

Reduction and recovery of municipal solid waste
Updated progress of implementing audit recommendations as at September 2009

Director of Audit's recommendations	Responsible policy bureaux/ departments	Administration's response in October 2008	Progress as at September 2009
Strategic management of municipal solid waste (MSW)			
1.	Take necessary measures with a view to achieving the target on reduction of MSW generated as set out in the 2005 Policy Framework.	ENB/EPD	The increase in the per capita MSW was mainly contributed by the increase in waste from the commercial and industrial (C&I) sector brought about by the significant growth in economic activities in recent years.
The Administration launched the first Producer Responsibility Scheme (PRS) on plastic shopping bag environmental levy in July 2009. From May to September 2009, the Administration conducted several view-seeking meetings with the relevant trades on the feasible options of introducing mandatory PRS for used electrical and electronic equipment. The Administration would consult the public before the end of 2009 as planned.	2.	Ascertain the reasons for the increase in the per capita MSW generated and take necessary measures to contain the increase.	ENB/EPD
The EPD would continue to monitor the trend to ascertain the relationship between the per capita MSW generated and economic growth.	The quantity of MSW generated was highly dependable on the economic situation and population growth and the Administration would continue to monitor the trend.	3.	Consider stepping up educational and publicity campaigns to promote the importance of a reduction in the per capita MSW generated.
ENB/EPD	The Government had earmarked \$10 million under the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) to promote environmental initiatives under the 2005 Policy Framework, including public education programmes on waste reduction and recovery. The EPD and the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) organised major events such as Environmental Protection Festival each year to promote green living habits and highlight	As at July 2009, 17 applications with a total funding of about \$6.7 million had been approved so far under the ECF public education programmes under the 2005 Policy Framework. These projects covered a wide range of topics, including reduction of plastic shopping bags, green procurement, green festive packaging, and the recovery and recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment.	

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		<p>environmental issues of concern, focusing on waste recycling. The EPD and the ECC would continue to organise publicity campaigns and activities to further promote waste reduction to members of the public.</p>	<p>The approval by the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council (LegCo) to inject \$1 billion into ECF had further strengthened the Administration's funding support to community education projects on waste reduction, which might take the form of partnership with district and community organisations to promote awareness on waste reduction and to adopt greener lifestyles.</p> <p>Training courses and seminars on waste reduction were provided to teachers and students under the ECC's Student Environmental Protection Ambassador Scheme.</p> <p>Exhibitions to promote waste reduction were also provided to the public in selected government buildings and shopping malls, as well as housing estates upon requests.</p> <p>The Administration would continue to carry out the above initiatives to raise public awareness. The Administration would report the progress to LegCo Panel on Environmental Affairs (EA Panel) regularly.</p>
<p>4. Keep under review the need to raise the target on the recovery rate of MSW.</p>	<p>ENB/EPD</p>	<p>The EPD would continue to implement measures as set out in the 2005 Policy Framework to achieve the MSW recovery rate of 50% by 2014, and would keep under regular review the need to raise the MSW recovery rate target.</p>	<p>The Administration would continue to enhance MSW recovery and would keep in view the need for reviewing the target.</p>
<p>5. Expedite action with a view to reducing the Government's reliance on landfills for MSW disposal.</p>	<p>ENB/EPD</p>	<p>The EPD would expedite the development of new facilities so as to divert the MSW from the landfills. It had already commissioned the feasibility study on the development of organic waste treatment facilities (OWTF). The feasibility study on the development of integrated waste management facilities (IWMF) would also be commissioned in late 2008.</p>	<p>The Administration had identified two potential sites suitable for developing the first phase of the IWMF. The Administration commenced the engineering and environmental assessment studies in November 2008. These studies would be completed in 2010 by which time the Administration would decide on the choice of site.</p>

