

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on November 11 to noon today (November 12), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 214 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24, 2023, to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 99 697 samples of food imported from Japan (including 63 733 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 22 212 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

[Import of poultry meat and products from Miyagi Prefecture in Japan suspended](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (November 12) that in view of a notification from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5 avian influenza in Miyagi Prefecture in Japan, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the area with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 2 000 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 227.42 million poultry eggs from Japan in the first nine months of this year.

"The CFS has contacted the Japanese authority over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreak. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

[Speech by FS at Silver Jubilee Celebration Ceremony for Tracker Fund of Hong Kong \(English only\) \(with photos/video\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the Silver Jubilee Celebration Ceremony for the Tracker Fund of Hong Kong today (November 12):

Diana (Executive Director and Chief Executive of Hang Seng Bank, Ms Diana Cesar) , George (Chairman of the Supervisory Committee of Tracker Fund, Mr George Hongchoy), Rosita (Director and Chief Executive Officer of Hang Seng Investment Management Limited, Ms Rosita Lee), distinguished guests, ladies

and gentlemen,

Good afternoon. It is a pleasure to be here with you all today to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Tracker Fund of Hong Kong.

The Tracker Fund's significance extends well beyond its market size and liquidity. It carries a unique historical weight for the Hong Kong financial industry. The creation of the Fund was for the orderly and non-disruptive disposal of a substantial portfolio of shares acquired by the Government in a decisive market operation in 1998, amid the Asian Financial Crisis, to uphold market stability and integrity. This pioneering approach of creating an exchange-traded fund as a disposal vehicle not only served as an innovative and successful exit strategy for the Government, but also marked a significant milestone in our financial market development. It has encouraged long-term investment via unit trusts, enhanced public's understanding of ETFs and fostered greater public participation. It laid the foundation for the thriving ETF sector we see today.

Initially launched as the largest IPO in Asia, excluding Japan, with a size of over \$33 billion dollar, the Tracker Fund has over the years grown some five-fold in size to over \$150 billion in market capitalisation, becoming Hong Kong's largest ETF. Over the past 25 years, along with Hong Kong and our capital market, the Tracker Fund has demonstrated incredible resilience in navigating multiple challenges. It has earned the trust of local, Mainland and international investors seeking exposure to Hang Seng Index constituent stocks. It offers investors a simple way to invest in a diversified portfolio of Hong Kong stocks, mitigating the risk of excessive concentration in a very cost-effective manner.

Over time, Hong Kong has gradually established itself as a leading ETF hub, offering a diverse array of products and attracting a wide range of issuers. And thanks to the staunch support of the Central Authorities, we have seen substantial growth in our ETF market since its inclusion in the Southbound Stock Connect in 2022. In the first three quarters of this year, the average daily turnover of ETFs reached some HK\$13 billion, representing a 30 per cent increase compared to that of 2022.

As a premier international fundraising centre, we have been striving to expand our markets and strengthen our international networks to attract more global capital.

And I'm glad that the Tracker Fund has been part of this remarkable endeavour. Through the concerted efforts of the Government, regulators, and the Hang Seng Investment, the global footprint of the Tracker Fund is broadening. That includes the earlier listing of two depositary receipts of the Tracker Fund on the Thai Stock Exchange, and of course, more recently, the successful listing of the SAB Invest Hang Seng Hong Kong ETF on the Saudi Tadawul. This new ETF investing in the Tracker Fund provides Saudi investors an opportunity to invest in a diversified portfolio of Hong Kong equities. As the Tracker Fund itself is an

eligible ETF in the Southbound Stock Connect, it means that the new ETF will also enjoy the liquidity from the investments from the Mainland.

Ladies and gentlemen, reflecting on the development history of the Tracker Fund, I am confident that as we continue to innovate and build better connectivity with both the Mainland and international markets, our ETF market will continue to grow and thrive. Hong Kong will continue to attract global and Mainland capital to reinforce our status as international financial centre.

Congratulations once again on the 25th anniversary of the Tracker Fund, and I wish you all the best of health and business in the years to come. Thank you very much.



[Remarks by CE at media session before ExCo \(with video\)](#)

Following are the remarks by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting today (November 12):

Reporter: Good morning Mr Lee. Firstly, with regards to your meeting with the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office Director, Xia Baolong, and members of the business community last week, are you concerned that such overt remarks and also instructions from your government, and Beijing as well, as to how

businesses here in Hong Kong should conduct their dealings and activities, would breach Hong Kong's long-standing free market principles and also perhaps undermine its reputation as a place for business? And secondly, with regards to the election of Donald Trump as the upcoming President of the United States (US), are you concerned about any of the potential policies that Mr Trump could take, such as the closure of the city's trade offices in the United States, or his pledge to get Jimmy Lai out of the country? Thank you.

