Environment Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government
Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province

Hong Kong–Guangdong Joint Working Group on Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection

Full Co-operation by Hong Kong–Guangdong
Environmental Outcomes for All to Share

Environmental Protection
In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, this booklet records the collaborative efforts made by Hong Kong and Guangdong in environmental protection.
On 4 May 2017, Mr Yao Yisheng, Secretary of the CPC Committee of the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (left four), exchanged views with Ms Christine Loh, Acting Secretary for the Environment (left five) and Mr Donald Tong, Permanent Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong (left three) and others over regional environmental co-operation during an event in Hong Kong. A group photo was taken to mark the occasion.

On 13 June 2016, Mr Lu Xiulu, Director-General of the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (right) met with Mr Wong Kam-sing, Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong (left).

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2000
The 1st meeting of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Working Group on Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection (JWGSDEP) was held in Guangzhou and agreed on the setting up of eight special panels.

2002
The JWGSDEP published a study report on air pollution in Southern China and established various targets for improving the regional air quality.

2003
The dedicated aqueduct between Dongjiang at Taiyuan and the Shenzhen Reservoir was commissioned, bringing about significant and sustainable improvements in the quality of raw water supplied to Hong Kong. The Dongjiang Water Quality Protection Special Panel followed up on the measures for protecting the water environment of Dongjiang to safeguard the quality of water supplied to Hong Kong.

2005
The regional air quality monitoring network jointly established by the environmental monitoring authorities of Hong Kong and Guangdong commenced operation.

2007
The Co-operation Agreement to Promote Energy Efficiency, Cleaner Production and Comprehensive Utilization of Resources to Enterprises in Hong Kong and Guangdong was signed.

2009
The Hong Kong-Guangdong Cleaner Production Partners Recognition Scheme was launched to give recognition and encouragement to enterprises for adopting cleaner production technologies and practices.

2010
A science team for the Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan Mid-term Review was set up.

2014
The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Joint Regional PM2.5 Study was launched. The enhancement of the Pearl River Delta regional air monitoring network was completed with monitoring coverage expanded to include Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao.

2015
A science team was set up to commence the Study on Attainment of Air Pollutant Emission Reduction Targets for 2015 and the Study on Finalising the Emission Reduction Targets for 2020.

2016
The 2016-2020 Co-operation Agreement between Hong Kong and Guangdong on Environmental Protection was signed. The Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel was set up under the framework of the JWGSDEP. The second review of the Deep Bay (Shenzhen Bay) Water Pollution Control Joint Implementation Programme was completed.
Exchanges between Hong Kong and Guangdong on environmental issues began in the 1980s. The Hong Kong-Guangdong Environmental Protection Liaison Group was established in 1990. It was renamed the Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Working Group on Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection (JWGSDEP) in 1999, forming a robust framework and operation mechanism.

JWGSDEP meets annually to review the annual work reports of the Expert Group and the seven Special Panels. The two sides also discuss and exchange views on environmental issues of mutual concern which need to be resolved.

(1) The Expert Group
Terms of reference: Drawing up annual work plan; putting forward recommendations, proposals and co-operation items; coordinating the discussions on special projects; examining the project outcome and reports for submission to JWGSDEP.

(2) The Special Panels

The Pearl River Delta (PRD) Air Quality Management and Monitoring Special Panel
Panel leaders: Environmental Protection Department (Hong Kong side) and Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Submitting to JWGSDEP suggestions and measures to improve regional air quality; monitoring changes in regional air quality; evaluating the effectiveness of control measures; providing training to the staff of both sides; conducting technical exchanges; exploring the feasibility of introducing new technologies and measures to the region, etc.

The Afforestation and Conservation Special Panel
Panel leaders: Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (Hong Kong side) and Forestry Department of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Dealing with issues pertinent to the development of forestry and nature conservation; exchanging information on issues such as greemery, afforestation, prevention of hill fire, management of conservation areas, protection of animals and plants, biodiversity and eco-tourism between the two places; exploring co-operation plans.

The Marine Resources and Conservation Special Panel
Panel leaders: Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (Hong Kong side) and Department of Ocean and Fisheries of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Conducting exchanges and co-operation on issues pertinent to fisheries management, conservation of Chinese White Dolphins, aquaculture and red tide monitoring of the two places, etc.