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			<p>The Administration would expedite the implementation programme of the first phase of the OWTF at Siu Ho Wan, Lantau, to seek to advance the commissioning date from mid-2010s to 2013. The Administration commenced the feasibility and environmental impact assessment (EIA) studies for the OWTF in August 2008. The EIA study was expected to be completed by early 2010.</p> <p>In June 2009, the FC of LegCo approved funding application for the design and construction of the sludge treatment facility. With the commissioning of the facility by end 2012, some 2,000 tonnes of sewage sludge generated each day would no longer be disposed of at landfills.</p> <p>The Administration would report the progress of the IWTF and the OWTF to LegCo EA Panel regularly.</p>
Progress of MSW recovery			
6.	Expedite action on the recovery and recycling of putrescible waste.	EPD	<p>The EPD had commissioned the feasibility study on the development of the OWTF and would expedite the development of the new facilities to divert putrescible waste from the landfills.</p> <p>The EPD would expedite the implementation programme of the first phase of the OWTF at Siu Ho Wan, Lantau, to seek to advance the commissioning date from mid-2010s to 2013.</p> <p>The EPD commenced the feasibility and EIA studies for the OWTF in August 2008. The EIA study was expected to be completed by early 2010.</p> <p>The EPD would report the progress to LegCo EA Panel regularly.</p>

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7.	Take further measures to improve the recovery of paper waste and plastic waste.	EPD	The EPD had commissioned the Hong Kong Business Environment Council to carry out a "Study on Waste Paper and Plastics Generation and Recovery in the C&I Sector in Hong Kong". The study would be completed by early 2009 and the findings could help further improve the recovery of paper waste and plastic waste.	The study had been completed and the Administration had been implementing the recommendations through the Source Separation of Commercial and Industrial Waste (SSCIW) Programme e.g. provision of free waste-separation bins, and wider publicity of the programme.
Implementation of domestic waste-recovery programmes				
8.	Monitor closely the achievement of the Source Separation of Domestic Waste (SSDW) programme by reference to laid-down performance targets.	EPD	The EPD had been closely monitoring the achievement of the SSDW programme and noted that through territory-wide promotion of the programme, the message of source-separation of waste was widely disseminated in the community. More residents, including those living in buildings/estates that had not yet joined the programme, were practicing source separation of waste. The programme had improved the waste recovery in Hong Kong. The increased quantities of recyclable waste collected had contributed to the overall achievement of the programme.	The EPD had continued to monitor closely the achievement of the SSDW programme including re-visits and analysis of data provided by participating estates. The EPD would conduct a review of the SSDW programme when the impacts of the current economic downturn were better ascertained. The EPD reported to LegCo EA Panel the progress of the key initiatives under the 2005 Policy Framework in April 2009 including the SSDW programme. The EPD would continue to report the progress to LegCo EA Panel regularly.
9.	Consider conducting periodic surveys to estimate the quantities of recyclable waste recovered under the SSDW programme for information of stakeholders and the general public.	EPD	The EPD would consider conducting periodic surveys to estimate the quantities of recyclable waste recovered under the SSDW programme.	The EPD had conducted a pilot survey in late June 2009 to assess the manpower required and the appropriate methodology for periodic estimation of the quantities of waste recovered under the SSDW programme. Analysis of the pilot survey was in progress.

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Implementation of non-domestic waste-recovery programmes			
10.	Obtain statistics of recyclable waste recovered under the Source Separation of Commercial and Industrial Waste (SSCIW) programme from management offices of the participating commercial and industrial buildings.	EPD	The EPD had requested participants of the SSCIW programme to submit regular returns in prescribed form, and compiled statistics based on the returns. The return rate had reached about 40%. The EPD would, through further communications with the participants, endeavour to encourage better response.
11.	Compile and publish the quantities of the C&I waste recovered as a result of the implementation of the SSCIW programme.	EPD	The EPD would compile and publish data obtained from participants of the SSCIW programme.
12.	Consider introducing a commendation scheme for the SSCIW programme.	EPD	<p>The EPD had already set up the necessary data management system to compile the information and data obtained from the participants.</p> <p>The EPD had posted the results on the EPD's website since July 2009. The data would be regularly updated and published.</p> <p>At present, certificates were issued to participants of the SSCIW programme to commend their efforts in waste recovery.</p> <p>The EPD had organised a forum cum award ceremony on 20 August 2009 to further commend their achievements.</p> <p>The EPD had launched a commendation scheme similar to that of the SSDW programme in August 2009, and planned to hand out the first batch of awards in the 3rd quarter 2010.</p>

