



# Environmental Policy Monthly

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## Feature Column

### 2005: Year of Environmental Action

The EPA's Three Year Action Plan has already attained concrete results and a high degree of citizen satisfaction after the first year of implementation. EPA Minister Juu-En Chang emphasized that protecting the environment should start with individual action. The year 2005 is marked as the "Year of Environmental Action," in hopes that all citizens join in protecting Taiwan's environment and help set an example by taking personal action to show their love for this small part of planet Earth.

Serving as Minister of the Environmental Protection Administration for nearly a year, Juu-En Chang (張祖恩) proposed a three-year action plan in early 2004 to focus on progress in these areas: new models of environmen-

tal lifestyles, access to information and full citizen participation, reduction of environmental pollution, the Complete Sorting for Zero Waste plan, comprehensive control of industrial waste, and international participation. Last year marked the first year of this three-year plan and positive results have been attained in each area of the plan with over 70% of citizens showing satisfaction with environmental protection policies.

during his first year as Minister, Chang has developed a "New Models of Environmental Lifestyles Plan," which urges citizens to cultivate environmental habits in all aspects of daily life including diet, clothing, shelter, behaviour, education and recreation. The plan aims to increase green consumption, waste reduction, resource recycling, and environmental cleanup, engaging the society to care for the environment and take actions to create a quality living environment and a sustainable homeland. Around 2.56 million participants eagerly took part in actions to make a more

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#### Citizen Action for a Better Environment

In terms of career achievements

peaceful living environment in the first year. In terms of concrete achievements, last year saw the initiation of 41 community environmental reform projects and 79.7% of government procurement going toward green products.

The EPA achieved sharp reductions in air pollution emissions last year through the Kaoping Air Quality Improvement Plan, which set controls for stationary and mobile pollution sources in the region. Water pollution effluent reductions were also continued including several ecological engineering projects to purify water, protect source water quality and restore the ecological vitality of natural riverways. A Water Pollution Focal Investigation Action Plan was also initiated to protect environmental quality and reduce pollution.

As for actual figures, under the Water Pollution Focal Investigation Action Plan, the ratio of river lengths with light pollution or no (negligible) pollution has increased from 61.6% in 2001 to 73.5% by October 2004 for a combined total river length of 2,135 km. As regards air pollution, the EPA has successfully reduced sulfur content of diesel fuel from 350ppm to 50ppm, thereby significantly cutting exhaust emissions from Taiwan's 19 million motor vehicles (this figure recorded as of November 2004). This measure was taken in advance, complying with standards set for 2007, and will reduce particulate matter emissions by 1,500 tonnes and oxysulfides emissions by 3,213 tonnes. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs), another source of air pollution, are also being cut through enforced controls to install vapor recovery equipment at gas filling stations; these controls are estimated to cut VOCs by over 20,000 tonnes per year – over

80% of total VOCs from gas stations.

### Complete Sorting for Zero Waste

The Complete Sorting for Zero Waste Plan—the core of the EPA's waste disposal strategy—is aiming for 25% waste reduction by 2007. The daily per capita volume of garbage has decreased from 1.143 kg to 0.752 kg during the six-year period from 1997 to 2003. By October 2004 the nation was recycling 1,263,199 tonnes of resources per year at a 19.6% recycling rate. Already 25 county and municipal governments, 254 city and township governments have launched food waste recycling plans and recycle a total of 907 tonnes of food waste per day.

Kaohsiung ESTP.

Another important goal of waste reduction efforts is to ensure open access to environmental information and strengthen information exchange platforms for publicizing environmental information. In the interest of reaching public consensus on environmental issues, the EPA has held several "environmental consensus forums" and "national environmental affairs forums" on the Internet inviting people from all fields to express their views and engage in public discussion. The EPA has also established river patrol teams throughout the nation, enlisting over 4,000 volunteers to keep tabs on local rivers. Thanks to these teams' reports of "night pipes" or other unaccounted-for effluent outlets, subsequent tracking and investigation has led to sub-

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## **The EPA is actively supporting the industrial waste management industry, and by the end of November 2004, already 95% of industries were part of the online report system; 96% of these enterprises have submitted industrial waste clearance and disposal plans.**

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As for industrial waste, the EPA is actively supporting the industrial waste management industry, and by the end of November 2004, already 95% of industries were part of the online report system; 96% of these enterprises have submitted industrial waste clearance and disposal plans. The EPA has also stepped up source controls and waste flow tracking to effectively curb illegal dumping.