The Dongjiang Water Quality Protection Special Panel
Panel leaders: Environmental Protection Department (Hong Kong side) and Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)

The PRD Water Quality Protection Special Panel
Panel leaders: Development Bureau (Hong Kong side) and Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Monitoring the water quality of Dongjiang and the Dongshen water supply systems; discussing the strategies and measures for further protecting and improving the water quality of Dongjiang; monitoring the effectiveness of the proposals on protecting and improving the water quality of Dongjiang.

The Pearl River Delta Water Quality Protection Special Panel
Panel leaders: Environmental Protection Department (Hong Kong side) and Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Auditing the progress of the action plans for the protection of Mirs Bay and Deep Bay (Shenzhen Bay) of both sides; studying and making recommendations on how to enhance co-operation in improving the quality of the environment in Mirs Bay and Deep Bay; exchanging information and environmental impact assessment reports on projects in Hong Kong and Guangdong which may affect Mirs Bay and Deep Bay (Shenzhen Bay).

The Hong Kong-Guangdong Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Production Special Panel
Panel leaders: Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (Hong Kong side) and Economic and Information Commission of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Jointly studying and formulating policies that are conducive to the promotion of energy efficiency and clean production of the two sides; encouraging enterprises in Hong Kong and Guangdong to practise energy efficiency and clean production.

The Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel
Panel leaders: Environmental Protection Department (Hong Kong side) and Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Studying marine environmental issues in Hong Kong and Guangdong and formulating response strategies; setting up a notification and alert system to enhance efforts to address cross-boundary marine environmental issues; exchanging experiences; promoting co-operation; protecting and improving regional marine environment.

The Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel
Established in October 2016
Panel leaders: Environmental Protection Department (Hong Kong side) and Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province (Guangdong side)
Terms of reference: Jointly studying and formulating policies that are conducive to the promotion of energy efficiency and clean production of the two sides; encouraging enterprises in Hong Kong and Guangdong to practise energy efficiency and clean production.
Blue Sky

Collaboration to build a clear sky

Sharing the same airshed, Hong Kong and Guangdong have a common interest in air quality. In 2002, the two sides announced the Joint Statement on Improving Air Quality in the PRD Region, pioneering regional air pollution prevention and control collaboration in China. The Guangdong-Hong Kong PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network – the first network in China that was representative of a region and in line with international practices – was established and started operation in 2005. It monitored regional air quality in a real-time manner, and published air quality indices for public information. Both sides have worked to implement emission reduction measures; launched the Joint Regional PM2.5 Study; and explored commencing routine monitoring of volatile organic compounds (VOC) in the PRD atmosphere. Their concerted efforts have led to continuous improvement in regional air quality. Compared with 2006, the annual average concentrations of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and respirable suspended particulates recorded by the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network in 2016 have decreased by 74%, 24% and 38% respectively, showing discernible downward trends. In 2016, the average concentration of PM2.5 in the PRD Region was 32 μg/m³, notably lower than the levels in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei and Yangtze River Delta Regions during the same period.

In September 2014, with the addition of a Macao monitoring station to the then Guangdong-Hong Kong PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network, the network was renamed the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network. The number of monitoring stations in the network also increased from 16 to 23, and the number of parameters being monitored from four to six. The coverage and spatial representativeness of the network were thus significantly enhanced.

The photo shows the Guangdong Atmospheric Monitoring Supersite in Heshan, Jiangmen.

Roadside Air Quality Monitoring Station in Central, Hong Kong

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Roadside Air Quality Monitoring Station in Central, Hong Kong
In June 2016, Mr Wong Kam-sing, Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong, led a delegation to visit the Guangdong Atmospheric Monitoring Supersite in Heshan, Jiangmen.

In December 2009, Mr Huang Wenmu, Deputy Director-General of the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province, accompanied Mr Edward Yau, the then Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong, to visit Guangzhou Hengyun Power Plant for exchange on air pollution prevention and control.

In August 2012, the Special Panel on PRD Air Quality Management and Monitoring held its annual meeting in Guangzhou. The PRD Regional Air Quality Management Plan, the plan to adopt the new Air Quality Standards, the PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network, and the updating of the Handbook on Preparation of Air Emission Inventory in the PRD Region, etc. were discussed.
Nurturing to protect Dongjiang water

Hong Kong and Guangdong share the same source of water supply from Dongjiang. As a major source of drinking water for the two sides, Dongjiang bears the task of supplying water for nearly 40 million people. Guangdong Province attaches great importance to protecting the water quality of Dongjiang. The Dongjiang water, which is regarded as the “water of politics”, “water of economy” and “water of life” is protected through the strictest laws and regulations, environmental management system as well as environmental control measures. To safeguard the quality of water supplied to Hong Kong, the Bureau of Dongjiang River Basin Administration was set up in Guangdong to complete the Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works and to deploy and distribute the Dongjiang water resources centrally. In 2011-2016, the water quality of the Heyuan section along the Dongjiang main stream, the Huizhou section and the Dongjiang north main stream remained excellent, while the water quality of the Dongguan section was from excellent to good. Various parameters of the water supplied to Hong Kong met the standard for Type II waters and complied with the Dongjiang Water Supply Agreement.

