

**From:** James Middleton [mailto:dynamco@netvigator.com]  
**Sent:** 29 April, 2015 10:53 AM  
**To:** morningbrew@rthk.org.hk  
**Subject:** FYI we are not holding our breath for a reply.....

## **2012 – reasons for Panel EA rejection of ENB landfill / incinerator package**

Nothing has changed, other than the DAB about-face

[www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0527cb1-1079-2-e.pdf](http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0527cb1-1079-2-e.pdf)

"13. Details of the funding proposals for the three landfill extension projects are set out in LC Paper No. CB(1)1369/11-12(01) which is hyperlinked in the Appendix. According to the Government, IWMF would require some seven years for reclamation, construction and commission, while landfill extension would need a few years for site preparation works

**15. The Panel held another special meeting on 20 April 2012 to continue discussion on the funding proposals. Noting that many measures pertaining to the Policy Framework had yet to be implemented, members were opposed to the reliance on landfills for waste disposal in view of the associated environmental nuisances, as well as the long lead time and cost incurred from restoration of landfills. They stressed the need for an holistic package of waste management measures (including waste reduction, separation and recycling) with waste incineration as a last resort and better communication between the two terms of Government on environmental policies, in particular on the need for incineration. They also urged the Administration to identify other suitable outlying islands for IWMF and promote the local recycling industry. In view of the foregoing, members did not support the submission of the funding proposals to the Public Works Subcommittee for consideration."**

Clear the Air says :

**Q: WHAT POLICY AND DIRECTION HAS CHANGED AT ENB SINCE THE LAST LEGCO PANEL ENVIRONMENT AFFAIR REJECTION ?**

**A: NOTHING !**

actually it's gone backwards as the 'new' figures show– the China '**Operation Green Fence**' blocking of transhipped dirty plastic from overseas to China via HKG exposed this sham of using the plastic trash transhipment figures as '**local recycling**'. ENB/EPD were caught out cheating by '**Operation Green Fence**'.

The ENB denied the container loads of blocked plastics were locally landfilled – so what happened to it ?

<http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/china-green-fence-global-recycling-innovation>

### **SCMP Recycling figures: plain rubbish**

CTA says: this only came to light due to China's 'Operation Green Fence'

ENB has been using data of containers of trash transhipped through here to China in their local recycling figures

When China blocked the transhipment of unwashed plastic imports the poop hit the fan and the divisive 'local recycling'

practice came to light.

## Estimates of the amount of Hong Kong rubbish being recycled are plain rubbish

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UPDATED : Wednesday, 29 January, 2014, 10:15am

News > Hong Kong

ENVIRONMENT

Cheung Chi-fai cheung.chifai@scmp.com

Overhaul of system is promised as officials admit estimates of the amount of waste the city recycles have been **drastically overstated**

Officials have admitted that estimates of the amount of Hong Kong waste being recycled - once put at over 50 per cent - have been drastically overstated. They said yesterday that the figures were distorted by "external factors" beyond their control and the system for calculating them would be overhauled. The admission came as the Environmental Protection Department reported a slashed recycling rate of 39 per cent in 2012, down from 48 the previous year and a peak of 52 in 2010.

The department blamed fluctuations in the waste trade and irregularities in export declarations for the distortions. In an effort to improve its data collection, it will introduce extra measures, as recommended by a consultant commissioned to look into the problem. But the officials said they did not believe the distortion would affect policy-making or the achievement of targets set out in the waste-management blueprint released last year.

World Green Organisation chief executive William Yu Yuen-ping said he was concerned about the "inflation of the recycling rate" and urged the department to set up an expert group to review the system. Friends of the Earth said the public would be confused by the figures.

According to the 2012 solid waste monitoring report released by the department yesterday, Hong Kong recycled just 2.16 million tonnes of waste, 860,000 tonnes less than 2011. About 60 per cent of the shortfall was due to a sharp drop in the trade in plastic waste.

Last year, a reported 320,000 tonnes of plastic waste was recycled, down from 840,000 tonnes in 2011 and 1.58 million tonnes in 2010. But the amount dumped in landfills largely remained steady at 600,000 to 700,000 tonnes during the same period. Since then, officials have used the disposal rate per person, rather than the recycling rate, as the key indicator to measure policy effectiveness. In 2012, the former rate rose 3 per cent to 1.27kg. The department said the recycling rate had been calculated from waste export figures compiled by census and customs officers, and the booming trade in recent years might have inflated the figure.