Currently over 90% of industrial waste is appropriately disposed of and over 70% of industrial waste is reused. Working to promote clean industry, the EPA has also recently established several environmental science and technology parks (ESTPs), and already seven companies have moved into the

stantial improvements. The EPA has recently established "Environmental Watch" teams, inviting retired soldiers, public servants and teachers to take part in environmental protection and further build up the network of pollution reporting and investigation.

### International Environmental Protection Starts with Local Action

Leading Taiwan's transformation into a society that recycles all resources, the Complete Sorting for Zero Waste Action Plan aims to get citizens to reduce, sort and recycle household waste, and paves the way for a sensible and comprehensive sustainable resource manage-

ment system. Minister Chang states that protecting the Earth starts with individual action devoted to protecting the environment in Taiwan. It is also vital that Taiwan stay on track with environmental protection in the international arena. Thus, in response to the UN-FCCC and the *Kyoto Protocol*, the EPA has established a Climate Change and *Kyoto Protocol* Response Taskforce, adopting cross-ministerial coordination mechanisms to keep Taiwan moving forward on a path of sustainable development.

Looking ahead into the New Year, the EPA strives for integration, innovation and continuation of current policies to complement the ongoing six major action plans. The results of each focal task are measured against indicators to encourage the attainment of goals according to individual needs. Some of the goals set by these indicators are: an overall resource recycling rate of over 20%; daily per capita waste reduction of 0.72 kg; a 1.4% reduction in the percentage of poor

air quality days in the Kaoping region (down from the current figure of 7.7%); an increase in the proportion of river lengths with only light pollution (to 76%, up from current figure of 73.5%); and an increase in the ratio of general industrial waste that is appropriately disposed of, to over 93%.

According to recent news reports of teenagers who have painstakingly indexed survey results environmental pollution, ranks at the top of the list. Hsinchu Hsiangshang Oceanside Green Oyster incident shows that no matter past or present, there are still many people who show little respect for the environment in Taiwan. Minister Chang expressed that individual action is the starting point for protecting and fostering respect for Taiwan's environment. As we embark on this Year of Environmental Action, it is up to every citizen to do their part for Taiwan's environment and set an example by personally taking part in environmental action.



*The Damei Elementary School (Yunlin County) cafeteria composting system turns food waste into plant fertilizer.*

## Waste Management

# Waste Disposal Act Merges with Resources Recycling Act

**As part of the Zero Waste policy, the EPA is currently integrating the *Waste Disposal Act* and the *Resources Recycling Act* into one piece of legislation. Waste will be prioritized as resources, first by reducing, recycling and appropriately disposing of waste at its source. This strategy cuts back on the generation of waste before it becomes a problem, and alleviates the burden on the natural environment.**

The EPA is currently drawing up a single piece of legislation that merges the current *Waste Disposal Act* (廢棄物清理法) and the *Resources Recycling Act* (資源回收再利用法). Adopting the concept that waste products put in the right place are resources, waste will be prioritized as resources rather than something to cast away. All materials discarded by anyone will be regarded as resources, and will first undergo repair, reprocessing, reuse, or recycling before final disposal in landfills.

EPA Minister Juu-En Chang expressed that source reduction, recycling and appropriate disposal have always been the leading waste management policies of the Administration. In fact, these three components—waste reduction, resource recycling and appropriate disposal of waste—are integrally connected, and therefore the existing *Waste Disposal Act* and the *Resource Recycling Act* should be integrated into one act. This step will push the nation to make

an early transition into a society that cycles its resources, joining the ranks of other developed countries.

The EPA invited related scholars and experts on 3 January 2005 to discuss the merging of these two acts. Apart from combining the two acts and prioritizing waste as resources, other important revisions include strengthening waste reduction and reuse measures, reassessing waste sorting, re-evaluating waste disposal responsibilities, adopting international standard definitions of hazardous waste, establishing principles for the export/import of resources and waste, setting controls for disposal organizations, and reevaluating the current waste management framework.

