



Municipal solid waste and food waste recovery

Figure 1 – Municipal solid waste and per capita disposal rate, 1991-2017

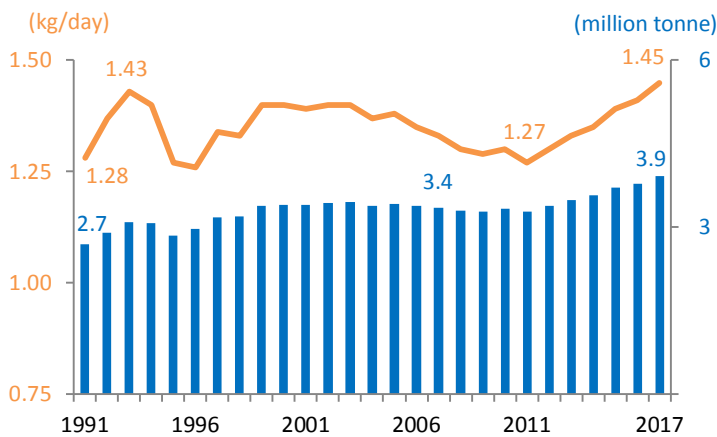
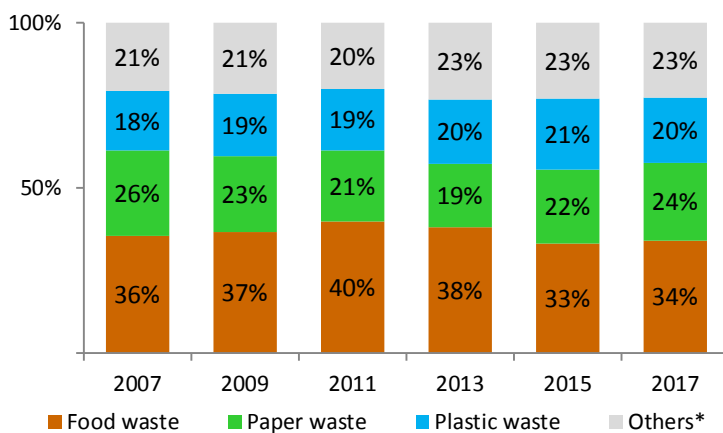
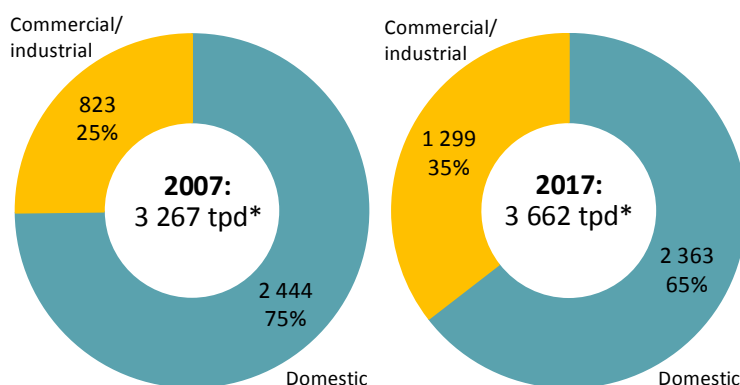


Figure 2 – Composition of municipal solid waste, 2007-2017



Note: (*) Including putrescibles other than food waste, glass, metals, textiles, wood and rattan, etc.

Figure 3 – Daily food waste by source in 2007 and 2017



Note: (*) tpd = tonne per day.

Highlights

- In spite of imminent saturation of three strategic landfills by the 2020s, municipal solid waste ("MSW") discarded at landfills has increased by 17% within a decade to 3.9 million tonnes in 2017. Per capita daily disposal of MSW also increased to a record high of 1.45kg in 2017 (Figure 1). It was 45% higher than the policy target of 1kg/day by 2017 stipulated in the "Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources" published in May 2013.
- Analyzed by type, food waste was the largest contributor to MSW discarded at landfills in Hong Kong, with a share of 34% in 2017 (Figure 2). As this was far more than paper waste (24%) and plastic waste (20%), it is of imperative importance to tackle food waste in waste management.
- Each day, some 3 662 tonnes of food waste is disposed of in Hong Kong, equivalent to some 250 double-decker buses by weight. Analyzed by source, 65% of the food waste was generated by households in 2017, down from 75% 10 years ago (Figure 3). On the other hand, the respective share from the C&I sectors enlarged from 25% to 35%, along with increased waste generated from catering establishments. Over the past decade, the number of restaurants has gone up by 31%, while food waste from C&I sectors has grown by 58%. Conceivably, it is deemed easier to sort and collect food waste from the C&I sectors than that from households, but the additional transport and logistics costs should have pre-empted the catering establishments from engaging in food waste recovery.

