

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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**Panel on Environmental Affairs**

**Meeting on 16 December 2013**

**Background brief on "Promotion of the recycling industry"  
prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat**

**Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the Government's measures to promote the recycling industry and on the work of the Steering Committee to Promote the Sustainable Development of the Recycling Industry ("the Steering Committee"), and gives a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject.

**Background**

2. In January 2013, there were about 500 companies and organizations engaged in the recycling industry in Hong Kong. These included private recyclers, recycling centers operated by non-profit-making organizations, and recyclers operating at the EcoPark. There were also itinerant collectors and scavengers of recyclable materials.

3. To create a favourable business environment for the waste recycling industry, the Government published the Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014) in December 2005 to set out a series of initiatives to assist the development of local recycling and green industries and encourage more people to join the industry. These measures include –

- (a) the implementation of programmes on source separation of waste to encourage the public to separate waste at source so as to increase the amount of local recyclables for collection;

- (b) the identification of more suitable sites for leasing to the recycling industry under short-term tenancy through bidding;
- (c) the development of the EcoPark to provide long-term land for the recycling industry at affordable rent so as to facilitate and encourage investment by the recycling industry;
- (d) the promotion of the green procurement policy among government departments to boost the demand for green products as an outlet for recycled/green products and materials;
- (e) the implementation of producer responsibility schemes ("PRs") to encourage the public and different industries to engage more actively in waste recovery; and
- (f) the encouragement of the development of recycling technologies to upgrade the standard of local recycling industry through the Innovation and Technology Fund, the Environment and Conservation Fund ("ECF") and various funds for small and medium enterprises.

4. Apart from the above, as over 3 million tonnes of recyclable materials are recovered in Hong Kong every year and the majority is exported for recycling, the Government will consider identifying suitable Public Cargo Working Area ("PCWA") berths for bidding by the recycling industry for their exclusive use to provide local waste recyclers with stable export facilities to support their recycling activities. The local recycling industry, PCWA operators and other relevant stakeholders will be consulted on the proposal.

5. The Government is also committed to launching initiatives on various fronts to facilitate the development of the recycling and green industries. In this connection –

- (a) legislative proposals are being prepared to introduce a new PRS on waste electrical and electronic equipment ("WEEE"). Mandatory PRSs will be implemented progressively, with priority accorded to glass beverage bottles;
- (b) five pilot Community Green Stations are being set up in different districts in Hong Kong to facilitate the collection of recyclables at the district level. In addition to publicity and education activities, the Community Green Stations will support recycling activities at

the community level. This will include reaching out to the community to collect recyclable materials, supporting the community recycling network and launching other source separation initiatives;

- (c) public consultation on the implementation details of municipal solid waste charging is underway to promote public participation in recycling and offer a financial incentive to the recycling industry to invest more in the industry; and
- (d) \$5,000 million has been injected into ECF to invest in long-term environmental action as sustainable support to the community.

6. In May 2013, the Environment Bureau issued the document "Hong Kong: Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022" ("the Action Blueprint"), which maps out strategies, targets, policies and action plans for waste management for the coming 10 years. To achieve waste reduction and recovery, the Government will undertake multiple and concurrent actions to drive behavioural change to reduce waste at source and to roll out targeted territory-wide waste reduction campaigns including waste recycling initiatives.

#### Recyclables of low commercial values

7. In general, recyclables of lower values including waste plastics, glass bottles, WEEE and wood require some government assistance to make their collection and recycling viable.

8. For waste plastics and WEEE, the Government has provided funding through ECF for non-government organizations to operate recycling centres at EcoPark. There are also 15 ECF-funded Community Recycling Centres to provide waste-exchange service and collection of recyclables of lower values. In addition, there are 48 community collection points which provide promotion materials and gifts to participants who bring recyclables to the collection points. The Community Green Stations also support recycling activities at the community level.

9. For wood waste, the Government has been liaising with wood waste producers and collectors, including government departments, to encourage separation of wood waste at source and delivery of wood waste direct to EcoPark or other suitable recyclers for processing. Meanwhile, the Government will continue to implement various voluntary PRSs in collaboration with relevant trades. To enhance the quality of recovered materials, new publicity

and promotion will continue to be rolled out to promote the proper use of waste separation bins.

### Steering Committee to Promote the Sustainable Development of the Recycling Industry

10. To step up concerted efforts in promoting the healthy development of the recycling industry, the Steering Committee, which is led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, was set up in August 2013. The Steering Committee is tasked to –

- (a) review the current situation of local recyclables' collection and disposal, and relevant policies and support measures;
- (b) study viable measures to support the recycling industry (which covers exploring the feasibility of setting up a "Recycling Fund" and its possible mode of operation);
- (c) enhance the community recycling network;
- (d) foster community support in recycling through public education and community involvement projects; and
- (e) promote research on relevant technologies as well as training and development of the workforce.