The present method of sorting waste primarily involves separating general waste from industrial waste at the source of generation. This has become cumbersome as different local regulations governing disposal, reuse and control apply for the same waste materials just because they come from different sources. In the future, consideration will be given to the properties of waste (composition or quality), and all waste will be classified as either hazardous or non-hazardous and different treatment methods will be stipulated

based on the quality of waste.

As for current methods of importing and exporting waste, when drawing up domestic treatment of waste and resources potential, restrict or prohibit the transboundary export of waste, domestic recycling enterprises may be granted approval to import another country's waste only if their recycling facilities have surplus storage and treatment capacity. Waste that can only be treated abroad may only be exported to developed countries. This strategy will help establish a domestic environmental service industry to manage the environment and reduce international disputes, and hopefully establish a new environmental image for Taiwan.

Minister Chang notes that although the *Waste Disposal Act* has undergone multiple revisions since its legislation in 1974, the revisions have only targeted certain articles. The current revision involves a comprehensive re-evaluation and modification of the waste disposal framework. When merging former management systems to treat waste as resources, consideration must also be given to existing implementation methods. The renovation of the system should also receive the approval and support of the public

and thus first requires active communication with all related fields. The next stage should be to reach consensus between industry, environmental groups and citizens, to smoothly complete the revision process.

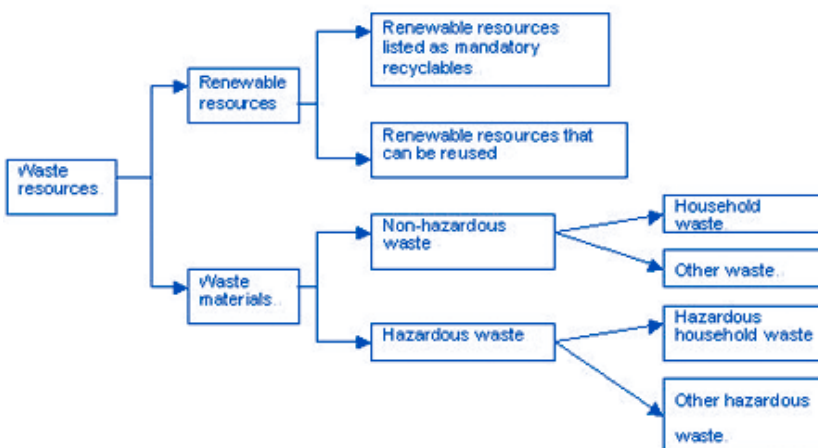
### Climate Change

## New Round of GHG Reduction Talks Kicks Off

**During COP 10, each nation agreed that the consequences of climate change are undeniably going to be severe. All countries were called upon to expedite steps in reducing greenhouse gases. A new round of talks on greenhouse gas reductions is soon to commence this year.**

The Tenth Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UN-FCCC) was held from 6-17 December 2004 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Over 5,570 representatives of more than 290 governments and non-governmental organizations from 180 countries participated. A delegation from Taiwan participated to obtain the latest international information and establish channels for international cooperation. Discussion focused on reassessing the past ten years of efforts, examining future challenges, adapting to and mitigating climate change, and recommending greenhouse gas reduction technologies.

The *Kyoto Protocol*, as agreed upon during COP 3 in 1997, asks 38 industrialized countries to reduce their national greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels between the years 2008 and 2012, and then reduce by another 5.2% on average. Russia finally signed the agreement in November 2004 and the *Kyoto Protocol* is slated to



*The new waste resources management scheme*

take effect on 16 February 2005. Secretariat of the Protocol, Ms. Joke Waller-Hunter, delivered the opening speech at COP 10, stating that the total emissions of greenhouse gases in industrialized nations in 2000 have already dropped to 6.6% below 1990's levels, attaining the preliminary standards set by the *Kyoto Protocol*. The world's greenhouse gas emissions concentrations (greenhouse gas emissions per GDP/GNP) have already seen a gradual decline, attesting to the fact that greenhouse gas emissions trends are already slower than economic growth trends. Waller-Hunter said that the next round of talks to decide reduction standards will commence in 2005. There are now at least ten different proposed plans in the international arena, including ones that call on developing countries to make reductions as well.

