

Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Working Group on Environmental Protection and Combating Climate Change meeting held via video conference (with photos)

â€‹The Secretary for the Environment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, Mr Wong Kam-sing, and the Director-General of the Department of Ecology and Environment of Guangdong Province (GDDEE), Mr Lu Xiulu, today (December 16) co-chaired the third meeting of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Working Group on Environmental Protection and Combating Climate Change (JWGEPCCC) by video conference. The meeting reviewed the progress of collaboration between the two sides in 2021 and agreed on the work plan for 2022.

In the past year, Hong Kong and Guangdong have maintained close co-operation and worked closely together on various fronts, including improvement of air quality in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region, protection of the water environment, forestry and marine resources conservation as well as combating climate change (as detailed at Annex 1).

On improving air quality, Hong Kong and Guangdong implemented the PRD Regional Air Quality Management Plan and monitored the progress and effectiveness of various improvement measures. To implement the proposal for including ambient volatile organic compounds routine monitoring in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network, having reviewed their respective experiences, Hong Kong planned to gradually increase the number of monitoring sites to three while the Guangdong side planned to increase the number of sites to four. The first batch of monitoring sites will start operation by December 2021.

On marine environment management, the trial of the Notification and Alert System on Marine Refuse has been functioning well since its commencement in 2017. As of October 2021, it had been activated 28 times with notifications issued in response to heavy rainfall, flooding or other major environmental incidents, which enabled relevant government departments to take timely clean-up actions as required.

The JWGEPCCC also endorsed the work plan for 2022 (as detailed at Annex 2). Guangdong, the HKSAR and the Macao Special Administrative Region are conducting a three-year project, "Characterisation of photochemical ozone formation, regional and super-regional transportation in the Greater Bay Area", to identify the causes of ozone formation in the Greater Bay Area and formulate a regional ozone control policy on a scientific basis. The Hong Kong and Guangdong sides will continue to work together on the study on post-2020 regional air pollutant emission reduction targets and concentration levels, with a view to announcing in 2022 the regional air pollutant emission

measures and targets for 2025 and 2030; strengthening collaboration on air quality forecasts to improve the forecasting capability of the PRD region; and exploring the establishment of the Greater Bay Area Air Pollutant Light Detection And Ranging monitoring network.

Hong Kong and Guangdong will continue to promote and deepen exchanges and co-operation on mitigation, adaptation and resilience to climate change and the relevant scientific research.

The two sides will also jointly explore technologies and measures to monitor marine refuse and tackle marine environmental incidents, with a view to further extending co-operation in the management of the marine environment with the neighbouring cities in the region.

As regards ecological conservation, Hong Kong and Guangdong will foster in-depth exchanges and enhance collaboration in the development, management and conservation of nature reserves including forests and wetlands, and in staff training, publicity and education. The two sides will continue to promote co-operation in the sustainable development of marine resources and conservation of ecosystems.

Officials of the HKSAR Government attending today's meeting included representatives of the Environment Bureau, the Development Bureau, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Buildings Department, the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Department of Health, the Drainage Services Department, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, the Environmental Protection Department, the Hong Kong Observatory, the Transport Department and the Water Supplies Department. Officials on the Guangdong side included representatives of the GDDEE, the Guangdong Provincial Development and Reform Commission, the Department of Industry and Information Technology of Guangdong Province, the Department of Science and Technology of Guangdong Province, the Department of Natural Resources of Guangdong Province, the Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guangdong Province, the Department of Transportation of Guangdong province, the Water Resources Department of Guangdong Province, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of Guangdong Province, the Health Commission of Guangdong Province, the Guangdong Administration for Market Regulation, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the People's Government of Guangdong Province, the Guangdong Meteorological Service, the Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration, the Guangdong Academy of Sciences, the Environmental Monitoring Center of Guangdong Province, the Ecological and Environmental Bureau of Shenzhen, and the Ecological and Environmental Bureau of Zhuhai.

The JWGEPPCC mainly discusses and exchanges views on matters relating to environmental quality, natural resources, ecological environment, sustainable development and climate change on the two sides. Eight special panels have been set up under the JWGEPPCC to take forward the implementation of the co-operation initiatives.

