

CY Leung Policy Address 2013

V. Environmental Protection and Conservation SUMMARY

A Green, Healthy and Liveable City

133. Hong Kong has unparalleled natural endowments. With better environmental conservation, Hong Kong can be the loveliest city in the world. We boast successful co-existence of urban development and countryside and a rich diversity of fauna and flora. Both shores of Victoria Harbour present a unique cityscape. Our city has sophisticated infrastructure and convenient transportation systems: a half-hour ride will get us to beaches and country parks.

134. For the well-being of future generations, the Government and the community must commit to improving the environment. To tackle key issues such as waste management and air quality requires us to make choices. The community and the Government must both take responsibility for making the decisions. To this end, we will engage the public in our discussion and foster co-operation among policy bureaux in introducing various environmental protection initiatives step by step. We will set out clear objectives and a roadmap to achieve cleaner air, better fuel mix, energy conservation, emission reduction, resources recovery and nature conservation in a comprehensive and systematic manner. These endeavours will turn Hong Kong into a healthy, low-carbon and resource-saving metropolis that is in harmony with nature.

Improving Air Quality

135. The Government's air quality policies are premised on protection of public health. We strive to improve air quality on all fronts, through better co-ordination of relevant policies on environmental protection, energy, transport and planning, as well as co-operation with Guangdong. **Our target is to broadly achieve the new air quality objectives by 2020.** Over the past six months, we have made substantial progress, including setting the

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emission reduction targets with Guangdong for 2015 and 2020, and enacting legislation to further tighten the emission caps for power plants for the years beyond 2017. Our next priority will be improving roadside air quality.

Phasing Out Old Diesel Commercial Vehicles

136. Diesel commercial vehicles are a major source of roadside air pollution in Hong Kong. In 2012, the World Health Organisation warned that diesel engine exhaust fumes are carcinogenic. In view of the lukewarm response to the voluntary incentive schemes introduced by the Government over the past few years, we must phase out old diesel commercial vehicles with greater financial incentives while putting in place more stringent regulatory measures. To meet the 2015 and 2020 emission reduction targets, I propose setting aside **\$10 billion as subsidies** to owners of over 80 000 heavily polluting pre-Euro and Euro I to III diesel commercial vehicles in order to **progressively phase out** these vehicles having regard to their pollution level. The scheme will significantly reduce the overall emissions of particulates and nitrogen oxides **by 80% and 30% respectively.** We also propose to set a service life limit for newly registered diesel commercial vehicles at **15 years.**

CTA: what a waste of taxpayer money ! why not consider first the big stick:



a) increase the number of HGV vehicle testing centres

b) mandate 6 monthly testing of pre-Euro, Euro 1 and Euro 11 vehicles and 12 monthly Euro III to meet a specific emissions level. No Pass = No drive on the road. Many vehicles would likely pass if they were properly maintained – this is seldom done here, hence they would fail and have to be scrapped. Poorly maintained vehicles with no brakes kill people, so do poorly maintained vehicles with massive toxic emissions.

c) increase the licensing fee for pre- Euro , Euro 1, II and III vehicles to a significant sum that will discourage the owners to keep the vehicles on the road. Increase the licence fee yearly so it is no longer economically feasible to run the vehicles.



d) offer an adequate surrender / scrapping fee
d) only then offer the carrot subsidy incentives

Green Transport

137. With the successive completion of a number of railway lines, the next seven years will be bumper years for railway development in Hong Kong. This gives us a good opportunity to optimise our public transport systems and to reduce roadside air pollution.

138. **We will help** franchised buses, taxis and minibuses reduce their emissions through retrofitting or replacing catalytic converters for these vehicles where necessary in the coming two to three years. In addition, the Government will continue to take the lead in using more electric vehicles, *which have zero emission*, and solicit participation from public bodies as well as leading enterprises. For example, the *Government has set aside funding for franchised bus companies to try out electric buses.*

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CTA: why would they want to spend taxpayer money to help the tycoon owned and run bus companies? Franchised buses are basically moving advertising billboards for 85% of the day outside rush hours. Instead, make them keep their vehicles maintained sufficiently to pass the emissions and roadworthiness tests or take them off the roads.

