

Hong Kong hosts 8th International Water Association Asia Pacific Regional Group Conference and Exhibition

The 8th International Water Association Asia Pacific Regional Group Conference and Exhibition Opening Ceremony was held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre this morning (October 31) under the theme of "Smart Solutions for Water Resilience".

The conference has attracted over 1 000 experts and delegates from more than 30 countries and regions. During the conference, participants will discuss water policy and management, smart water supply, sustainable development and climate change. Visits to Hong Kong's water and sewage treatment works and environmental facilities will also be arranged.

Delivering a welcome address at the opening ceremony, the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, said water is vital to every living thing on earth and critical to sustained economic growth. Hong Kong's high population density stretches the limits of the city's conveyance systems for its water supply, flood prevention and sewage disposal. It has long relied on innovation to tackle these challenges. Over the years, Hong Kong has developed world-class water and wastewater infrastructure while upgrading sewage treatment and flood-protection levels.

She pointed out that Hong Kong reviewed its Total Water Management Strategy earlier this year, placing an emphasis on containing the growth in fresh water demand while planning for extremes due to climate change to ensure stable water supply to meet Hong Kong's needs. In tandem with this, the Happy Valley Underground Stormwater Storage Scheme has significantly reduced flood risk whilst the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme has greatly improved water quality in Victoria Harbour.

Mrs Lam also visited the exhibition area showcasing the latest products and technologies of water supply, flood prevention and sewage treatment around the world.

The conference, organised by International Water Association (IWA), the IWA Asia Pacific Regional Group and the IWA Regional Committee of Hong Kong, China, and co-organised by the Water Supplies Department, the Drainage Services Department and the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management Hong Kong Branch, and with the support of the Civil Engineering and Development Department and the Environmental Protection Department, will conclude on November 2.

The IWA, with members from more than 130 countries and regions, strives for a world in which water is wisely, sustainably and equitably managed. The

Director of Water Supplies and the Director of Drainage Services serve as the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the IWA Regional Committee of Hong Kong, China, which was formed in 2003.