**It also admitted that the formula could not accurately reflect local recycling efforts since it also included waste imported and then exported after processing.**

"We believe the 2012 figure is closer to the reality of how the city fared in recycling after a slump in the trade," said an official, speaking anonymously. Officials refused to be drawn on whether the admission showed that the recycling rate, used by former environment chiefs to highlight the city's progress in dealing with its waste problem, had little value. "The public still have expectations for this figure and we will try to give the best estimate," said an official, adding that the formula was widely adopted elsewhere in the world. Greeners' Action executive director Angus Ho Hon-wai said the government should set up a registration system for recyclers in order to get first-hand recycling data.

Lau Yiu-shing, a local waste recycler, admitted some operators might have wrongly reported export figures to suit their needs. But the scope of doing so had shrunk as mainland customs stepped up checks in recent years.

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Source URL: <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1415979/recycling-figures-plain-rubbish>

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# South China Morning Post 南華早報

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## EPD needs a Plan B for waste management

PUBLISHED : Wednesday, 23 April, 2014, 12:45am

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Business

LAI SEE

Howard Winn

Despite difficulties in pushing its controversial incinerator project through the Legislative Council, the government is showing no signs of taking a second look at its proposals. Indeed, it seems to be making it more obdurate in its determination to ram the project through.

However, organisations outside the government, notably the New Territories Concern Group and Clear the Air, have done much to alert the public and the government to alternative possibilities for dealing with Hong Kong's waste. But the government has confronted these alternatives almost as if they were a threat and tried to undermine them.

The government's plan is to build a mass-burn moving-grate incinerator on Shek Kwu Chau at a cost of about HK\$15 billion and then spend a further HK\$8 billion to HK\$10 billion building an artificial island of 11.8 hectares. Inevitably, this price will rise. All this in a scenic conservation area. Even proponents of incineration think it odd to site the incinerator on an island miles away from the users of the electricity it is supposedly going to generate.

Then on top of that is the problem of disposing of the toxic waste, which for bottom ash can be as much as 30 per cent by weight. The capacity of the proposed incinerator is 3,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste per day, so there could be just under 1,000 tonnes a day of bottom ash that has to be carefully disposed of. The government's plan is to barge this across to the ash lagoons in Tuen Mun and, when these are filled, put it in the landfills. Other technologies mooted by outside groups include plasma gasification, which is increasingly being used in preference to incineration by municipal authorities around the world. It is cheaper, cleaner and faster to install. There is no toxic fly ash or bottom ash. Instead, the end product is an inert slag that can be used for construction. The Environmental Protection Department has tried to undermine this technology by telling us the technology is "uncertain" and repeatedly cited the case of one plasma gasification plant that closed in Japan. It said the closure was due to mechanical problems, whereas the reason it closed was it ran out of fuel. Then, we were told it was only suitable for small amounts of industrial waste. Yet we hear on a regular basis of plans in the United States, Britain and China to use plasma gasification for dealing with municipal solid waste.

The government's consultants, Aecom, have said gasification is not suitable in Hong Kong, but in the US an Aecom executive was quoted as saying that the technology was ready for large-scale commercialisation. The New Territories Concern Group has suggested a pilot gasification plant be set up near a landfill site. Indeed, the government has received offers to do this free but declined them. One cannot help feeling that the government is so hidebound by its bureaucratic procedures that there is probably no way it could permit it within its rules. One can only speculate on the reasoning: "If we give land to one company,

we'll have to give it to everyone." Indeed, the longer this battle with the incinerator goes on, the more we begin to wonder if it is not so much the technology for the processes that are hindering a rethink, but the way the bureaucracy works and thinks. You get the impression that it does not have the will to go through the interminable meetings and reports again to come up with a better plan that may find more acceptance within the community.