<http://tilt.ft.com/#!posts/2011-02/12361/invest-hong-kong-taxi-licences-new-way-save-retirement>

So an HK taxi licence now costs HK\$ 5 million and Mainlanders are buying them as investments (or money laundry) – why should our tax dollars subsidize taxis whose owners disable their catalytic converters rather than servicing or renewing them ? – make them pass the tests ! Not roadworthy, get off the road !

Mini buses – are probably the worst maintained and (never) serviced vehicles in Hong Kong. Make them pass the roadworthiness tests or get off the road.

The Pilot Green Transport Fund is also subsidising the testing of electric taxis, coaches and goods vehicles. I hope that green transport can be widely used in Hong Kong.

CTA: Hong Kong desperately needs hybrid buses (and other goods vehicles) which can handle our hilly topography. London will have 450 of these (Euro VI diesel charged) hybrid electric buses by March 2013 and 600 by 2016. Electric commercial vehicles need to connect to the mains power which is produced by burning coal, need frequent recharging and have a problem going uphill with the aircon running, then have to retreat to recharging stations after short journeys in our stop-go traffic environment.

Bus Route Rationalisation

139. In parallel with railway development, we will review other land transport services and rationalise the functions and roles of various public transport modes. At present, some bus routes overlap or are under-utilised. Our review will proceed on the basis that *bus services are a complementary means of public transport*; we will explore ways to rationalise bus routing, **enhance feeder service** and **improve interchange arrangements** in order to reduce roadside pollution.

CTA: make the worst roadside pollution areas (Nathan Rd, CWB and Central) CLEAN AIR ZONES. Only Euro 4 and above diesels, hybrid electric or electric shuttles allowed. If the bus or transport companies want to enter the Zones they must be compliant and go and get the right equipment. Mandate massive penalties for unqualified entry abuse.

Vessel Emission Reduction

140. In 2011, marine vessels were the largest source of respirable suspended particulates, nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide. In particular, the ***emissions of ocean-going vessels at berth accounted for about 40% of their total emissions within Hong Kong waters.*** In September 2012, the Government launched an incentive scheme to encourage ocean-going vessels at berth to switch to low-sulphur diesel. We are also considering *bringing in new legislation to enforce the requirement of fuel switch at berth.* We plan to submit our proposal to this Council in the next legislative session following the completion of consultation with the maritime sector. Meanwhile, we are stepping up our efforts with the Guangdong Provincial Government in *exploring the feasibility of requiring ocean-going vessels to switch to low-sulphur diesel while berthing in Pearl River Delta ports.* Also, the first berth of the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal will be commissioned in the middle of this year. We plan to seek funding approval from this Council to install *on-shore power supply facilities* for use by cruise vessels with such facilities. This will enable cruise vessels to switch to electric power while berthing and hence minimise their impact on air quality. We are also *promoting* the use of cleaner fuels among

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local vessels. We have conducted relevant tests and consulted the relevant sector.

CTA: SIMPLE – ban the import of high sulphur bunker fuel so they must bring in low sulphur fuel and then there is a level playing field amongst the vessels using Hong Kong ports. Pursue the Mainland (as full Marpol member) to legislate an Emissions Control Area (ECA) in Hong Kong waters.

Waste Management

Resource Sustainability

141. In Hong Kong, the amount of solid waste per capita per day is way higher than that of other advanced cities in the region. Our existing landfills will be full within seven years. It is a looming crisis. To address the problems, the Government will vigorously pursue a multi-pronged strategy. **We will focus on waste reduction at source, while progressively implementing Producer Responsibility Schemes and the polluter-pays principle to boost the recovery and recycle rates of resource materials.** On the other hand, with the use of the advanced **Integrated Waste Management Facilities (CTA: aka INCINERATOR)**, we can turn waste into a resource. This can also reduce waste **(CTA: LEAVING 30% DAILY ASH RESIDUE AFTER THERMAL CONVERSION including dioxin furans laden fly ash that will leach into the environment and food chain)** and alleviate the pressure on landfills.

