

# [SDC submits public engagement report on control of single-use plastics to Government \(with photo\)](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Council for Sustainable Development:

The Council for Sustainable Development (SDC) today (April 14) submitted to the Government its public engagement report on control of single-use plastics.

The public engagement, adopting a bottom-up and stakeholder-oriented approach, provided a platform to gauge public views extensively and identify ways to move away from non-essential and hard-to-recycle single-use plastic items.

The Chairman of the Council, Dr Lam Ching-choi, said, "In early March, a historical resolution was endorsed unanimously by the representatives from 175 countries (including China) at the United Nations Environment Assembly. The resolution aims at ending global plastic pollution and paves the way for making an international legally binding agreement by the end of 2024. It is timely for the Council to give recommendations on control of single-use plastics so that the Government can take prompt actions. Controlling single-use plastics can also help Hong Kong move towards the goal of achieving carbon neutrality before 2050. In view of the generally positive views collected from the public, the Council considers that the Government should contemplate more control measures as soon as possible to reduce the excessive use of single-use plastics."

After taking into account the feedback collected during the public engagement, the SDC has put forward 24 recommendations across five key areas, namely general principles on prioritising the control of single-use plastics, new control measures, enhancing the Plastic Shopping Bag Charging Scheme, publicity and public education, and green merchandise. Key recommendations include: banning the sale of single-use plastic products with readily available alternatives or products that are not essential, such as disposable plastic tableware sold at retail outlets; banning the free distribution of certain single-use plastic products, such as umbrella bags; implementing measures for reducing single-use plastic packaging materials (including polyfoam); enhancing the Plastic Shopping Bag Charging Scheme currently in place by tightening the scope of exemption and increasing the charging level; and supporting the research and development on plastic alternatives by relevant research fund.

In view of the prevailing epidemic situation, the SDC believes that the Government will carefully consider the recommendations and the appropriate timing of implementation.

"Last year the Government conducted public consultations on the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Plastic Beverage Containers and the Scheme on Regulation of Disposable Plastic Tableware, covering two major types of plastic products disposed of in the landfills. This public engagement conducted is the final chapter on reducing waste plastics. It is evident that indiscriminate use of single-use plastics would bring negative impacts on our environment. For the future of Hong Kong, I appeal to everyone to contribute to creating a plastic-free culture where single-use plastic items will only be used when they are absolutely essential and without reasonable non-plastic alternatives. If the use of these items is not avoidable, we should still minimise their environmental impact through reuse, recycling and proper disposal. All of us should start playing our parts now to foster a better future for us and for our future generations.

"We look forward to the Government's positive response to the Council's recommendations and roll out control measures as soon as ready," Dr Lam added.

During the public interaction phase from September 30 to December 29, 2021, a total of 35 engagement events, including three town hall meetings, a youth forum, activities for the elderly, school visits and a series of briefing sessions for various key stakeholders and organisations were organised with around 2 600 participants. The SDC actively engaged the elderly in the public interaction phase by organising briefings and dramas to gauge the views of elderly people and enhance their awareness of the importance of the control of single-use plastics.

The Hong Kong Productivity Council was commissioned by the SDC as the Programme Director to analyse over 9 400 views collection forms (VCFs) and 60 written submissions. The Aristo Market Research and Consulting Company Limited was commissioned to conduct a randomised telephone opinion survey to gauge the views of the general public, and had successfully interviewed a total of 1 003 mobile phone users from October 15 to November 1, 2021.

The SDC report (covering the telephone opinion survey) and documents relevant to the public engagement, including a digital compendium containing the VCFs, individual and organisation/company submissions and detailed records of discussions held at the engagement events are available on the public engagement website at [www.susdev.org.hk](http://www.susdev.org.hk).