Another plan the department has tried to flick away is the idea of garburating food waste at source and putting it through the sewage system. This would eliminate 40 per cent of the municipal solid waste that goes to landfill. **The department airily says: "It would have an adverse impact on the sewers and sewage treatment works. Large-scale practical experience, especially for multi-storey buildings, is lacking and inconclusive internationally. Some cities have banned such practice."**

According to Tim Evans, chairman of the wastewater management panel of the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management, the department's comments are incorrect. "My own research into the impact at sewage treatment works shows [food waste disposal] has no detrimental effect and probably has an overall beneficial effect on nutrient removal."

Have you got any stories that Lai See should know about? E-mail them to [howard.winn@scmp.com](mailto:howard.winn@scmp.com) [1]

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Source URL: <http://www.scmp.com/business/article/1494727/epd-needs-plan-b-waste-management?page=all>

[1] <mailto:howard.winn@scmp.com>

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# South China Morning Post 南華早報

## Waste charge futile without separation of rubbish at source

PUBLISHED : Monday, 23 February, 2015, 4:53pm

UPDATED : Monday, 23 February, 2015, 4:53pm

Comment › Letters

Tom Yam

Secretary for the Environment Wong Kam-sing's proposed waste charging scheme is another example of our overpaid principal officials cherry-picking an idea without addressing the root cause of the problem ("Bill on charging for waste 'likely to be aggressive'", February 18).

**They visited countries to examine incinerators, but not their recycling effort.** They look at Taipei and other countries to examine waste charging, but not how they create the infrastructure to complement waste charging.

Taiwan introduced a pay scheme for garbage **only after implementing a comprehensive waste management plan, including aggressive waste separation at source and recycling.**

Just charging people for waste means added costs without addressing the root problem: **the absence of waste separation at source** so that recyclable waste and waste delivered to landfills and incinerator are sorted separately. All the waste that is collected after waste charging is implemented still ends up in the landfills in the same black plastic bag as in today's arrangement.

A waste charging system does not end with the collection of fees. Complementary measures must be implemented at the same time. Before official implementation of the waste charge, a "Keep Trash Off the Ground" policy and "3-in-1 Resource Recovery Scheme" were carried out by the Taipei government in 1996 and 1997, respectively. The former made sure that people must classify waste at home and hand rubbish to the collection vehicles at specified times; the latter required the public to hand recyclables to the resource recovery vehicles that follow the waste collection vehicles twice a week, integrating waste separation, resource recycling and waste collection at one shot. Since 2003, resource recovery collection has increased to five times a week, and a free recovery service for kitchen waste is also provided. Since 2005, compulsory recycling has been in place.

The "Hong Kong: Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022" shows no plan for Hong Kong to implement a city-wide waste separation at source, the only developed city in the world that does not do so.

Yet, secretary Wong is proposing to do what bureaucrats do best: creating another bureaucracy headed by two senior officials to oversee the waste charging scheme. The scheme should not be approved by Legco unless and until a truly holistic waste management policy is developed that includes waste separation at source, aggressive recycling, and the deployment of advanced thermal treatment technology.

*Tom Yam, Lantau*

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**Source URL:** <http://www.scmp.com/comment/letters/article/1721766/waste-charge-futile-without-separation-rubbish-source>

## Hong Kong's waste problem: a stinking trail of missed targets, data errors and misdirected efforts

PUBLISHED : Tuesday, 01 December, 2015, 5:30pm  
UPDATED : Wednesday, 02 December, 2015, 11:13am  
Comment > Insight & Opinion

**Tom Yam**

*Tom Yam says a government audit of Hong Kong's waste reduction efforts makes clear who is to blame for our growing mountain of rubbish*



In the private sector, a chief executive accountable for such rotten results would have been fired.

increased from 1.27kg in 2011 to 1.35kg in 2014. Waste recovered and recycled dropped from 49 per cent in 2009 to 37 per cent in 2013. Food waste increased from 3,227 tonnes per day in 2004 to 3,648 tonnes in 2013.


If an organisation misses targets, mangles statistics, mismanages capital assets, underestimates costs, undertakes trifling projects and underperforms in a critical task year after year, will it survive?

The answer is a resounding "yes" if it is the Environmental Protection Department.

The Audit Commission recently [issued a report](#) [1] [on the government's management](#) [2] of the garbage, officially known as municipal solid waste, which Hong Kong produced over the decade to 2015. The Environmental Protection Department is responsible for waste management and has an annual budget of HK\$2.05 billion to do the job.