(CTA: SO WHERE DOES THE ASH GO ? hence the need to build offshore islands to be the replacement ash lagoons for the Shek Kwu Chau cave man technology bonfire)

Expansion of landfills is an integral part of the overall strategy of waste management. To make this basket of policies a success, all of us should play our part.

CTA: see above – with plasma plants adjoining the landfills they can be reverse mined.

- **follow Belgium (73% recycling rate in Flanders) and build a plasma gasification plant to reverse mine the landfills back to nature.**

Reduction of Food Waste

142. Food waste imposes a heavy burden on our landfills as it accounts for about **40% of total waste disposed of in landfills**. In addition, odour from food waste creates nuisance to nearby residents. The Government has recently launched the “Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign” to mobilise the public as well as the industrial and commercial sectors to reduce food waste. **We will build modern facilities in phases for recovery of organic waste** so that it can be converted into energy, compost and other products.

CTA: plasma gasification could handle all of Hong Kong’s daily food waste and convert it to useful bio-fuels.

Support for Recycling Industry

143. In my Manifesto, I proposed to promote vigorously the development of the recycling industry. Since **most of the recyclable materials are exported** through the public cargo working area, the Government will consider identifying suitable berths for bidding by the recycling industry for their exclusive Page 50

use so that there will be stable provision of export facilities. We will consult the sector and stakeholders on the proposal.

CTA: so much for local recycling ! The Government made HK\$ 8 billion last year from exporting our recyclables.

Municipal Solid Waste Charging

144. According to the findings of a public consultation conducted by the Government early last year, the public generally supported the introduction of a quantity-based waste charging system. To work out the implementation details and develop complementary measures, we have invited the Council for Sustainable Development, through its public engagement efforts, to devise a viable charging system jointly with members of the public.

Green Building

145. Buildings account for as much as 90% of Hong Kong's total electricity consumption. Apart from our plan to develop Kowloon East into a low-carbon community, I have asked the Secretary for the Environment to lead an inter-departmental steering committee to promote green building. The committee will strengthen the co-ordination among departments to formulate implementation strategies and action plans, while maintaining close dialogue and co-operation with the relevant sectors and stakeholders.

Ecological Conservation

146. The Government shares public concern about ecological conservation. To take forward the Convention on Biological Diversity, we will consult the public in 2013 on the formulation of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Hong Kong. We will also emphasise ***conservation of land and marine ecologies in major government policies***.

CTA: so they mean such as building an incinerator at Shek Kwu Chau and destroying the marine habitat then polluting the sea and food chain with dioxins and furans ?

147. To protect our marine ecosystem, the Government has prohibited trawling in Hong Kong waters. We will also set up a \$500 million sustainable fisheries development fund to help fishermen adopt a sustainable and high value-added operation

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mode, and subsidise relevant programmes and research so as to enhance the overall competitiveness of the industry. Fishermen affected by the trawl ban will be among the beneficiaries. We will also establish a committee composed of government officials and trade representatives to advise on the use of the fund and ensure that it will meet the actual needs of the fisheries industry. The Secretary for Food and Health will announce the details in due course.

Water Quality of Victoria Harbour

148. With continuous improvement in the water quality of Victoria Harbour, we can better promote a water-friendly culture, and realise the amenity, leisure and tourism potential of the harbour and coastal areas. Upon the completion of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme Stage 2A next year, the water quality of Victoria Harbour will see substantial improvement. The Government will study ways to further enhance the water quality of the urban coastal waters.

CTA: we look forward to watching KS Wong and CY Leung swimming across the harbour if it will be free of its current coliforms.

Environment and Conservation Fund

149. Since its establishment in 1994, the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) has achieved remarkable success in engaging different sectors of the community in environmental protection and organised more than 3 900 environmental protection activities. As a long-term commitment to environmental protection and conservation, I propose injecting **\$5 billion into the ECF** so that investment returns of the fund can provide long-term and sustained support for green actions initiated by the community.

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CTA: such as funding EPD friendly blinkered academics to run trips to Taiwan and Singapore to view incinerators and write glowing reports in return ?