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8 July 2020

Chief Council Secretary (1)1
Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Mandy Poon)

Dear Ms Poon,

Panel on Environmental Affairs
List of follow-up actions

The Panel on Environmental Affairs discussed “Management of Waste Plastics” on 25 May 2020. The supplementary information requested by Members is at **Annex**.

For enquiries, please feel free to contact the undersigned at 3509 8665.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Amy WONG)
for Director of Environmental Protection

Annex

(a) overall targets for reducing the quantity of waste plastics disposed of at landfills, and the timetables for implementing related measures;

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) tailored different management initiatives for a series of common plastic products. Their implementation timetables / targets are set out below.

1. On **plastic shopping bags (PSBs)**, we are conducting a full review of the PSB Charging Scheme, and plan to consult the public on the outcome of the review in the second half of 2020 in order to map out the way forward.
2. On **plastic beverage containers**, for reducing the consumption of plastic bottled water, the Government's target is to increase the number of water dispensers for public use in government venues from about 2 700 units at present to about 3 200 units by 2022. For country parks, there are currently 17 water filling stations already in place, and about ten more will be installed in 2021 that can be conveniently used by visitors. In addition, with a view to encouraging the public to bring their own bottles, the existing drinking water fountains in country parks will be gradually replaced with water filling stations. Seven country park kiosks have also ceased to sell plastic bottled water of one litre or less. The remaining two kiosks will cease their sale upon contract renewal in 2021.

Besides, since 20 February 2018, the sale of plastic bottled water of one litre or less has been progressively ceased in automatic vending machines (AVMs) at government premises. Over 80% of about 1 600 AVMs installed at government premises have put in place the above stop-sale arrangement. The remaining AVMs will implement the arrangement progressively during the renewal of existing relevant contracts, lease/tenancy agreements or permissions.

In the long run, our target is to introduce a producer responsibility scheme (PRS) on plastic beverage containers (PPRS). We plan to consult the public in the second half of 2020 on the detailed proposal, and will continue to maintain close communication with relevant stakeholders in formulating the detailed arrangement for the future PRS.

To pave way for the future PPRS, we are preparing to roll out a pilot scheme on reverse vending machines (RVMs) in the second half of 2020, by installing 60 RVMs at different locations with a view to assessing the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of the application of RVMs in local context as well as gauging the public responses.

3. On **disposable plastic tableware**, the Government commenced a study on the feasibility, scope and mechanism of controlling or banning disposable plastic tableware in April 2019. Based on the findings of the study and analysis, the consultant will draw up a proposal to the Government that is suitable for implementation in Hong Kong in the long run. The study is scheduled for completion by the end of 2020.

The Government announced the “Plastic-free” School Lunch Pilot Scheme in the 2019 Policy Address Supplement. The EPD will provide refrigerators, steam cabinets, dishwashers and disinfection machines (collectively known as the “Four Treasures”) to primary and secondary schools. The pilot scheme is scheduled to be open for applications in September / October 2020.

As at the end of May 2020, among all 270 restaurants in the Government, about 140 government premises restaurants have implemented the "plastic free" measure. It is expected that 90% of government premises restaurants will completely ban the use of disposable plastics tableware by the end of 2021.

4. On **strengthening recycling support**, the EPD launched a 2-year “Pilot Scheme on Collection and Recycling Services of Plastic Recyclable Materials” firstly in the Eastern District in late January 2020. The Scheme will also commence in Kwun Tong and Sha Tin in the third quarter of 2020. Subject to the experience and effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme, we will consider extending the services to the whole territory progressively in a longer term.