On 28 May 2015, the Dongjiang Water Supply Agreement for the period between 2015 and 2017 was signed between the People’s Government of Guangdong Province and the HKSAR Government in the Commemoration Ceremony of the 50th Anniversary of Dongjiang Water Supply to Hong Kong.

On 14-15 April 2017, Hon Kenneth Lau, Deputy Chairman of the Panel on Development of the HKSAR Legislative Council (LegCo), led an 18-strong LegCo delegation to visit the Mainland to study the supply of Dongjiang water to Hong Kong. Through the visit, the LegCo Members gained a deeper understanding of the supply and monitoring aspects of Dongjiang water to Hong Kong, and expressed gratitude to Guangdong Province for attaching great importance to safeguarding water quantity and quality through various measures. The photo showing the full delegation and accompanying staff was taken in front of the Monument to the Water Supply Scheme at Shenzhen Reservoir.
To ensure the safety of water supply to Hong Kong, Guangdong Province commenced the Dongshen Water Supply Improvement Works in August 2000 to isolate Dongjiang water from pollution sources, thereby improving the quality of water supply. The works took three years to complete at a total investment of over RMB 4.2 billion yuan. The project was completed ahead of schedule on 28 June 2003 and has been supplying water to Hong Kong since then.

The Guangdong Provincial Government set up the Dongshen Water Quality Protection Leading Group. A working meeting on the protection of Dongjiang water quality is held every year to prepare the relevant implementation strategy. The meeting is participated by the person-in-charge of authorities of environmental protection, economic and information, land resources, housing and urban-rural construction, water resources and agriculture, and Guangdong Yue Gang Water Supply Co. Ltd, as well as heads of divisions of district-level municipalities in Dongjiang River Basin including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Shaoguan, Heyuan, Huizhou, and Dongguan. The photo shows the working meeting on protection of Dongjiang water quality held in 2014.

In order to strengthen the protection of Dongjiang water quality, Guangdong and Jiangxi Provinces signed an agreement on ecological compensation across the upstream and downstream areas of Dongjiang River Basin. Cross-province and cross-municipality mechanisms on river pollution prevention and control, monitoring and forecasting, joint co-operation on contingency for emergency environmental incidents and working meeting, etc. were established to protect Dongjiang water hand in hand.

On 25 May 2012, experts from the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province visited the laboratories of the Water Supplies Department of Hong Kong (WSD) for guided tours and sharing of water quality monitoring experience.

On 9 December 2016, representatives from the Water Science Division of WSD made a reciprocal visit to the Guangdong Environmental Monitoring Centre to enhance mutual understanding and co-operation on monitoring of water quality and protection of Dongjiang water.
Preservation to embrace green forestry

Hong Kong and Guangdong both enjoy continuous ranges of green mountains with similarities in climate, soil and nature species. Through strengthening exchanges and co-operation on forestry and nature conservation, both sides have attained fruitful results in the development of forestry ecology, wildlife protection and trading, enforcement management, wetland protection, establishment and management of nature reserves, forestry disaster prevention and control technology, forestry technology, etc. This has greatly enhanced the standard in development of forest ecology in the Hong Kong-Guangdong PRD Region, and improved the awareness of people of the two sides in wildlife protection and their self-motivation for participating in the establishment of nature reserves.

The Forestry Department of Guangdong Province organises one to two rounds of forestry duty training every year for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department of Hong Kong (AFCD).

In December 2012, AFCD sent a delegation to Guangdong for a field study on mangroves in Leizhou Peninsula.
The Annual Meeting of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Afforestation and Conservation Special Panel was held at AFCD Headquarters on 8 December 2009.

A group photo of attendees of the 15th meeting of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Afforestation and Conservation Special Panel held in Zhanjiang, Guangdong on 6 December 2012.