By every measure, including the department's own as set out in its [Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste \(2005-2014\)](#) [3], and the [Hong Kong Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources \(2013-2022\)](#) [4], it fell short.

Key performance indicators for waste management have all deteriorated. Per capita waste disposed daily increased from 1.27kg in 2011 to 1.35kg in 2014. Waste recovered and recycled dropped from 49 per cent in 2009 to 37 per cent in 2013. Food waste increased from 3,227 tonnes per day in 2004 to 3,648 tonnes in 2013.

 The department's data, used to manage ongoing programmes, is rubbish (pun intended)

**[READ MORE: What a waste: Hong Kong government 'set to miss targets' as people dump more rubbish](#) [5]**

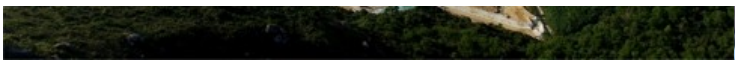


The policy framework set a target of disposing of 25 per cent of waste in landfills by 2014. As of 2013, 63 per cent was still dumped in landfills.

The department's data, used to manage ongoing programmes, is rubbish (pun intended). The Audit Commission cites a litany of statistical errors. The amount of waste recovered for recycling was inflated because the department included waste imported for processing. Its forecast of a 50 per cent drop in food waste from school lunches was overstated because only 12 per cent of students ate lunch in school. It could produce no quantifiable data to explain its changing assumptions about the serviceable life of the landfills. It now claims that all landfills will be full by 2018. The Audit Commission believes they should last some years beyond 2018.

The department priced phase 1 of the Organic Waste Treatment Facilities, to recycle mainly food waste, at HK\$489 million in 2010. But because it omitted or significantly underestimated the cost of some components, the cost surged to HK\$1.589 billion in 2014.

**[READ MORE: Waste not, want not: The 'food angels' collecting goodies we're about to throw out to cook for Hong Kong's underprivileged](#) [6]**



The landfill in Tseung Kwan O. As of 2013, 63 per cent of Hong Kong's waste was still dumped in landfills. Photo: SCMP Pictures



Target dates for rolling out the producer responsibility scheme for six products, based on the "polluter pays" principle, have not been met. Only the first two phases of the plastic shopping bag levy have been implemented, in 2009 and 2015, six to eight years behind target. The scheme has yet to be implemented for the other five products – waste electrical and electronic equipment, vehicle tyres, glass bottles, packaging materials and rechargeable batteries.

Only four of the 12 government departments have signed up to the Food Wise Hong Kong Campaign, which promotes reduction of food waste, two years after its launch.

With great fanfare, the department did launch a series of waste reduction, recovery and recycling initiatives. Their impact, however, has been inconsequential. Net reduction of plastic shopping bags disposed of in landfills in 2009-2013 was 11,544 tonnes, or an infinitesimal amount of total waste disposed.

[READ MORE: Cycle of waste: City's recycling industry needs must be addressed by Hong Kong government \[7\]](#)

The producer responsibility scheme for plastic bags has been rolled out, albeit behind schedule. But the scheme has yet to be implemented for five other products, including glass bottles. Photo: Jonathan Wong

As of June, only 4.6 per cent of the 43,091 households in 16 public rental housing estates were taking part in the food waste recycling scheme, fewer than half the department's 10 per cent estimate. Though not discussed in the Audit Commission's report, the recyclable waste collected in the three-colour recycling bins is no more than 900 tonnes per year, or 0.02 per cent of the waste generated.



Workers at a recycling centre in the EcoPark in Tuen Mun check disposed of appliances in 2011. The HK\$308 million EcoPark was trumpeted as a hi-tech hub but the industry remains at the lowest rung of the value-added ladder. Photo: May Tse

The HK\$308 million EcoPark in Tuen Mun was trumpeted as a hi-tech hub to develop a recycling industry. But the industry remains at the lowest rung of the value-added ladder, mainly collecting, baling and packaging waste materials. One operator started 24 months later than stipulated in the tenancy agreement. In another lot, operations started five years later. From August 2008 to June 2015, a HK\$16 million pilot food waste treatment plant was operating at only 22 per cent of capacity.

