

Development Bureau responds on issues related to reclamation and fill materials

In response to a media report pertaining to the reclamation and fill materials for the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, a spokesman for the Development Bureau said the following today (October 11):

The Government estimates that the fill materials required for the 1 000 hectares of Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands reclamation amount about 250 million to 300 million metric tons. This has all along been our estimate, and is not the latest assessment as mentioned in the media report. For the whole project, half of the materials for reclamation, i.e. about 125 million to 150 million metric tons, comprise inert construction waste (public fill) generated from construction projects. The rest is mainly manufactured sand, instead of marine sand as reported by the media.

On average, about 15 million metric tons of public fill are generated every year in Hong Kong. In 10 to 15 years, about 150 million to 230 million metric tons of public fill will be generated. The Government will make the best use of the public fill and accord priority to using it in reclamation. The remaining fill materials are mainly manufactured sand, which is a by-product of quarries. The production volume of manufactured sand can be adjusted according to demand. Many quarries in the Pearl River Delta area of the Mainland can supply manufactured sand.

Reclamation does not necessarily rely on marine sand as a fill material. In recent years, Hong Kong has been carrying out two large-scale reclamation projects concurrently, namely the Tung Chung East reclamation project and the Hong Kong International Airport Three-runway System reclamation project. The total area is about 800 hectares. The progress of the projects is satisfactory. The fill materials for the Tung Chung East reclamation project are all public fill and manufactured sand (public fill: 75 per cent; manufactured sand: 25 per cent). For the Three-runway System reclamation project, more than half of the fill materials comprise manufactured sand (manufactured sand: 60 per cent; public fill: 20 per cent; marine sand only accounts for 20 per cent).

The Policy Address mentioned launching the studies for the Lung Kwu Tan near-shore reclamation, the planning and engineering studies for the re-planning of the Tuen Mun West area, and the Ma Liu Shui reclamation. We believe that even with these reclamation projects, with appropriate arrangements, the issues of fill materials will not affect the taking forward of the projects.

Currently, there are two temporary fill banks in Hong Kong, one in Tuen Mun Area 38 and the other in Tseung Kwan O Area 137, with a total stockpiling

capacity of around 20 million metric tons for storing reusable inert construction waste generated from local construction works. Local reclamation projects not only use the fill materials from fill banks, but also substantially absorb reusable construction waste generated from local construction works, facilitating the circular use of resources and alleviating the pressure on fill banks from saturation.

In June this year, the Government appointed consultants to conduct detailed planning and engineering studies for the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, including the study of matters in relation to fill materials supply.

In addition, the media report stated that the Government will study the introduction of land for light industries in the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands. We emphasise that the Government has always been planning to build Hong Kong's third core business district, which would be comparable to the Central district, in the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, instead of steering towards the direction of light industry development.