

For information
24 May 2010

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation
Environmental Protection and Ecology Conservation**

PURPOSE

This paper outlines co-operation areas on environmental protection and ecology conservation under the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation.

BACKGROUND

2. In January 2009, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) promulgated the "Outline of the Plan for the Reform and Development of the Pearl River Delta (PRD)" (the Outline), establishing Hong Kong/Guangdong co-operation as a national policy. To take forward the implementation of the Outline, the Chief Executive and the Governor of Guangdong Province, Mr Huang Huahua, signed the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation (the Framework Agreement) on 7 April 2010 in Beijing. The Framework Agreement defines clearly the development positioning of Hong Kong/Guangdong co-operation, including co-operation initiatives in environmental protection and ecology conservation.

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ECOLOGY
CONSERVATION**

3. In respect of environmental protection and ecology conservation, the Framework Agreement has included the co-operation initiatives being

undertaken or actively considered by the Hong Kong and Guangdong sides. The objectives are to improve the regional environmental quality and to transform the PRD region into a Green Quality Living Area. Key areas of co-operation under the Framework Agreement include-

- (a) taking concerted actions to prevent and tackle air pollution;
- (b) enhancing cleaner production in the region;
- (c) promoting wider use of electric vehicles;
- (d) co-operation in protecting marine water quality;
- (e) promoting the development of circular economy; and
- (f) co-operation in ecology and marine resources conservation.

4. The Framework Agreement also supports Guangdong and Hong Kong to work with Macao to jointly formulate a Regional Cooperation Plan on Quality Living Area (the Regional Cooperation Plan). Amongst others, enhanced co-operation will be pursued in the areas of environmental protection, ecological conservation as well as low-carbon development, so as to raise the quality of the living environment in the region. Relevant extracts from the Framework Agreement are set out at **Annex**.

Concerted Actions to Prevent and Tackle Air Pollution

5. Under the Framework Agreement, Hong Kong and Guangdong will continue to co-operate to improve the regional air quality by actively taking forward control measures under the PRD Regional Air Quality Management Plan. Both sides are committed to achieving the emission reduction targets by 2010 and will undertake a joint study on the post-2010 arrangements for emission reduction in the PRD region. Building on past achievements, the two governments will strive to further reduce the level of air pollutant emissions beyond 2010.

6. Targeting at main air pollution sources, including emissions from motor vehicles and vessels, Guangdong and Hong Kong will progressively adopt air quality objectives and fuel and emission standards for motor vehicles and vessels which are more advanced than other places in the

Mainland. This will help continuously improve the regional air quality. For the purpose of tackling regional air pollution problems, both sides will also strengthen the cooperation in researches into the relationship between ambient air quality and the formation of photochemical smog and hazy weather; and enhance the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network.

Enhancing Cleaner Production in the Region

7. Under the Framework Agreement, both sides will actively promote enterprises to enhance cleaner production in the region with a view to promoting energy efficiency and reducing emissions. The HKSAR Government and the Economic & Information Commission of Guangdong Province (formerly the Economic and Trade Commission of Guangdong Province) will continue to implement the five-year Cleaner Production Partnership Programme (the Programme) which commenced in April 2008. The Programme aims to facilitate Hong Kong-owned enterprises in the PRD region to adopt cleaner production technologies and practices, including provision of funding to help the enterprises to conduct on-site assessments and demonstration projects and verify their improvement measures. It also gives recognition to Hong Kong-owned companies that have participated in the Programme with good performance as “Hong Kong-Guangdong Cleaner Production Partners”. At its meeting on 21 January 2010, the Environmental Affairs Panel supported the Government’s proposal to revise the coverage of the Programme to provide professional advice and technical support in the treatment and reduction of effluent discharges to Hong Kong-owned factories in the PRD region, so as to further promote a wider application of cleaner production technologies amongst the industries.

Promoting Wider Use of Electric Vehicles

8. In promoting wider adoption of electric vehicles (EVs), the HKSAR Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government have jointly undertaken trials of dual mode plug-in hybrid vehicles produced by

BYD (比亞迪) last year. Looking ahead, to tap the strengths and experience of Guangdong in the development of energy efficient transportation system, we will work hand in hand with Guangdong to promote the wider use of EVs in accordance with the Framework Agreement. We will also continue to strengthen exchanges with Guangdong in fostering the research and development, manufacturing, wider adoption and development of relevant auto parts industry of EVs in the Greater PRD region.

