

EPD's "Plastic Free Beach, Tableware First" campaign launched today

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) will hold the "Plastic Free Beach, Tableware First" campaign at all public beaches this summer with the aim of achieving a plastic-free ocean. The campaign seeks to encourage members of the public to go plastic-free on beaches and reduce the use of disposable plastic utensils. It also aims to mobilise support from eateries on beaches or in the vicinity to avoid using or handing out disposable plastic tableware as far as possible. Witnessed by various supporting organisations, a ceremony was held today (July 19) at Repulse Bay Beach to launch the campaign.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, said that the problem of excessive plastic waste is immediate and worldwide, and it is currently a global challenge to prevent plastic waste from entering the marine environment. Through the "Plastic Free Beach, Tableware First" campaign, the Government seeks to raise public awareness on the impact of plastics to the marine environment and the importance of going plastic-free. He said he was delighted to learn that quite a number of food premises, ranging from kiosks selling fish balls and siu mai to high-end restaurants in shopping arcades, have already pledged their support to the campaign to help protect the ocean.

Mr Wong stressed that the campaign is only a starting point and that green promotion efforts to encourage members of the public to reduce the use of disposable plastic tableware will go beyond beaches. He said he hopes that the campaign will serve as a positive example and a promotion drive to encourage all sectors of the community to go plastic-free and minimise the use of disposable plastic tableware. The Government will organise a wide range of public education and publicity campaigns to foster a plastic-free culture for all.

In addition to public education and publicity campaigns, Mr Wong said that the Government is considering a series of new measures to reduce disposable plastic tableware usage, including to explore means to require the operators of all canteens and refreshment kiosks in government properties and venues to avoid distributing disposable tableware, and to prepare the launch of voluntary schemes on using less plastic and disposable tableware in the food and beverage sector. The EPD will also commence a consultancy study in 2018-19 to obtain in-depth knowledge about worldwide proposals on the future control of disposable plastic tableware, and consider whether it is suitable to implement such control in future having regard to the local situation.

The "Plastic Free Beach, Tableware First" campaign covers all fast food kiosks and restaurants at public beaches and in their vicinity and has been joined by 47 of them so far. During the campaign, the participating food premises will try to avoid using or distributing plastic straws and disposable plastic tableware as far as possible to eliminate plastic waste on

beaches. In addition, they will try using more environmentally friendly tableware (such as paper straws, bamboo sticks, paper bags or reusable utensils) to replace items made of disposable plastics. Posters will also be put up on-site to support marine protection.

Today's launch ceremony was also joined by the Deputy Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services), Ms Ida Lee, and representatives from green groups and participating organisations. After the launch ceremony, volunteer ambassadors promoted the message of plastic-free beaches to swimmers at Repulse Bay Beach.

For more details on the "Plastic Free Beach, Tableware First" campaign, please visit the event information on the Big Waster Facebook page: www.facebook.com/events/251123192141266/.

Appointments to Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service

The Government announced today (July 19) that the Chief Executive has re-appointed Dr Wilfred Wong Ying-wai as Chairman of the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service (SCCS). The Chief Executive has also re-appointed two existing members and appointed a new member to the SCCS.

The term of Dr Wong as Chairman of the SCCS will be extended from July 31, 2018, to December 31, 2018. The term of the two re-appointed members, Ms Angela Lee Wai-yin and Ms Elaine Lo Yuen-man, will be extended from July 31, 2018, to December 31, 2020.

The Chief Executive has also appointed Ms Christina Maisenne Lee as a new member from August 1, 2018, to December 31, 2020.

The Government expresses its deep gratitude to outgoing member Dr Carrie Willis Yau Sheung-mui for her invaluable contribution to the work of the SCCS over the past six years.

The SCCS tenders advice to the Chief Executive on matters concerning pay and conditions of service of non-directorate civilian civil servants. Other serving members are Mrs Edith Chan Ngan Man-ling, Mr Ignatius Chan Tze-ching, Mr Lee Luen-fai, Mr Dick Lee Ming-kwai, Mr Joseph Lo Kin-ching, Mr Tony Tse Wai-chuen and Mr Wilfred Wong Kam-pui.

[Effective Exchange Rate Index](#)

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, July 19, 2018 is 103.7 (up 0.3 against yesterday's index).

[SDEV speaks to the media](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, at a media session after attending "M21 TV Programme at Book Fair" today (July 19):

Reporter: Do you think this is the failure of the Government's supervision because this is not the first case of lead in water?

Secretary for Development: I think at this moment we need to find out the fact first. And also, I understand that the residents are concerned about the quality of water. We understand their concern. So, the Water Supplies Department is making arrangement to provide in-situ water support and we think that will be available this afternoon. So, that's one thing we would do. At the moment, I don't think it is right for me to make any speculation as it is premature for the Government to speculate the reason of the incident. At the moment, we would focus our efforts on finding out the facts. Depending on the outcome, we would do our best to make sure that the water quality is satisfactory.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

[Fifteen building plans approved in May](#)

The Buildings Department approved 15 building plans in May, with five on Hong Kong Island, six in Kowloon and four in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, eight were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, three were for commercial developments, two were for factory and industrial developments and two were for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on 11 building

projects which, when completed, will provide 30 903 square metres of gross floor area for domestic use involving 270 units, and 25 321 sq m of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has received notification of commencement of works for eight building projects.

The department also issued 16 occupation permits, with six on Hong Kong Island, two in Kowloon and eight in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 185 471 sq m involving 2 717 units, and 52 155 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in May totalled about \$9.4 billion.

In addition, seven demolition consents involving seven building structures were issued.

The department received 3 097 reports about unauthorised building works in May and issued 1 407 removal orders on unauthorised items.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for May can be viewed by the public on the Buildings Department's homepage (www.bd.gov.hk).