Municipal solid waste and food waste recovery (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Recovery of food waste in 2017

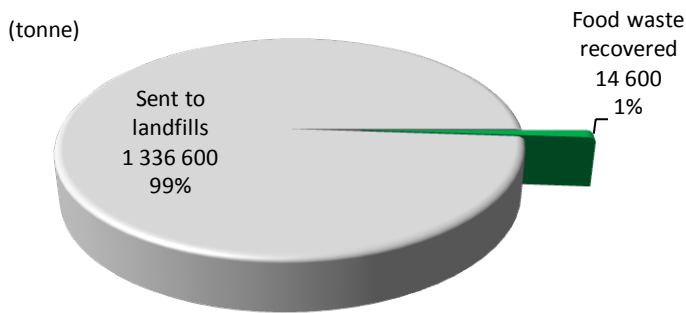
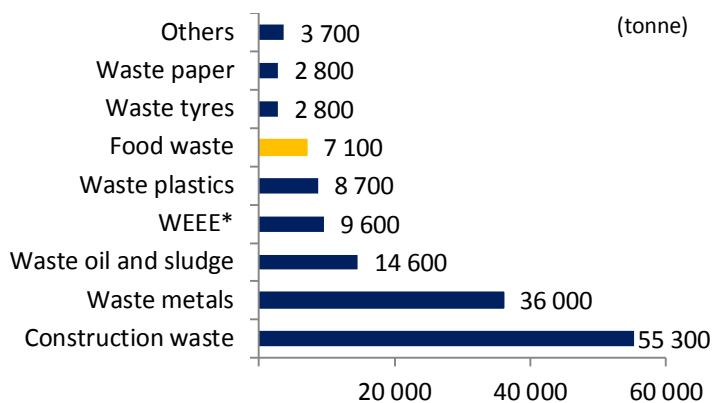
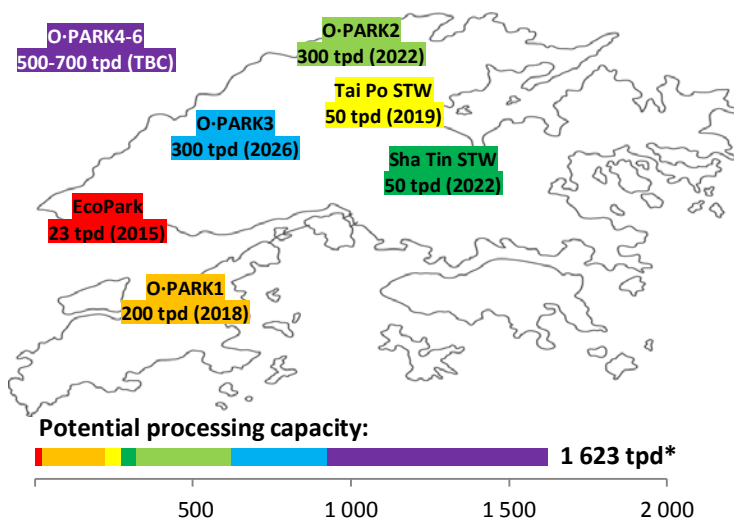


Figure 5 – Processed quantities of waste by type of the Recycling Fund as in December 2018



Note: (*) WEEE refers to waste electrical and electronic equipment.

Figure 6 – Major recycling facilities of food waste in operation or under planning



Note: (*) tpd = tonne per day

Highlights

- Unlike metal and paper wastes, food waste has a much lower usage value, recycled value and commercial viability. In 2017, only 14 600 tonnes or 1% of the food waste was recovered, mostly for production of compost and fish feed locally (**Figure 4**). In the near future, local recycling of food waste may be boosted by the scheduled implementation of two policy measures, namely MSW charging by end-2020 and territory-wide free collection service for such waste as from 2022. These measures will provide more incentives for both households and C&I sectors to reduce and recycle food waste over time.
- Separately, whereas the Government earmarked HK\$1 billion to set up a Recycling Fund in October 2015, only HK\$5.4 million of the Fund has been allocated for food waste projects so far to facilitate its collection, delivery and treatment. At end-2018, the approved projects under the Fund could process 7 100 tonnes of food waste, representing just 0.5% of food waste generated in 2017 (**Figure 5**).
- There are two major recycling facilities dedicated for food waste right now, which located at EcoPark in Tuen Mun and Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 1 ("O-PARK1") in Siu Ho Wan. Looking ahead, the Government plans to expand the O-PARK by phases and utilize additional capacity of sewage treatment works ("STW") for food waste processing. These facilities altogether could provide a food waste treatment capacity of 1 623 tonnes per day, about 44% of the daily food waste discarded at landfills at present (**Figure 6**).

Data source: Latest figures from Environmental Protection Department.

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