

EPD wins Special Achievement in Geographical Information System (SAG) Award 2020 (with photos)

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has been awarded the "Special Achievement in Geographical Information System (SAG) Award 2020" by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). The award recognises the department's positive application of Geographical Information System (GIS) technology with innovative ideas to provide better services for the public.

The ESRI is an international authority in GIS technology. Every year, its review committee selects organisations that have produced an outstanding performance in applying GIS technology from nominations worldwide. The EPD is the only award-winning organisation for the SAG award in Hong Kong this year.

In the past year, the department's Environmental Compliance Division has extensively used GIS technology to develop different applications on its own to strengthen its law enforcement capability and effectiveness. It launched a "GIS-based Pollution Tracking Platform" in February 2019, which enables frontline enforcement officers to conduct real-time spatial analyses with the support of a mobile Global Positioning System to quickly retrieve environmental information for tracking pollution sources. To further enhance the effectiveness of analyses and management of a district's environment, the EPD added the "District Environment Dashboard" and the "Environmental Management Geodatabase Platform" in June last year. The dashboard and platform provide real-time visualised data of complaint and enforcement statistics to facilitate the identification of pollution trends and blackspots, planning of strategic operations, and management of enforcement resources.

In addition, the EPD developed the "Flytipping Spotter App" in March this year. Field inspectors can report abandoned construction waste via the app during their patrols. Photos and locations of the abandoned waste can be captured and uploaded to the GIS platform instantly to facilitate case referrals to the relevant departments for prompt clearance. The handling of 90 per cent of the illegal abandoned construction waste cases had thus been accelerated by about 40 per cent. The "Operation Deployment Platform" launched in July this year enhanced the efficiency of real-time communication and case information sharing amongst enforcement team members, further boosting the department's operational deployment capacity for enforcement to detect and combat the misbehavior of polluters.

The Deputy Director of Environmental Protection, Mr Elvis Au, said at the award ceremony that the department is committed to applying innovation and technology in environmental protection to improve work efficiency and effectiveness as well as to promote the development of Hong Kong into a smart city. The application of innovation and technology has opened a new chapter in the management of environmental compliance. He expressed gratitude to the

ERSI for its support and recognition of the EPD, adding that the accomplishment should be attributable to the collaboration of the department's Smart Technology Task Force and frontline colleagues in using mobile applications more effectively in law enforcement.

The EPD will continue to embrace innovation and make good use of technology to work with all parties in enhancing environmental protection.