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<p>13. Step up measures to enhance students' awareness of the importance of resource conservation and waste separation. Provide adequate waste-separation bins for use by all schools as far as possible.</p>	<p>EPD Education Bureau (EDB)</p>	<p>The EPD shared the views of the Audit Commission that to sustain or facilitate the implementation of the Waste Separation and Recycling Scheme at schools, which had been jointly organised by the EPD, the ECC and the EDB since 2000, there was a need to provide adequate waste-separation bins for use by schools. The ECC had already committed \$6 million for providing waste-separation bins for schools.</p>	<p>The EPD would continue its effort in enhancing students' awareness of the importance of resource conservation and waste separation.</p> <p>The ECC had been distributing newly designed waste-separation bins to primary and secondary schools. As at the end of July 2009, over 370 applications for bins had been received. All bins required would be provided within this school year, boosting the coverage rate of bins in school premises to 87.4%.</p> <p>The Administration would continue to reach out to those schools that had not yet joined the voluntary "Waste Separation and Recycling Scheme" to proactively invite them again to join or to ascertain their reasons for not joining.</p> <p>The Administration would continue to carry out the above initiatives to enhance students' awareness. The Administration would report the progress to LegCo EA Panel regularly.</p>

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14.	Take appropriate measures to minimise overflowing waste-separation bins at public places. Provide waste-separation bins at refuse collection points in rural areas.	<p>Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)</p> <p>EPD</p>	<p>The FEHD would step up contract management to ensure its contractors collected recyclable waste from various recyclable waste collection points at least once a week or when the waste-separation bins were 70% full. If situation warranted, the FEHD would increase the collection frequency or suitably adjust the number of recyclable waste collection points and waste-separation bins as appropriate.</p> <p>The FEHD and the EPD would review the design and size of waste-separation bins to suit different usage patterns.</p> <p>The FEHD had placed waste-separation bins at about 50 village-type refuse collection points since August 2008, in addition to the 130 refuse collection points. The FEHD would closely monitor the situation.</p>	<p>The FEHD had closely monitored the performance of its recyclable collection contractors and would increase the collection frequency or suitably adjust the number of recyclable waste collection points and waste-separation bins as appropriate. As at September 2009, the FEHD had set up 1,261 (854 as at August 2008) recyclable waste collection points in public places.</p> <p>The FEHD had collaborated with the EPD to provide another 298 sets of new waste-separation bins across the territory including rural areas after consulting the respective District Councils. The FEHD had already placed the new bins at the agreed locations in June 2009.</p> <p>The FEHD and the EPD had agreed on the new design of the waste-separation bins for adoption in ordering new bins.</p> <p>As at September 2009, the total number of village-type refuse collection points placed with waste-separation bins was 259 (180 as at August 2008).</p>
15.	Place rubbish bins near waste-separation bins at public places as far as practicable.	<p>FEHD</p> <p>Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)</p> <p>EPD</p>	<p>It was the FEHD's existing practice to provide a rubbish bin near the waste-separation bins for public convenience.</p> <p>The EPD, the FEHD and the LCSD agreed with the audit recommendation.</p>	<p>The FEHD and the LCSD would adopt the practice and place rubbish bins near waste-separation bins at public places where practicable.</p> <p>All relevant departments would continue to carry out the initiatives under item 14 and item 15 to meet public needs.</p>