The Taiwan delegation expressed that currently Taiwan is among the world's top 25 emitters of greenhouse gases and its emissions are not on a downward trend. In the face of new reduction talks, Taiwan cannot afford to rebuff this issue. The delegation observed the mood of the December conference has already shifted from the former focus on political distractions and policy debates to development and implementation of reduction technology. There was a particular emphasis on increasing energy efficiency and developing renewable energy, attesting to the fact that most countries are taking greenhouse gas reductions seriously.

The Executive Yuan will soon establish a Climate Change and *Kyoto Protocol* Response Taskforce to help orchestrate cross-ministerial coordination and task integration. The Executive Yuan will also convene a national energy conference in May 2005 to reassess the national policy on responding to global greenhouse gas

reductions. The delegation from Taiwan will share the information gathered at COP 10 and the results of related international

meetings; this information will be referred to when formulating government policies.

### Recycling

## Overpackaging Restrictions Take Effect in July 2006

**After a series of discussions and public hearings, the EPA plans to successively implement restrictions on overpackaging of products in 2006 and 2007. Taiwan will become the second country after South Korea to lay down restrictions on packaging. The policy is expected to reduce packaging materials by 30%.**

Due to advances in packaging technology and an increase in GDP, gift box packaging has become more elaborate and complex in recent years. However, the public has increasingly voiced complaints regarding the problem of recycling and disposing of such waste from gift box packaging. According to the 2000 and 2003 public opinion polls taken by the EPA, 60.9% of citizens in 2000 felt that overpackaging of gift boxes had become a serious issue, increasing to 68.9% in 2003. Citizen support of the government's packaging reduction and control policy rose from 82.4% to 91.4% over these three years. This attests to strong public concern about overpackaging and public support of government control measures.

As for packaging controls in other countries, a EU directive to control packaging has been implemented in France and England. South Korea has drawn up regulations to restrict packaging based on the ratio of empty space, number of packaging layers and materials used. Referencing the basic demands in the EU directive and drawing on South Korea's experience in setting and implementing controls on overpackaging, the EPA has formulated an ordinance in the *Resource Recycling Act* (資源回

收再利用法) to restrict product packaging.

The EPA will implement restrictions in two stages to control the packaging of gift boxes of pastries, cosmetics, alcohol and processed foods, as well as the packaging of computer program CDs. The proportion of empty space should be under 25% of the entire product package and under 35% if only one type of packaging material is used. Gift boxes of cosmetics, alcohol and processed foods should have no more than two layers of packaging. Pastry gift boxes and computer program CDs should have no more than three layers of packaging.

Now that Taiwan is a member of the WTO, the draft plan for this restriction measure must first be submitted to the WTO for deliberation. The first stage of packaging restrictions is slated to take effect from 1 July 2006, and applies to packaging of pastries, cosmetics, alcohol and computer CD programs. The second stage will take effect on 1 July 2007, placing restrictions on the packaging of processed goods and pastries. In addition to controls on packaging, Article 21 of the *Resources Recycling Act* obligates product manufacturers, importers and retailers to provide free products for inspection as well as prod-

uct records, market targets and dates, and the source and date of stocked merchandise, to facilitate the implementation of controls. The EPA first announced the draft regulation on 1 July 2004 and held the first public hearing on 15 July. Since then 23 public hearings and meetings have been held with various organizations that are either positively or negatively affected by the restrictions. The content of the draft regulations has been modified based on the views presented and the final hearing was held on 10 December 2004. The EPA plans to announce the content of the draft regulation in February 2005.

