



香港廢物管理學會

Hong Kong Waste Management Association
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Response to Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs (Special meeting on 22 March 2014)

Hong Kong Waste Management Association (HKWMA) is the premier organization representing professionals in Hong Kong's solid waste management and environmental industries and we take an active interest in all areas represented by our membership. Since our inception 20 years ago, HKWMA has been witnessing the evolution, needs and challenges of waste management issues in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong, as one of the most vibrant cities in Asia, recognizes its unique challenges in the direction of sustainable waste management. In the last two decades, there have been several extensive rounds of opinion gathering, expressions of interest, public forums, consultations, etc. from various stakeholders. With the pressing need for alternatives to the three strategic landfills as they reach capacity, the government has long ago identified the waste to energy (WtE) approach as one of the solutions.

Learning from the operating experiences of countries including Japan, Korea and Singapore, as well as some European countries, we understand that for effective waste management it is essential to have a combination of WtE technology with continuing landfill capacity downstream, together with specialized organic waste management. Also it should not need to be mentioned that an enlightened approach to resource recycling serves as the backbone of a sustainable society.

It is understandable that the general public is skeptical about the health and safety issues of WtE technologies as well as the idealistic preference toward a zero landfill approach. From the professional angle of a learned society as well as proven operation experience from other countries, HKWMA is convinced that these concerns have already been well taken care of by technological advancement and Hong Kong would genuinely have the capacity to ensure the highest operating standards for its waste management facilities. Realistically, it is inevitable that residuals will be generated from different advanced thermal technologies and landfills remain the most viable solution at the end of the pipe line.

Working towards Effective Waste Management for a Sustainable Society
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Our Association has actually obtained updated relevant knowledge on these topics and has organized overseas study tours with other professional stakeholders to be able to make this submission with full confidence.

With the proposed IWFM Phase I targeting only 3,000 tonnes of MSW every day, we still have an imminent need to extend our three existing landfills which can be monitored and managed on a performance basis. The waste charging scheme recently proposed by the government will play a determining and effective role in encouraging our citizens to reduce, recycle and reuse resources. Another point to stress is that extensive environmental education for the whole Hong Kong community remains one of the most critical items of software for the success of a sustainable environment. When some of the above measures are in place with significant results, the Government should consider to reduce the scale of landfill extension and to allocate more green areas between the extended landfill and nearby residents in order to reduce the impact.

Compared with other world class cities, Hong Kong is also lagging behind in implementing a basket of solutions to tackle waste management issues holistically. Can we really wait any longer? Now is certainly the time to proceed with the “3+1” option while implementing the other initiatives set out in the Government’s blueprint in parallel.

The HKWMA strongly supports the Government’s blueprint and anticipates helping Hong Kong to walk the talk.

Victor C. Li
Honorary Secretary
March 22, 2014

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