Co-operation in Protecting Marine Water Quality

9. Under the Framework Agreement, the two governments will enhance regional water quality management and pollution control. Both sides will commission an initial study on Pearl River Estuary water quality management planning and continue to advance the regional environmental management co-operation in Mirs Bay and Deep Bay (Shenzhen Bay). Shenzhen and Hong Kong commenced the first review of the Regional Water Quality Control Strategy for Mirs Bay in October 2008 with a view to recommending additional measures to protect Mirs Bay and meet sustainable development objectives. The review is scheduled for completion in 2011. In addition, Shenzhen and Hong Kong will commence a review in 2012/2013 on the effectiveness of the Deep Bay Water Pollution Control Joint Implementation Programme and the progress of pollution reduction, which was last revised in 2007. The purpose of the review is to jointly map out further water quality improvement targets and implementation plans.

Promoting the Development of Circular Economy

10. Hong Kong is liaising with Guangdong to explore the feasibility of possible cooperation in cross-border recycling of reusable materials with a view to promoting the development of circular economy in the PRD region.

Co-operation in Ecology and Marine Resources Conservation

11. According to the Framework Agreement, Guangdong and Hong Kong will carry out coastal wetland cooperative conservation projects such as mangroves restoration at the Pearl River Estuary, joint planning of major cross-boundary nature conservation areas, developing a regional cross-boundary green corridor for the Bay Area at the Pearl River Estuary. Both sides will also foster the exchange and co-operation in the development of cross-boundary nature conservation areas and ecological corridors through the existing “Hong Kong-Guangdong Afforestation and Conservation Special Panel”. In order to facilitate the establishment of regional green corridors, the Hong Kong side will commence a feasibility study and consultation on the proposed designation of Robin’s Nest in the border area as a country park; and carry out tree planting, forestry enhancement and hill fire prevention in the country parks.

12. As for the marine resources conservation, Guangdong and Hong Kong will continue to foster co-operation and exchanges in conservation and research of Chinese white dolphin, corals and turtles in accordance with the requirement of the Framework Agreement. Both sides will also explore opportunities for co-operation and exchanges in the areas of establishment and evaluation of the effectiveness of artificial reefs; conservation of rare marine life; red tide studies and law enforcement actions in respect of marine fisheries through the existing “Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Resources and Conservation Special Panel”.

ADIVCE SOUGHT

13. Members are invited to note the areas of co-operation and actions being taken in respect of environmental protection and ecology conservation under the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation.

Environment Bureau
May 2010

**Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation
(Extract of Chapter 6, Clause 1)**

Chapter 6 Quality living area

To improve the ecological enhancement and environmental protection co-operation mechanism, to protect the environment and natural ecology of the region, to promote sharing of community resources, to jointly build the Greater Pearl River Delta regional quality living area by making better the natural and community environment for living.

Clause 1 Ecology enhancement and environmental protection

1. To continue to implement the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan (2002-2010). Taking into account the circumstances in the region, to undertake a joint study on air pollutant emission reduction targets and measures for the Pearl River Delta Region in 2011-2020 and strive to complete the study in 2010. To progressively adopt air quality objectives and fuel and emission standards for motor vehicles and vessels which are more advanced than other places in the mainland, and to enhance the regional air quality monitoring network.

2. To jointly take forward the protection of water resources of Dongjiang and Dongshen water supply scheme, to push forward the establishment of a water course flow and quality monitoring system for Dongjiang River Basin, to exchange at regular intervals monitoring information, to ensure safety of water supply to Hong Kong, to enhance regional water environment management and pollution control and prevention, to commence an initial study on the regional water quality management plan for the Pearl River Estuary, and to continue to take forward the Mirs Bay and Shenzhen Bay (Deep Bay) area environmental management co-operation.

3. To jointly set up cross-boundary nature conservation areas and ecological corridors, to establish an integrated regional ecosystem, to jointly set up several ecological protection barriers connecting Guangdong and Hong Kong, to jointly plan for the setting up of Shenzhen-Hong Kong cross-boundary nature conservation areas, to jointly protect coastal wetlands such as mangrove area at Pearl River Estuary, to jointly launch afforestation in Dongjiang, and to protect regional eco-tour resources.

4. To formulate a co-operation mechanism for marine environment monitoring and disasters prevention, to share marine environment investigation and monitoring facilities and equipment with time, to improve information notification system, to deepen marine ecology restoration co-operation and conserve the diversity of marine organisms through sustainable development measures such as aquatic biological resources propagation and release, artificial reef, marine aquaculture etc. To work together to start improving the marine ecological environment and protecting rare marine wild fauna and flora, and conserving aquatic biological resources and the ecosystem of the Pearl River Estuary. To strengthen co-operation on healthy aquaculture, to start joint law enforcement actions in respect of marine fisheries, and to step up mobile fishing boats management.

