

Government announces Strategy of Hydrogen Development in Hong Kong

The Government today (June 17) announced the Strategy of Hydrogen Development in Hong Kong (the Hydrogen Strategy).

Announcing the Hydrogen Strategy today, the Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, said, "To tackle the challenge of climate change, the world is striving to phase out fossil fuels and accelerate energy transition. Hydrogen energy is regarded as a low-carbon energy with development potential, and countries around the world are actively promoting the development of the hydrogen energy industry. With a solid foundation for developing the hydrogen energy industry, our country has stated clearly that hydrogen would be an important component of the national energy system in the future. Seizing the opportunities brought about by the development of hydrogen energy can help Hong Kong strive towards carbon neutrality, develop a new quality productive force and maintain international competitiveness."

To prepare for opportunities presented by the development of hydrogen energy, the Government has set up an Inter-departmental Working Group on Using Hydrogen as Fuel (the Working Group) in 2022, comprising more than 10 bureaux and professional departments, to remove barriers and facilitate commencement of local hydrogen applications. The Working Group has assisted in formulating interim standards for hydrogen applications in Hong Kong and has given agreement-in-principle to 14 projects. These projects, which include cross-boundary hydrogen transportation, supply facilities, as well as applications in transport, construction sites and remote areas, etc, have commenced progressively.

Having reviewed various considerations, the Government has formulated the Hydrogen Strategy to address the technical challenges in the six major areas of safety, suitable technologies, infrastructure, cost effectiveness, capacity building and public acceptance, as well as the unique situation of Hong Kong. The Strategy sets out the four major strategies of improving legislations, establishing standards, aligning with the market, and advancing with prudence to create an environment conducive to the development of hydrogen energy in Hong Kong in a prudent and orderly manner, so that Hong Kong would be able to capitalise on the environmental and economic opportunities brought about by the recent developments of hydrogen energy in different parts of the world, the country in particular. It can also help Hong Kong broaden co-operation with the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and even the world, integrate into the country's overall development, and develop a new quality productive force.

According to the Hydrogen Strategy, the Government will introduce legislative amendments in the first half of 2025 to provide a legal basis for regulating the manufacture, storage, transport, supply and use of hydrogen used or intended to be used as fuel, and formulate the approach for certifying a hydrogen standard that aligns with international practices by

2027. The Government will also promote regional co-operation, investment outside Hong Kong, development or importation of hydrogen through joint ventures; leverage on Hong Kong's distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world to promote Hong Kong as a demonstration base for the development of hydrogen energy in the country; facilitate the development of the hydrogen industry in the Belt and Road region; and, in collaboration with Invest Hong Kong and relevant bureaux and departments, capitalise on Hong Kong's roles as a "super connector" and "super value-adder" to reach out to overseas and Mainland potential enterprises and talent to promote Hong Kong's business opportunities arising from hydrogen energy development.

Regarding the implementation of the Hydrogen Strategy, the Government will expand the roles and functions of the Working Group. In addition to examining and approving future trial projects, the Working Group will also co-ordinate the development and continuous enhancement of the relevant technical standards and guidelines for hydrogen applications; advise on the pathway for wider application and commercialisation of various hydrogen projects; provide support for local infrastructure developments and capacity building for hydrogen applications; assist in the promotion of the popularisation of hydrogen applications; and regularly review the implementation progress and update the Hydrogen Strategy.

The full text of the Strategy has been uploaded to the Carbon Neutrality and Sustainable Development website of the Environment and Ecology Bureau (cnsd.gov.hk/strategy-of-hydrogen-development-in-hong-kong_booklet_en.pdf).