5. On **enhancement of community recycling facilities**, we will regularise the funding support for Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) by appointing non-profit-making organisations to operate the CRCs through contracts starting from 2020-21. The network of CRCs will be expanded to all 18 districts across the territory and their services will also be upgraded, including extending the service hours and days, and increasing the number of mobile recyclable collection points, etc.
6. On **strengthening public education and publicity**, the EPD established its outreaching teams in end 2018. The outreaching teams collaborate closely with community partners to educate the public on the importance of waste reduction at source, assist them in practising proper source separation of waste and clean recycling, and identifying proper outlets for recyclables. The outreaching teams have kick-started pilot outreaching service in three districts (i.e. Eastern District, Kwun Tong and Sha Tin). We will extend the outreaching service to the entire territory by phases starting from end 2020, having regard to the experience in the pilot districts.

- (b) **the major sub-categories of "plastic dining wares" in the waste statistics for 2018 titled "Monitoring of Solid Waste in Hong Kong"; (ii) the differences between the composition of "plastic dining wares" in the above waste statistics and the composition of "plastic cutleries" mentioned in paragraph 3 of the Administration's paper for the meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)655/19-20(03)); and (iii) how the Administration would reduce the disposal and promote the recycling of "plastic dining wares";**

The "plastic dining wares" mentioned in the report "Monitoring of Solid Waste in Hong Kong" covers disposable plastic dining wares and other non-disposable plastic dining wares, such as plastic knives, plastic forks, plastic spoons, plastic cups, plastic straws, plastic chopsticks, plastic bowls, plastic plates, etc.

The EPD and the Environmental Campaign Committee have put forward a number of publicity and promotion initiatives, which include:

1. using social media to remind the public to go green, and holding online activities to encourage them to practise the idea of "Plastic-Free Takeaway";
2. disseminating the message of "plastic-and-disposable-free" via various online platforms and mobile applications as well as bus/tram/outdoor advertising;
3. proactively arranging with property management companies and the Housing Department to display publicity posters in both private and public housing estates to urge members of the public to practise "Plastic-Free Takeaway" in daily lives for joint efforts in waste reduction; and
4. launching programmes themed on plastic-free and other green practices via different channels such as TV stations, online media and social platforms, and video sharing platforms, thereby providing the public with everyday guidelines on waste reduction during the epidemic to foster the culture of "Food Wise" and "Waste Reduction" and promote using less disposable plastic tableware.

- (c) regarding the incident of spillage of plastic pellets into the sea in 2012, the percentage of cleanup cost recovered by the Government from the parties concerned; and**

Regarding the incident of massive spillage of polypropylene plastic pellets into the sea during the passage of typhoon Vicente in July 2012, after detailed negotiations, a settlement agreement was eventually reached between the Government and the party concerned. The party concerned agreed to pay a sum to the Government to compensate for the costs incurred by the Government in cleaning up the plastic pellets. In light of the complex legal issues involved, the Government, having taken full consideration of the evidence and sought independent legal advice, considered the compensation amount agreed to be paid by the party concerned reasonable, realistic and acceptable. As the settlement agreement adopted a usual confidentiality clause, the Government could not further disclose the content of the agreement.

- (d) (i) the method for identifying marine refuse items of non-local origin; and (ii) whether items of unknown origin (e.g. items without packaging labels) were regarded as local items, and if so, how the Administration would improve the method for investigating the origins of marine refuse.**

The United Nations has released the United Nations Environment Programme / Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNEP/IOC) Guidelines on Survey and Monitoring of Marine Litter in 2009 on the survey of marine refuse. The guideline pointed out that, given the increasing globalisation of product markets, tagging items with the point of manufacture or origin is not likely to provide a practical or functional approach to the management of marine refuse. Hence, the EPD would not compile statistics on the point of manufacture or origin of marine refuse during regular shoreline surveillance.

To support shorelines cleanup work, the EPD conducted a Marine Refuse Study in 2013 to investigate the activity sources, regional distribution and movement of marine refuse, and to support the development of strategies to combat the marine refuse problem. The EPD is taking forward a three-pronged strategy including promoting waste reduction at source, reducing the amount of refuse entering the ocean and removing refuse from the marine environment. The EPD will also continue to enhance communication and co-

operation with neighbouring cities to exercise marine environmental management at the regional level.