

Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs Discussion
"Reduce, Recycle and Proper Waste Management"

First of all, I would like to declare interest of the Business Environment Council Limited (BEC). As BEC is a membership-based organisation, with over 200 member companies that spans across major holding companies in Hong Kong, to multinational conglomerates, and to small and medium-sized enterprises, some of our member companies may be involved in businesses relating to today's discussion topic.

BEC members are very concerned about waste management in Hong Kong. We recognise that there is an urgent need to reduce municipal solid waste (MSW) in Hong Kong, as part of a comprehensive approach to put in place modern waste management facilities. Thus we support policy and regulatory approaches that encourage circular economy.

For reduction, the Government should significantly increase programmes to educate the public about the need and ways to reduce waste, with the aim of creating lasting behavioural change, and turning awareness into action. This should be associated with the formulation of comprehensive policies, and infrastructure planning and development. Financial disincentives such as landfill charges and environmental levies can be implemented to effectively control waste generation. [Revenue collected from such charges and levies should be used to further finance waste reduction and management initiatives.]

For separation, BEC supports the establishment of the Integrated Waste Management Facilities, and broadening of source separation from the currently well-established categories of paper, plastic and metal, to include other categories such as waste electrical and electronic equipment, glass and food waste. At the same time, there should be support mechanisms to ensure commercial viability of the additional source separation and recycling.

Finally, we see comprehensive assistance with inter-departmental support by Government essential in attracting local as well as foreign companies to establish recycling business. The key aim is to lower the entry barriers at the initial stage operation – especially for start-ups and small and medium enterprises.

BEC believes that a territory-wide total waste management approach is needed now more than ever to accomplish waste reduction targets. It is our pleasure to be provided this opportunity to share our opinion in the hope of shaping a low carbon and sustainable future for Hong Kong.

Submitted by Business Environment Council Limited
March 2012