Chief Executive: Director Xia (Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Work Office of the Community Party of China Central Committee and the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr Xia Baolong), being the director in charge of Hong Kong and Macao affairs, of course, has a pivotal interest in the overall development of Hong Kong, Under the "one country, two systems" principle, a lot of things can be conducted. And what is important is – I think Director Xia's points are – that this is our common home, and all of us should make Hong Kong our common home, a good place to live for everybody to realise their dream and for things to really thrive. He has a great heart and love for Hong Kong, and his urges are really to tell enterprises, investors and business people to think of the overall good of Hong Kong, and the importance of everybody within the family to play his part, to contribute. And of course, enterprises can make their decisions. But the key point is how much you love this place and how much you think you should contribute, whether it's just a business decision, or whether you want to be showing your love to the people who live with you every day, and showing your love to the home, which is the home for your children. Obviously, all of us want to live in this home with a much better environment, much better development and more opportunities for ourselves and, also, for the family members that live in this Hong Kong home.

So I thank Director Xia for telling us what he thinks are the important directions and opportunities in front of us, and he has mentioned the complexity of this world that we are facing. So he's reminding us of the risks, but at the same time telling us the opportunities and the advantages that are right in front of us. And one of the main advantages and opportunities are our country's development. Our country is always the strongest backing of Hong Kong, and has been rolling out many, many different measures to help Hong Kong's development, to promote Hong Kong's interests. All these things are said, with a very kind heart of love, to ask us to wake up to the challenges and all collectively, to strengthen our competitiveness, to ensure that we will continuously develop and make this a better home for us all.

In regard to the election result in the US, Hong Kong being one of the most open economies in the world always firmly supports free and open trade, and a multilateral trading system. Hong Kong and I attach great importance to our relations with both mature and emerging markets. We welcome normal business exchanges, economic activities and people-to-people exchanges with different economies, including the US. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is also actively expanding regional networks and exploring emerging markets such as ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), the

Middle East market and Belt and Road countries. The US enjoys significant economic benefits in Hong Kong, and has realised a trade surplus of some US\$270 billion with Hong Kong over the past 10 years, the largest among US global trading partners. Additionally, there are more than 1 200 US companies with their businesses in Hong Kong; in terms of source country, the US consistently held the top three positions, with the total number in 2023 having increased by about 1 per cent compared to the previous year. These figures demonstrate the close economic ties between Hong Kong and the US, as well as the vast business interests of US businesses in Hong Kong.

This year, Hong Kong has once again been recognised as the world's freest economy. We hope to develop fair and free trade relations and promote mutually beneficial and win-win trade relations with the principle of mutual respect, but we will also adopt bottom-line thinking to protect the legitimate rights and interests of Hong Kong businesses. We will continue to actively engage with the world to promote trade relationships, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges, telling good Hong Kong stories. I think for any country or economy that wants to develop trade relations or normal relations with another economy, mutual respect is important. And also, there should be respect for the non-interference with local affairs, internal affairs. Hong Kong attaches great importance to the rule of law. So I would urge all economies, or countries, to adopt that principle to develop relations with Hong Kong.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks.)

Tenders invited for licence of automatic vending machines

The Government Property Agency (GPA) is inviting tenders for a three-year licence for the installation and operation of nine automatic vending machines on portions of Fire and Ambulance Services Academy, 11 Pak Shing Kok Road, Pak Shing Kok, Tseung Kwan O, New Territories, Hong Kong.

The premises should only be used for the installation and operation of eight automatic vending machines for the sale of pre-packed non-alcoholic drinks (except plastic bottled water measuring one litre or less) and one automatic vending machine for the sale of pre-packed snacks.

The tender notice was uploaded today (November 12) to the GPA Property Portal: www.gpaproperty.gov.hk/en/index.html. Tender documents are available for collection at the GPA, 9/F, South Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, during the period from 9am to 6pm from Monday to Friday, except public holidays. The documents can also be downloaded from the GPA Property Portal.

Interested tenderers who wish to attend a site inspection of the premises should make a prior appointment with the GPA by calling 3842 6783 on or before November 19.

Tenderers must submit their tenders by placing them in the Government Logistics Department Tender Box situated on the Ground Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong, before noon on December 3. Late tenders will not be accepted.