Despite all these failings, here's where the department's record truly stinks: the Audit Commission's 2015 report on the dismal state of Hong Kong's waste management echoes its 2008 report. At the time, the Legislative Council's Public Accounts Committee expressed serious concern over the management of the Environmental Protection Department as well as "deep regret and sadness that the secretary for the environment lacks a sense of urgency and is not proactive enough" in tackling the problem of municipal solid waste. Seven years later, nothing has changed.

[READ MORE: Rubbish effort: Hong Kong environment bureau slammed for slow work on food waste disposal \[8\]](#)



The audit report describes a mismanaged organisation that lacks coordination with other government departments, produces inaccurate information and statistics, and engages in inconsequential efforts to tackle waste reduction and recycling. It cannot effectively manage ongoing programmes, resulting in missed targets and deteriorating performance.

In the private sector, a chief executive accountable for such rotten results would have been fired. Yet the previous environment

Here's where the department's record truly stinks: the Audit Commission's 2015 report on the dismal state of Hong Kong's waste management echoes its 2008 report



Secretary for the Environment Wong Kam-sing kicking off a campaign to reduce food waste last month. Photo: Sam Tsang

secretary, Edward Yau Tang-wah, is now director of the Chief Executive's Office. The current one, Wong Kam-sing, is this week attending the UN climate change conference in Paris. The Environmental Protection Department's director, Anissa Wong Sean-ye, has been in her job since 2006. Despite the audit report, all three are likely to keep their highly paid jobs in Hong Kong's non-accountable government.

**Tom Yam is a Hong Kong-based management consultant. He holds a doctorate in electrical engineering and an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania**

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**Source URL:** <http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1885428/hong-kongs-waste-problem-stinking-trail-missed-targets-data>

#### Links

[1] [http://www.aud.gov.hk/pdf\\_e/e65ch01.pdf](http://www.aud.gov.hk/pdf_e/e65ch01.pdf)

[2] [http://www.aud.gov.hk/pdf\\_e/e65ch02.pdf](http://www.aud.gov.hk/pdf_e/e65ch02.pdf)

[3] [http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/boards/advisory\\_council/files/30-2005-Annex-A.pdf](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/boards/advisory_council/files/30-2005-Annex-A.pdf)

[4] <http://www.enb.gov.hk/en/files/WastePlan-E.pdf>

[5] [https://www.google.com.hk/url?](https://www.google.com.hk/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&ved=0ahUKEwj_r3exLnJAhUDHpQKHSyhDdoQFgg4MAM&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scmp.com%2Fnews%2Fhong-kong%2Fhealth-environment%2Farticle%2F1874282%2Fwhat-waste-hong-kong-government-set-miss-targets&usg=AFQjCNF7w2N4cDAK9NDUu48RtPh0TfXiQQ&sig2=oddoH-E35xDMxkJGtLmalg)

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[6] [https://www.google.com.hk/url?](https://www.google.com.hk/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwjFiaPC0LnJAhXCoJQKHVzYBwQQFggmMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scmp.com%2Fcomment%2Finsight-opinion%2Farticle%2F1867631%2Fcycle-waste-citys-recycling-industry-needs-must-be-addressed&usg=AFQjCNEIOkiZRJb_ITo0EBRVZyohnyVtBA&sig2=72Om_Gbge6PUyecvSVVya)

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[7] [https://www.google.com.hk/url?](https://www.google.com.hk/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwjlpf6zmJAhUGkZQKHTlyCTIQFggaMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scmp.com%2Fnews%2Fhong-kong%2Fhealth-environment%2Farticle%2F1880154%2Frubbish-effort-hong-kong-environment-bureau&usg=AFQjCNGCt54dtnheFVMNuLPnbpZCaV-QA&sig2=tM-cD9_ZO4waW7MrCN6EQA)

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[8] [https://www.google.com.hk/url?](https://www.google.com.hk/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwjlpf6zmJAhUGkZQKHTlyCTIQFggaMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.scmp.com%2Fnews%2Fhong-kong%2Fhealth-environment%2Farticle%2F1880154%2Frubbish-effort-hong-kong-environment-bureau&usg=AFQjCNGCt54dtnheFVMNuLPnbpZCaV-QA&sig2=tM-cD9_ZO4waW7MrCN6EQA)