

# Enhanced waste plastics import and export control to take effect on January 1, 2021

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (October 12) reminded the recycling trade that following amendments to the Basel Convention (BC), the department will enhance the import and export control of waste plastics in Hong Kong from January 1, 2021. Members of the trade are advised to get prepared as soon as possible and gradually familiarise themselves with the new control arrangement to meet the requirements related to "regulated waste plastics".

The EPD held two briefings early this year to explain to the trade the newly amended content of the BC on regulating the transboundary movement of waste plastics and the corresponding import and export control arrangements under Hong Kong's Waste Disposal Ordinance. Generally speaking, with effect from January 1, 2021, waste plastics are regarded as "regulated waste plastics" except for the single-type and uncontaminated waste plastics listed under the BC that are destined for recycling in an environmentally sound manner. Any person who intends to conduct transboundary movement of "regulated waste plastics" must obtain a permit or prior written consent from the states of export, import and transit concerned. Import and export of "regulated waste plastics" between a party and a non-party of the BC are prohibited.

A spokesman for the EPD said that, starting from January 1, 2021, any person who imports, exports or re-exports "regulated waste plastics" into, from or via Hong Kong must apply for the relevant waste import/export permit in accordance with the Waste Disposal Ordinance or obtain consent from the EPD in advance. As for importing, exporting or re-exporting "non-regulated waste plastics" into, from or via Hong Kong, a declaration form and relevant documents should be submitted to the EPD in advance for record purposes. This is to prove that the planned transboundary shipment does not fall into the category and requirements of the aforementioned "regulated waste plastics".

Such an arrangement will help enhance the control and efficiency of the import, export and re-export of waste plastics, so as to prevent waste plastics from being stranded or illegally dumped, or causing pollution, in Hong Kong. It will also help reduce the trade members' risk of violating the laws of the places of import or transit (including laws of Hong Kong), resulting in repatriation of the waste plastics or being prosecuted.

The EPD will, jointly with the Customs and Excise Department, continue to screen and inspect import, export and re-export containers based on intelligence, import and export permits or consent and information submitted by importers and exporters, having regard to the risk assessment and enforcement priority. At the same time, the EPD will also strengthen co-

operation with competent authorities outside Hong Kong through timely mutual notification and collaboration to control the transboundary movement of various types of waste plastics.

The Guidelines on Import and Export Control of Waste Plastics prepared by the EPD have listed out the detailed requirements and matters needing attention in the import and export control of waste plastics. The Guidelines together with the declaration form and other related information have been uploaded to the EPD website at [www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide\\_ref/guide\\_wiec\\_tcs6.html](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/guide_wiec_tcs6.html). The Guidelines can also be downloaded via QR code (see Annex).

The department will hold briefings again this month to explain to the trade the details of the Guidelines so that the trade can have a clear understanding of the new control arrangement. For enquiries and enrolment for the briefings, please call 3178 9355 or email [kyleyfchan@epd.gov.hk](mailto:kyleyfchan@epd.gov.hk).