5. To develop circular economy and environmental industries, to formulate co-operation plan for promoting circular economy, to take forward the development of circular and associated service industries, as well municipal waste sorting and detoxication treatment, reduction and reuse. To control cross-boundary waste transfer, to explore new co-operation models for recycling and reuse of reusable materials. To develop electric vehicle industry, to organise environmental trade exhibitions. To study the regional development strategy of cleaner energy and renewable energy, to encourage wider use of and research in cleaner energy and renewable energy, and to expand the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme to support the enterprises in energy saving and emission reduction.

Major work plan for the Implementation of “Framework Agreement on Guangdong /Hong Kong Co-operation” in 2010

(Extract of Clause 5(1))

(5) Quality Living Area

(1) Ecological enhancement and environmental protection

(1) To jointly reduce and control air pollution; to implement the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan (2002-2010); to strive to complete the study on Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan (2011-2020) by 2010; to strengthen the cooperation in researches into the relationship between ambient air quality and the formation of photochemical smog and hazy weather; and to enhance the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network.

(2) To protect water resources and commission an initial study on the Pearl River Estuary water quality management co-operation plan; to implement the Deep Bay (Shenzhen Bay) Water Pollution Control Joint Implementation Programme as well as the Regional Water Quality Control Strategy for Mirs Bay.

(3) To prepare for establishing a Guangdong-Hong Kong Marine Environment Monitoring Network, to exchange conservation technologies in respect of rare marine life; to occasionally exchange information on the marine environment of the water adjoining Guangdong and Hong Kong through the existing exchange platform for environmental cooperation and marine resources conservation; and to carry out technical exchanges on marine environment monitoring, network building, and laboratory analysis etc.

(4) To establish a notification and joint handling mechanism for marine incidents like red tide, i.e. by making use of the existing exchange

platform for environmental cooperation and marine resources conservation to timely notify each other of the handling of marine disasters like red tide. To establish a marine disaster notification and joint handling mechanism and a comprehensive marine disaster emergency response exchange platform and mechanism to timely notify each other of the handling of marine disasters like storm surge, tsunami etc.

(5) To carry out joint task-based enforcement operations to combat illegal activities like illegal exploitation of sea, unauthorized cross-boundary extraction of marine sand and destruction of marine environment etc. as well as to fight against cross-boundary illegal fishing. To further enhance the management of mobile fishing vessels, to strengthen the training for mobile fishermen on safe production and fishing permission, to make joint efforts in fisheries resources conservation, to regulate fishery production, to safeguard lawful rights of mobile fishermen; to conduct exchange forums for the fishery law enforcement departments of Guangdong and Hong Kong.

(6) To implement the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme; to conduct on-site improvement assessment for 800 to 1000 Hong Kong-owned companies, to provide verification service to 500-1000 improvement projects, to develop 120 demonstration projects, To recognise Hong Kong-owned companies that have participated in the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme with good performance as “Hong Kong-Guangdong Cleaner Production Partners”.

(7) To carry out coastal wetland cooperative conservation projects like mangroves restoration at the Pearl River Estuary. To establish a coordination system for relevant departments of both sides, to enhance exchanges of information on experience and technologies for coastal wetland (e.g. mangroves) conservation, and to commence establishment and restoration works for native mangrove species.

(8) To jointly plan for major cross-boundary nature conservation areas. To work together to strengthen ecological protection and

enhancement at significant areas at the Hong Kong-Shenzhen boundary including nature conservation areas, geo parks, wetland parks, country parks etc.

(9) To commence the establishment of a regional 400km long cross-boundary green corridor for the Bay Area at the Pearl River Estuary by phases and sections. The main sections are: Zhuhai Taipin Mountain Forest Park – Heibaimein General Mountain Country Park – Fenghuang Mountain Scenic Area – Zhongshan Wugui Mountain Forest Park – Guangzhou Shanwan Waterway– Haizhu Orchard Conservation Area – Dongguan Shuilian Mountain Forest Park – Dalin Mountain Forest Park – Shenzhen Luohu Forest Park – Tanglang Mountain – Muolin Forest Park – Yinhu Forest Park – Wutong Mountain Forest Park – Hong Kong Pat Sin Leng, Tai Lam Country Park.

(10) To promote introduction of electric vehicles (EVs) to major Greater Pearl River Delta cities like Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shenzhen etc, and jointly foster the research and development, manufacturing, general application and development of relevant auto parts industry of EVs in the Greater PRD region.