



環 保 工 程 商 會

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTRACTORS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

CB(1) 1386/11-12(08)

20th March 2012

Clerk to Panel on Environmental Affairs
Legislative Council Secretariat
2/F Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Attn: Miss Mandy Poon

By mail and e-mail: mpoon@legco.gov.hk

Dear Miss Poon,

Submission for the Public Consultation on :
“Reduce, Recycle and Proper Waste Management”

Views from
Environmental Contractors Management Association

Environmental Contractors Management Association (ECMA) promotes and maintains professional standards of commercial, environmental and safety practices amongst members. In last 20 years, we have established working relationship with all relevant Government departments to ensure ECMA is consulted in advance any proposals which may affect the industry in general. Waste management strategies in Hong Kong not only are essential for the environment and citizen daily life quality, but will also have strong economic and industrial influence on the society. ECMA therefore recognizes the importance of the waste management strategy of Hong Kong and hereby wishes to express its views on the above mentioned subject.

ECMA has reviewed the relevant materials publicly assessable and welcomes this initiative, which addresses a fundamental issue related to waste management in Hong Kong. The initiatives also represents a unique opportunity to encourage waste reduction, to adopt proper modern waste treatment technology and should be proceed without further delay.

ECMA expresses our views as follow :



Time for action without delay

From public accessed information, the three strategic landfills in Hong Kong is about to fill up in recent years. Although the Government has already launched two major environmental projects - the Sludge Treatment Facility (STF) and the Organic Waste Treatment Facility (OWTF) Phase 1, the imminent needs for an overall waste management strategy is undeniable. ECMA considers it is important to :

- Adopt a sustainable treatment technology such as Waste-to-Energy incineration method integrated with material recovery. Stringent emission control technology and monitoring system must be installed to alleviate the public concerns on health nuisance. Generated electric power must be connected to the city grid supply for beneficial use of the public ;
- In parallel, proceed to extension of landfills to receive uncombustible waste and the inert residue from the incineration ;
- Continue to explore latest sustainable technology on material and energy recovery, such as the OWTF Phase 2 and the treatment centre for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) ;
- Educate the public on waste reduction and encourage local community on waste recycling, such as food waste composter in housing estates;
- Adopt a MSW charging scheme which offer opportunity on waste reduction by financial incentive, the collected levy should partially deployed to subsidize the local waste recycling business

Technology

Hong Kong should adopt a system integrated with waste reduction / recycling / reuse economic, a combination of advance Waste-to-Energy incineration with landfills available to supplement the overall waste management strategy.

Hong Kong as a well developed international city shall leverage the experience from similar cities or countries such as Singapore, Taiwan, Japan, Europe and USA. Although in last 20 years, landfill serves as an efficient and cost effective means of waste disposal with environmental impact managed successfully. This method is not sustainable in terms of land use, carbon emission and energy recovery. Hong Kong Government should review the modern and advanced Waste-to-Energy incineration methods developed in oversea countries which have proven to be safe. International safety and emission standards (such as EU standard) are well established to govern the performance and environmental impact of modern Waste-to-Energy incineration plant.

ECMA urges the Government to involve and consult the local stockholders on the application of various treatment technology on material resources and energy recovery, to ensure the selected option will optimize the waste characteristics in Hong Kong, the operating mode of waste industry as well as meeting the high expectation of environmental performance standard of the public.



MSW Charging Scheme

Provided a well establish education program on waste reduction, public environmental awareness is sustained, ECMA supports the MSW charging system. We consider the charging is the most effective way to help waste reduction. Such a scheme will encourage general public with incentives to adopt new behaviours in terms of waste generation, recycling, reuse and disposal. The collected levy should partially deployed to offer policy support, financial subsidies to sustain the local recycling activities, which offer opportunity to raise the overall environmental, health and safety standard of the industry.

Legislation

The Government should proceed with the long debating "Producer Responsibility Scheme" to encourage the corporate environmental awareness in a fair and transparent legal framework. The Government should also consider regulation to proper licensing of the waste and recycling industry sectors for the benefit of standardize the environmental and safety practices. ECMA believes mandate the waste producer (in commercial and industrial sectors) to produce waste disposal certificate by licenced waste operators could assist with the enforcement of the MSW charging scheme.

As a conclusion, ECMA supports the EPD's recent strategy to handle our waste issues from a combined and diversified approach instead of a single method. The key however is to recognize the fact that there is a time lag between now and then. Nevertheless, more public awareness and corporate responsibilities should be raised in parallel through government programs such as establishment of professional value added recycling schemes with policy and financial support; proper licensing and regulated system in compliance and evaluation during execution.

For and on behalf of

Environmental Contractors Management Association

Catherine Yan - President