun Area 38 provides long-term land at affordable costs for the development of the recycling and environmental industry, with the objective of encouraging investment in more advanced technologies and value-added processes. There are a total of six lots in Phase I of the EcoPark. As of to-date, four lots have been awarded to recyclers of waste wood, used cooking oil, computers and waste plastics. Three tenants are working on their building plan submissions with a view to commencing recycling operations in end 2008. The fourth tenant, who was recently</p>

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<p>(g) provide incentives in terms of taxation or land, etc., expand the scope of ‘EcoPark’ and improve the infrastructural facilities and leasing conditions to attract advanced local or international waste recycling trades to invest in the waste recycling industries in Hong Kong, so as to process the waste generated locally by recycling as far as practicable, thereby reducing the waste ultimately dumped at landfills, promoting the sustainable development of the Hong Kong economy, and creating job opportunities;</p>	<p>awarded the lot for plastics recycling, is now liaising with their architect for their plant design and building plan submission. The Government is proceeding with the preparation work for the tendering of the remaining two lots. At the same time, the Government has been providing various support and advisory services to the tenants for setting up their plants in the EcoPark. These include liaison with Government departments, assistance for licence applications, sourcing of waste materials and promotion of collaboration among tenants.</p> <p>With the experience gained in previous tender exercises and the feedback from the tenants, the Government is reviewing the tenancy requirements for Phase II lots in order to make the EcoPark more attractive. For example, the Government is considering to sign the tenancy agreements at an earlier stage before the handing over of the completed sites to the tenants to allow sufficient time for submission of building plans etc. during the "rent-free" period and to lower the amount of performance guarantee so that successful tenants would have the necessary cash to start up business at the EcoPark. As the EcoPark concept is the first of its kind in Hong Kong, the Government hopes to develop it in an incremental approach so as to allow scope for further modification and improvement.</p> <p>To further assist the recycling industry, 35 short-term tenancy (STT) sites have been leased exclusively to the recycling trade to provide affordable land resources to support the trade. As at August 2008, an aggregate area of 7 hectares has been leased. It is estimated that 460 000 tonnes of recycling materials, 16% of the territory total, are processed on these sites per annum. We will continue to identify suitable sites exclusively for the use of the recycling trade.</p> <p>Regarding funding support, \$1 billion was injected</p>

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	<p>into the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) this year to strengthen our funding support to waste reduction, recovery and recycling; environmental education; public engagement campaigns; technology transfer; demonstrative projects on waste reduction; research initiatives and regional exchange etc. We will continue to reinforce our effort in public education and in providing support to the trade. The Environment and Conservation Fund has granted more than \$25 million for 72 community waste recovery projects and for 98 housing estates to establish facilities for source separation of waste since 2001.</p> <p>At present, waste recycling activities are already subject to the control of environmental legislation (including the Waste Disposal Ordinance) and other relevant ordinances and regulations. On the other hand, there is a lack of community consensus on the needs and merits of introducing a licensing system for the recycling trade. The Administration will continue to monitor the situation, taking into account the development of the recycling industry and the views of the public.</p>
<p>(h) formulate a green procurement policy with the Government taking the lead in requiring all departments and contractors to comply with it, so as to provide steady outlets for green products; implement a green certification and labelling system, as well as establish a database to facilitate the Government, private organizations and the public to identify when procuring such products; and</p>	<p>In 2000, the Stores and Procurement Regulations were amended to require all bureaux and departments to give consideration to purchase products that are recyclable, with higher energy efficiency, greater durability, higher recycled contents, etc.</p> <p>Since 2000, the Government has also developed and adopted green specifications for a range of commonly used products for green procurement. In addition, the Government recently commenced a consultancy study to review and expand the green procurement list. In the public work arena, the Government encourages the use of recyclable materials, such as recycled aggregates and recycled asphalt in road and slope works.</p> <p>The Government has been encouraging the</p>

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	<p>business sector to support green procurement and the use of green products. Currently, there are organizations and businesses who are actively promoting the implementation of green labeling and certification. The Environment and Conservation Fund is now supporting a green procurement programme. The programme will organize a series of seminars and workshops to promote the business sectors' understanding of green procurement. A guidebook will also be produced to provide reference for the business sector.</p>
<p>(i) adopt effective measures to appropriately address the problem of illegal dumping, so as to minimize improper disposal of recyclable materials; and</p>	<p>Cracking down fly-tipping of waste is one of the key enforcement roles of EPD. Apart from carrying out complaint investigations, EPD also updates the intelligence on fly-tipping black-spots and deploys manpower to patrol these black-spots regularly. The key departments including the EPD, the Highways Department, the Lands Department, and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department have identified a total of 48 black-spots with recurrent fly-tipping activities. These black-spots have been put under close surveillance and monitoring by the departments concerned. The list of black-spots has also been sent to the relevant District Councils for their information and support in deterring fly-tipping activities.</p> <p>As most of the fly-tipping complaints are related to renovation waste found in developed areas (89% of the complaints in 2007), EPD has taken proactive measures in those areas. Once a renovation project is identified, the property owner, incorporation of owners or property management office of the building/estate will be contacted. They will be reminded to pay close attention to and keep records for the proper disposal of construction waste arising from the renovation works. EPD staff will also make return visits to the same premises to ensure that the responsible party has disposed of their waste</p>

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	properly.
(j) use the proceeds from the levy on plastic bags to set up a green fund to encourage waste reduction and recovery work.”	The environmental levy provides an economic incentive to discourage the indiscriminate use of plastic shopping bags, instead of a means to increase fiscal income. Should the levy scheme be proven effective, the amount of levy collected would gradually decline. Furthermore, by earmarking the environmental levy for environmental purposes, the public may be given a wrong perception that they are contributing to the effort of environmental protection as they pay the levy. This is contrary to the objective of the levy scheme. The Government is committed to environmental protection irrespective of the amount of levy collected. To underline this commitment, \$1 billion was injected into the Environment and Conservation Fund earlier this year to provide further funding support for public education campaigns and researches on environment and nature conservation.

**Environmental Protection Department
September 2008**