



CIWEM HK

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香港水務及環境
管理學會

THE CHARTERED INSTITUTION OF
WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
HONG KONG

Our Ref. L20120323-01

23rd March 2012

LegCo Secretariat
(Email: mpoon@legco.gov.hk)

By email only

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Views of CIWEM HK on the Proposed Integrated Waste Management Facilities

On behalf of the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management Hong Kong (CIWEM HK), I am pleased to offer our views on the captioned subject.

Need for a Proper Waste Management

According to the information provided by EPD, 13,300 tonnes of waste are disposed everyday at our landfills in Hong Kong. Among the disposed waste, about 9,000 tonnes are unrecovered municipal solid waste (MSW), about 900 tonnes are sludge generated from the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme or other sewage treatment processes, and about 3,200 tonnes are construction waste. Currently the recovery rate of our MSW stands at 49% and the unrecovered MSW are all disposed of at the three strategic landfills in Hong Kong, i.e. the South East New Territories (SENT) Landfill, the North East New Territories (NENT) Landfill and the West New Territories (WENT) Landfill.

As Hong Kong is densely populated with limited land, CIWEM HK agrees that the current practice of relying on landfills as the only means of waste disposal is not sustainable. As per EPD's prediction, the three strategic landfills are projected to be filled up one by one in 2014, 2016 and 2018. It is imperative to have an effective and acceptable waste management strategy at this stage because any waste management facilities would require several years for design and construction, not mentioning the long lead time consulting the community for funding support upstream to the planning process.

Waste Management Strategy

CIWEM HK opines that Hong Kong not only needs an Integrated Waste Management Facilities, but also an Integrated Waste Management. We need a holistic approach to tackle the waste issue. Waste avoidance, reduction, waste recycling and waste disposal have to be implemented with urgency. We consider the Government should commit resources in putting waste minimization and recycling into practice.

Judging from the data collected from other countries, it is effective to reduce large volume of waste after the implementation of waste charging scheme. CIWEM HK opines that MSW charging scheme and Producer Responsibility Scheme should be introduced with firm commitment plans and route map not later than the construction of advanced waste treatment facilities.

We also express our support to educational programmes, such as technical talks, seminars, competitions, etc. There should be practical guidelines for designers, builders, traders and consumers on waste avoidance and reduction. For instance, buyers of new buildings should be given a chance to choose interior designs and materials before actual construction. Practicable measures must be in place to much reduce arisings of commercial and industrial, construction, demolition and renovation wastes. Also, the use of materials which can be recycled should be timely regulated, such as the recycle and use of gypsum in fabricating building partitions.

Integrated Waste Management Facilities

Despite our strong support to waste reduction and recycling, CIWEM HK concurs that merely waste reduction and recycling measures are not adequate to solve the yet complicated waste problem. We still have to find ways to dispose of the final waste. We opine that we still need modern waste disposal facilities with proven technologies to substantially reduce and stabilise waste prior to final disposal.

As the MSW in Hong Kong is heterogeneous in nature, we consider that incineration if could be effectively and efficiently operated could substantially reduce the volume of waste before disposal. Nevertheless, the Government should be cautious in taking forward the incineration option and release relevant updated information to answer public queries on the subject. Modern incineration technology with sophisticated process control and advanced air pollution control has been proven to meet up-to-date stringent air emission standards. We noted the Government has committed that emissions from the IWWMF will meet the target emission limits that are the same as or more stringent than those stipulated in Hong Kong and the European Commission for waste incineration. Therefore, we suggest that there should be contingency plan and mitigating mechanism in place, and on-going dissemination of emission monitoring data easily accessible to members of the public.

Site Selection for IWMF

The EIA study has started from an initial list of 21 sites and shortlisted 8 potential sites for consideration. After comparing these 8 potential sites, the artificial island near Shek Kwu Chau (SKC) is identified as the most preferred site for developing the first modern IWMF in Hong Kong. As it is always controversial when it comes to siting of any waste facilities, CIWEM HK encourages taking systematic approach to identify the best option. Any conclusions and recommendations must base on scientifically sound facts and evidence. This is the sensible way to convince stakeholders of concern.

Concluding Remark

Waste treatment and disposal should only be the last resort to take in waste management. It will be a serious misconception to regard them as the solution to the waste management problems. The Government should communicate to the general public that simply construction of sophisticated waste treatment facilities in remote areas will not cure the waste problem. Every citizen has the responsibility to avoid, reduce and recycle waste arisings.

Should you have any queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned (tel: 2788 5613; email : anthonym@hkpc.org)

Yours faithfully,



Dr. Anthony Ma
Chairman of CIWEM HK

Website : <http://www.ciwem.org/knowledge-networks/branches/hong-kong.aspx>