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**Paper for the House Committee meeting
on 1 March 2013**

**Proposed overseas duty visit to the Republic of Korea
by the Panel on Environmental Affairs**

Purpose

This paper seeks the permission of the House Committee for the Panel on Environmental Affairs ("the Panel") to conduct an overseas duty visit to the Republic of Korea to study its experience on waste management.

Background

Waste management in Hong Kong

2. Waste reduction and waste management are great challenges for Hong Kong. Hong Kong's per capita quantity of waste generated on a daily basis is higher than that of many developed economies and the landfills in the territory will also be exhausted one by one by 2020. The Panel has been monitoring the efforts made by the Administration in addressing these challenges and has urged the Administration to conduct a comprehensive review and to put forward a series of waste management strategies.

3. As highlighted in the 2013 Policy Address, the Administration is vigorously pursuing a multi-pronged waste management strategy. It will focus on waste reduction at source, while progressively implementing Producer Responsibility Schemes and the polluter-pays principle so as to boost the recovery and recycling rates of resource materials. It will also develop sustainable end of pipe treatment for waste.

4. The Administration is planning to publish a waste management blueprint around the first quarter of 2013. The blueprint will lay out the comprehensive approach to waste management premised on the "waste hierarchy" widely adopted internationally. It will contain a full range of initiatives on reduction, reuse, recycling, recovery, treatment and landfilling.

Administration's plan to visit the Republic of Korea

5. At its meeting on 25 February 2013, the Panel was advised that the Administration was planning to visit Seoul, Republic of Korea, between 2 and

5 April 2013 to learn more about the city's experience in various aspects of waste management regarding –

- (a) waste reduction: policy, measures and implementation;
- (b) waste recycling: how the Government, the community and the private sector work together; and
- (c) treatment infrastructure: planning and operation of relevant facilities.

6. The Administration invited the Panel to consider whether to conduct a similar visit.

Proposed duty visit by the Panel

The visit

7. The Panel notes that Seoul, Republic of Korea, has been very successful in achieving waste reduction and it shares many similarities with Hong Kong in population density and built environment. Its path towards success will provide good reference for Hong Kong. The Panel considers it worthwhile to undertake a visit to the city to obtain first-hand information on its experience in waste management so as to enable members to grasp the latest development on the subject and facilitate their deliberations on the issues concerned in examining the waste management blueprint to be published by the Administration.

8. At its meeting on 25 February 2013, the Panel decided to undertake a duty visit to Seoul from 1 to 5 April 2013. The duty visit aims to study the following areas –

- (a) the Korean Government's policies and measures on waste reduction, waste recycling and waste treatment infrastructure;
- (b) response of the public, non-governmental organizations and members of the local municipal council to waste management policies and waste treatment facilities;
- (c) measures adopted by the Korean Government to address issues of concern or problems relating to waste reduction, waste recycling and waste treatment facilities; and
- (d) the business and employment opportunities made available by recycling operations developed by the Government and non-governmental organizations.

9. The Panel agreed that apart from having the same visit programme as the Administration, it would start the visit one day earlier than the Administration to meet with the relevant committee of the Seoul Metropolitan Council and non-governmental green groups to exchange views on issues of mutual concern. The tentative outline programme of the visit is in the **Appendix**.

Participants of the visit

10. Some Panel members consider that only Members who have been following up on environmental affairs should join the visit, and that the delegation should be kept to a manageable size to facilitate in-depth exchange with the receiving organizations. The Panel has agreed that the participants of the visit should be limited to members of the Panel. A circular has been issued to invite Panel members to indicate interest in joining the visit.

Funding arrangements

11. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an overseas duty visit account of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong organized by committees of the Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in excess of the available balance in a four-year term has to be paid by the Member personally.

12. A preliminary estimate of the expenditure (including airfare, hotel accommodation, meals, in-town travelling and miscellaneous expenses, etc.) to be incurred by each participating member for the proposed duty visit from 1 to 5 April 2013 is about \$17,500 (for economy class air passage).

Advice sought

13. Rule 22(v) of the House Rules provides that should any Panel consider it necessary to undertake any activities outside Hong Kong under the name of the Panel of the Council, the prior permission of the House Committee shall be sought.

14. The House Committee's permission is sought for the Panel to conduct the overseas duty visit as proposed.

Visit to Seoul, Republic of Korea, on Waste Management
(1 - 5 April 2013)

Outline Programme
 (tentative)

| Item | Features |
|-------------|--|
| | 1 April: Hong Kong → Seoul (evening arrival, no visit programme) |
| | 2 April: Visit to Seoul Metropolitan Council and Non-governmental Green Groups |
| | <p>Meetings with the following parties to exchange views on the Korean Government's waste management policies and waste treatment facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Relevant committee of the Seoul Metropolitan Council <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public funding and land resources required for the implementation of waste management policies; and 2. To understand the challenges faced by the Seoul Metropolitan Council in the implementation of waste management and the improvement measures since implementation. ➤ Greenpeace East Asia Office, Seoul Office <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To understand the inadequacies in local policies and administrative measures from the critical perspective of non-governmental organizations. ➤ Korea Zero Waste Movement Network <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To understand the opportunities and difficulties faced by non-governmental organizations in promoting resource recycling under local policies; 2. Employment opportunities in the recycling industry and the technologies required in different stages; and 3. The process of changing the waste management culture of the people. |
| | 3 April: Reduction and Reuse |
| 1. | <p>Overall briefing by the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduction of waste management in the Republic of Korea ➤ Vision, mission and target of waste management ➤ The path of waste reduction |

| Item | Features |
|---------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Challenges on waste reduction |
| 2. | <p>Waste Charging System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Introduction of fee collection and monitoring under the waste charging system➤ Visit residential buildings on their waste management (including grassroots and middle-class residential buildings)<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Garbage bags used by each household model● Garbage bags used by building management model➤ Visit commercial buildings on their waste management (including retail and restaurants) |
| 3. | <p>Food Reduction Campaign since 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ How the Government encouraged food waste reduction at source by restaurants and the public➤ Visit restaurants with Kimchi Bar➤ 101 food waste reduction tips promoted by the Government |
| 4. | <p>Second-hand product store</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Their story of success and interface with waste management policy of the Republic of Korea |
| 4 April: Recycling | |
| 1. | <p>Food Recycling System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Introduction of the collection and monitoring system on food waste➤ Visit food waste collection in residential buildings (including grassroots and middle-class residential buildings)➤ Visit food waste collection in commercial buildings (including retail and restaurants) |
| 2. | <p>Food Waste Recycling Facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ How to liaise with locals and solicit their support?➤ How to tackle the odour problem? |

| Item | Features |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 3. | Community Recycling Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Visit recycling bins and litter boxes in Seoul to study their locations and design<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Public area – subway stations, park, street● Shopping mall / supermarket |
| 4. | Waste Separation Treatment Plant <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ to study its operational model and management principles➤ to study how separation treatment plants create green jobs |
| 5. | Development of Korean recycling industry <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ to study how waste management policy facilitates the development of recycling industry➤ to study the technology of turning waste plastics of low value into high value-added resources |
| 5 April: Treatment Technology | |
| 1. | Incinerator <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Visit the treatment plant and its operation➤ Sharing with local community groups on community monitoring system |
| 2. | Landfill <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Visit the landfill➤ Briefing by operator on continuous community engagement in planning, commissioning and operation of landfill |