### General Policy

## Opinion Poll: 80% Support Current Environmental Policies

**On 8 December 2004, the EPA announced the results of the latest public opinion poll. Over 80% of respondents supported current measures including the plastic bag restricted use policy, penalties for drippy air conditioners, and compulsory sorting of garbage. Many citizens disapproved of a nationwide trash bag fee collection system and regular inspections of motorbike exhaust at the owners expense; these two policies received support by only 32% and 43% of respondents, respectively.**

The EPA carried out a telephone survey from 30 September to 21 October 2004 to better understand the public's support and willingness to cooperate with existing and planned environmental policies. The survey covered 15 environmental policies related to the people's livelihood such as the new penalties for drippy air conditioners, compulsory sorting of trash and regular inspections of motorbike exhaust at the owner's expense. A total of 4,735 people throughout the island over the age of 20 were surveyed.

Poll results showed a majority – eighty percent – of respondents are supportive of and willing to abide by most current environ-

mental policies. However, certain policies currently in the planning, including the nationwide trash bag fee collection system and regular inspections of motorbike exhaust at the owner's expense, received notably less support. Approximately 59% percent of respondents approved of the proposed trash bag fee collection system, while 32% disapproved. About 55% of respondents approved of plans for regular inspections of motorbike exhaust at the owner's expense, saying that an NT\$80 inspection fee will not influence people's willingness to have their exhaust checked. However, 43% felt that the fee would have a bearing on motorbike owners' will-

ingness to cooperate.

The EPA points out that most of the policies that citizens tend to frown on, are those that require extra expense on the part of citizens. With a better understanding of green consumer concepts, citizens will learn that the trash bag fee collection system and regular inspections of motorbike exhaust at the owner's expense actually are cost-effective ways to attain pollution source controls, and comply with the polluter pays principle.

The EPA will refer to the results of this poll when making the final decision on environmental policies, and will determine the feasibility of reevaluating parts that citizens tend to disagree with. The EPA will also strengthen education to help citizens better understand the reasoning behind policy decisions.

### *Taiwan-Japan Green Technology Website Videoconference Exchange Platform*

Taiwan and Japan NGOs held the "International Forum to Establish a Taiwan-Japan Environmental Technology Website Videoconference Exchange Platform" on 7 December 2004. Taipei Technology University and Chengkung University, and Japan Waseda University were the three key participants in the event. Participants carried out onsite simultaneous website direct broadcasting and exchanged experience in holding environmental activities. ERP University's media website center chairman Moichi Hirasawa (平澤茂一) and the Integrated Environmental Research Center Professor Tokukyu Yoshida (吉田徳九) were present at the forum. Taipei Technology University indicated that current environmental exchange between Taiwan and Japan is focused on resource recycling and clean up of residential environs. The 32 categories of recyclables laid down by the EPA complement the manufacture of environmental crafts to reach the goal of Zero Waste.

## Waste Management

# Tightened Inspections of Industrial-Use NiCd Battery Waste Flow

**Most nickel-cadmium batteries in Taiwan are imported and for years there has been no mechanism to enforce the recycling of these items. With growing concerns about industries carelessly dumping mixed scrap metal waste, the EPA has reinforced careful inspection of the disposal and flow of nickel-cadmium batteries used by industries.**

Based on recent news reports, the EU will soon discuss the feasibility of prohibiting the use of portable nickel-cadmium (NiCd) batteries—a sign that strengthened management of cadmium batteries is becoming a world trend. In Taiwan, the EPA has not only listed dry cell cadmium batteries as a mandatory recyclable, but has also entrusted a consultancy to check up on the usage and waste flow of NiCd batteries used in industry. This information will serve as a useful reference in formulating further management measures.

NiCd batteries are a type of alkaline battery, and the NiCd batteries used in industry are similar in appearance to lead batteries. The positive and negative ends of NiCd batteries are made of nickel and cadmium, and the inner charge fluid is composed of alkaline sodium hydroxide solution. While NiCd batteries are more expensive than lead acid batteries, they offer several advantages such as longer lifetime, stronger/faster charge, steady current, and voltage does not easily drop during usage. For these reasons, NiCd batteries are in widespread use in shipping, power generation, communications and high tech industries. As there are no NiCd battery manufacturers in Taiwan, all such batteries must be imported. Customs agency statistics on imported products show that Taiwan imports an average of 360 tonnes of industrial-use NiCd batteries per year.