The Landscape Greening Management Office of Urban Management Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality sent a delegation to Hong Kong to study the design of country park trails, trees, ecological features and promotion of conservation in Hong Kong; and to study Hong Kong’s experience and practices in nature conservation, as well as its effort on publicity and education in raising public awareness of ecology.

The 19th meeting of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Afforestation and Conservation Special Panel was held in Nanling, Shaoguan on 2 November 2016.
Hong Kong and Guangdong share the same coastal region. It is a shared vision of the two sides to protect the marine ecological environment and prevent marine pollution. In recent years, both sides have been promoting co-operation in managing the marine environment and jointly formulating response strategies. Collaboration in areas such as fisheries management, protection of Chinese White Dolphins, aquaculture and red tide forewarning and monitoring is facilitated by sharing of monitoring data and technology. The Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel was set up to work on establishing a notification and alert system on marine refuse issues and combating illegal marine dumping activities.
In September 2016, Guangdong Province undertook dedicated operations to combat illegal marine dumping activities. Through rigorous interception, investigation, cleaning efforts and heavy penalties, illegal marine dumping activities were effectively curbed. The photo shows the briefing held by the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province in conjunction with other relevant departments to brief the media on the details of the dedicated operations.

On 28 April 2017, the Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel held its first meeting in Guangzhou. The Hong Kong side reported the progress of establishing a notification and alert system to help tackle marine refuse.
Innovation for enhanced co-operation

Environmental co-operation between Hong Kong and Guangdong is not confined to achieving green mountains, a blue ocean, a clear sky and clean water. The two sides will continue to develop innovative measures to promote environmental co-operation in areas such as environmental publicity and education, environmental monitoring and cleaner production among enterprises. The launch of collaborative projects like the Hong Kong-Guangdong Cleaner Production Partners Recognition Scheme manifests the close co-operation and ties between Hong Kong and Guangdong in environmental protection.
The two sides regularly exchange environmental monitoring data collected. The photo on the left shows a Mainland monitoring vessel conducting field survey in the Pearl River Estuary. The photo on the right shows the marine monitoring vessel — "Dr. Catherine Lam" of the Environmental Protection Department of Hong Kong.

In December 2004, Hong Kong and Guangdong set up the Hong Kong-Guangdong Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Production Special Panel to jointly promote energy efficiency and cleaner production to industrial enterprises in both places. Subsequently, the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme and the Hong Kong-Guangdong Cleaner Production Partners Recognition Scheme were launched to encourage adoption of cleaner production by enterprises.

The Guangdong-Hong Kong Endangered Species Protection Summer Camp was held.

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In December 2004, Hong Kong and Guangdong set up the Hong Kong-Guangdong Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Production Special Panel to jointly promote energy efficiency and cleaner production to industrial enterprises in both places. Subsequently, the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme and the Hong Kong-Guangdong Cleaner Production Partners Recognition Scheme were launched to encourage adoption of cleaner production by enterprises.

A group photo of attendees of the 3rd meeting of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Working Group on Cleaner Production in 2016.

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Way Forward

Progressing to embrace opportunities

The signing of the “2016-2020 Co-operation Agreement between Hong Kong and Guangdong on Environmental Protection”, the establishment of a mechanism to strengthen co-operation in protecting the marine environment, the setting of emission reduction targets for the two places, the commencement of VOC monitoring, the control of vessel emissions, as well as the continuous deepening and broadening of co-operation between Hong Kong and Guangdong in environmental protection will all contribute to greater success in future.

In June 2016, Mr Wong Kam-sing, Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong, led a delegation to Guangdong to meet with Mr Lu Xuili, Director-General of the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province. The two sides had in-depth exchanges to map out the way forward for the co-operation between Hong Kong and Guangdong in environmental protection.

On 6 January 2017, JWGSEP held its 16th meeting in Guangzhou, which was co-chaired by Mr Wong Kam-sing, Secretary for the Environment of Hong Kong, and Mr Lu Xuili, Director-General of the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province. The meeting reviewed the progress of environmental collaboration of the two sides in 2016, and agreed on a work plan for 2017.
Establishing an enhanced co-operation mechanism to protect the marine environment. The photo shows Shenzhen Bay with clear water and surrounded by green mountains.

Deepening of co-operation in the management of atmospheric pollutants such as VOC. The photo shows the Victoria Harbour of Hong Kong under a clear and sunny sky.

With the strengthening of environmental co-operation between Hong Kong and Guangdong, building a Quality Living Area in the two places is no longer a dream.