11. The Steering Committee has met with the recycling industry and relevant stakeholders to listen to their views on the way forward to promote the sustainable development of Hong Kong's recycling industry and support recycling operations. It will also study in depth the structure of recycling operations for different types of recyclables and formulate support programmes and measures for each recyclable type. The establishment of a "Recycling Fund" will also be examined in that context.

### **Deliberations by the Panel on Environmental Affairs**

12. The Panel on Environmental Affairs ("the Panel") discussed the promotion of the recycling industry at its meeting on 24 June 2013. Some members expressed concern about the lack of efforts in creating outlets for recyclable materials and enquired if measures could be put in place to incentivize the recycling of plastic bottles and create a market for the purpose,

similar to the recycling of waste glass beverage bottles. They considered that even if recyclable materials were not of economic value, such materials should be recycled as far as possible to reduce the pressure on landfills. These members also opined that there was a need to work out a practical policy on waste recycling by adding value to the recyclable materials. The Administration was requested to invest in recycling operations and identify outlets for recyclable materials, and provide supporting recycling facilities, such as by helping to build plants in the EcoPark. There should also be more publicity on the proper use of the three-colour waste separation bins, thereby increasing the supply of recyclable materials.

13. Some other members were concerned that as waste recyclers were operating on land granted on short-term tenancies, they would not make long-term capital commitments in their waste recycling operations. These members saw a need for the Administration to provide land and funding support to assist recyclers in the recycling of waste. In particular, more assistance should be provided to waste recyclers in the recycling of recyclables with low commercial values.

14. There were also suggestions that the Administration should set up an environment fund to assist in the development of environmental industries, and the environment levy collected from various PRSs as well as the savings generated from the implementation of environmental initiatives should be ploughed back to the environment fund. A member suggested that the Administration should set aside a recurrent expenditure of \$2 billion per year to assist recyclers in the recycling of waste and to conduct technological research to improved product designs, with a view to creating 10 000 job opportunities.

### **Council questions and motion**

15. Hon Vincent FANG, Hon KWOK Wai-keung and Hon CHAN Hak-kan raised questions relating to the recycling industry at the Council meetings on 26 January 2011, 30 January and 20 November 2013. Details of the Council questions are hyperlinked in the **Appendix** for ease of reference.

16. At its meeting on 10 July 2013, the Council passed the motion on "Promoting the waste recycling industry to create employment opportunities" moved by Hon KWOK Wai-keung as amended by Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kiwok, Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN, Hon Gary FAN and Hon WU Chi-wai. The hyperlinks to the wording of the motion and the progress report provided by the Administration are provided in the **Appendix**.

### **Latest development**

17. The Administration will brief the Panel on the measures implemented to promote the recycling industry as well as the direction of work of the Steering Committee at the meeting scheduled for 16 December 2013.

### **Relevant papers**

18. A list of relevant papers is set out in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
13 December 2013

## List of relevant papers

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Environmental Affairs	24 June 2013	<p>Administration's paper on "Monitoring the outsourcing of the collection of recyclable materials and promotion of the recycling trade" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1332/12-13(05)) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0624cb1-1332-5-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0624cb1-1332-5-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1807/12-13) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/minutes/ea20130624.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/minutes/ea20130624.pdf</a></p> <p>Administration's supplementary paper on "Monitoring the outsourcing of the collection of recyclable materials and promotion of the recycling trade" (LC Paper No. CB(1)218/13-14(01)) <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0624cb1-218-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0624cb1-218-1-e.pdf</a></p>

Hyperlinks to relevant Council Questions:

Date	Council Question
26 January 2011	Council question raised by Hon Vincent FANG <a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201101/26/P201101260184.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201101/26/P201101260184.htm</a>
30 January 2013	Council question raised by Hon KWOK Wai-keung <a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201301/30/P201301300399.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201301/30/P201301300399.htm</a>
20 November 2013	Council question raised by Hon CHAN Hak-kan <a href="http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201311/20/P201311200626.htm">http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201311/20/P201311200626.htm</a>

Hyperlink to relevant Motion:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Motion</b>
10 July 2013	<p>Motion on "Promoting the waste recycling industry to create employment opportunities" moved by Hon KWOK Wai-keung as amended by Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN, Hon Gary FAN and Hon WU Chi-wai</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/motion/cm0710-m2-wordings-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/motion/cm0710-m2-wordings-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Progress report provided by the Administration</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/motion/cm0710-m2-prpt-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/motion/cm0710-m2-prpt-e.pdf</a></p>