

**Submission to Legco Panel on Environmental Affairs in connection with environmental infrastructure projects : 22 March 2014**

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I am not in favour of the Government's current proposals in respect of environmental infrastructure projects, i.e.:

(a) upgrade **5164DR** (Southeast New Territories (SENT) landfill extension) to Category A at an estimated cost of \$1,997 million<sub>1</sub> in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices; and

(b) upgrade **5177DR** (Integrated Waste Management Facilities (IWMF) Phase 1) to Category A at an estimated cost of \$18,201 million<sub>2</sub> in MOD prices.

However, I do strongly support a holistic approach to address Hong Kong's waste challenges, with priority given to implementing a comprehensive range of measures to reduce waste generation.

It is noted on Page 7, sub-section(I) that:

“to reduce our reliance on landfilling in the long run, we will embark on preparatory work this year for a **strategic study** on future waste management facilities. The study will look into various issues such as types, scale, technology, locality and timing of new strategic and regional facilities and services needed with a view to drawing up a strategic masterplan of waste management facilities for future”

This proposal is most welcome (albeit somewhat late in the day) and every effort should be made urgently to expedite any preparatory work required and to commence the study. However, it appears that Government, in spite of the above commitment, is proposing to go ahead with specific projects without waiting for the study outcome which, in my view, is putting the cart before the horse and is likely to lead to a great deal of unnecessary work and expenditure.

However, if a study is to be undertaken, and it cannot be started until next year, then Government should in the interim only introduce new waste management measures and facilities that are unlikely to impinge adversely on the study findings. These would include immediate introduction of meaningful waste charging, significantly increased public

education regarding the seriousness of Hong Kong's waste issues and serious efforts to improve waste separation, particularly wet and dry waste.

As part of the strategic study review the following also should be considered: introduction of mechanical sorting facilities at each of the existing landfills to minimise waste that goes to landfill and maximise that going to recycling, together with expansion of recycling facilities across Hong Kong. Additional collection and sorting centres distributed across the Territory should also be provided. These measures/facilities can all be implemented in a relatively short time frame and will be required going forward even as significant reductions in waste generation result from their provision.

One further comment – waste, particularly in warm climates generates odour and everything should be done to reduce this in order to make any waste storage and treatment facilities less objectionable to those living or working in their vicinity. Emphasis on the initial separation and wet and dry waste, and specific handling of wet waste, would do a great deal to reduce odour at our landfills; therefore Government should be encouraged to make as much provision as necessary for the reduction, efficient treatment and disposal of organic waste as this would go a long way to easing concerns of local residents.