Each industry has different requirements for battery performance and

there is a great variation in battery replacement rates, with battery lifetimes ranging from three to twenty years on average. Industrial-use NiCd batteries contain the toxic heavy metal cadmium. In many developed countries, most batteries are returned to battery manufacturers or metal smelting plants, where cadmium is recovered or undergoes treatment as hazardous waste. However, in Taiwan, there are no NiCd battery manufacturers or special chemical industries that require large amounts of cadmium as a raw material; therefore there are no enterprises with the capacity to handle discarded NiCd batteries in Taiwan. Thus after industries report their waste NiCd batteries, they are commonly put into storage at factories, or in some cases discarded along with scrap metal. This clearly presents a waste storage problem that could lead to environmental pollution.

To better understand industries' use and handling of NiCd batteries, the EPA targeted publicly owned enterprises and large-scale businesses in a preliminary investigation in 2003. This year, a consultancy has been entrusted to scan customs data and screen companies that import NiCd batteries, as well as other industries suspected of using NiCd batteries. The consultancy will then perform an investigation via questionnaire. Onsite investigations will be carried out at those companies that go through a large amount of NiCd batteries to gain a

better command over the actual use and waste flow, and to instruct industries on proper clearance and disposal methods.

## General Policy

# New Ministry Shaped by Public Input

**The Executive Yuan resolved last year to restructure the Environmental Protection Administration into a new Ministry of Environmental Resources. Heeding the Executive Yuan's reform plans, the EPA held nationwide forums at the end of 2004 to solicit views from all fields regarding the integration of water, land, forests, and air resources. These views will help build a blueprint for the new Ministry.**

In late December 2004, the EPA held forums in northern, eastern, southern and central Taiwan regarding draft plans to reorganize the EPA into the new Ministry of Environmental Resources. Opinions from all areas of society were solicited and will serve as an important reference in modifying the structure of the new Ministry. The EPA has proposed two potential organizational frameworks for the new Ministry, one divided into seven departments and the other into eight departments. At the present stage, ideas and views are still being solicited and integrated in pursuit of building the most appropriate framework.

The present system divides jurisdiction of environmental protection affairs, land planning and management, energy and mineral resource management, maintenance of natural scenery, and water resources management across

many different government organizations. In the interest of integrating environmental protection manpower and resources and unifying the jurisdiction of authorities presiding over environmental protection affairs, the Executive Yuan resolved during its 15 September 2004 meeting to form a new Ministry of Environmental Resources. The new body will integrate water, land, forests and air resources under one authority to strengthen protection of environmental resources, maintain ecological balance, and pave the way for national sustainable development.

In view of the interconnection of water, land, forests and air resources, the establishment of the Ministry of Environmental Resources will be conducive to efforts toward integrating authority. Taking water resources as an example, at present management of authority over water resources and water quality protection is under the EPA's jurisdiction, while water supply is under the Water Resources Agency, Ministry of Economic Affairs. As water pollution control and usage of water resources are merely two aspects of the same resource, organizing both under one authority is the best way to bring into play policies and measures that mutually benefit both aspects. Water resources development and environmental protection can thus be better organized to complement each other.

The Ministry of Environmental Resources' scope of jurisdiction will include air quality, water quality protection, noise control, waste, environmental sanitation and toxic substances, environmental monitoring, water supply, mining, geology, land administration, land use planning, national parks, national scenic areas, weather, the ocean, forestry, soil and water conservation, bioconservation, and nuclear energy management.

The organization of the Ministry of Environmental Resources will comprise four core areas: National Land Use Planning, Resource Conservation, Disaster Prevention, and Pollution Control. These core areas will carry out crosswise integration of water, land, forests and air resources. Organizational planning will proceed according to the following four principles: "Vertical division of labor, regional management, and local empowerment;" "Central planning with implementation by auxiliary agencies;" "Unifying the affairs and personnel of auxiliary agencies facilitates interdepartmental links;" and "Integration with county and city agency affairs." This approach will work to build a safe, sound, healthy and sustainable homeland.

As the current draft revision of the *Executive Yuan Reform Act* and *Organization Three Act* have already been sent to the Legislative Yuan for review, if the revision makes it to the agenda of the next meeting and is approved of, the Act could be promulgated as soon as January 2006. The official establishment of the Ministry of Environmental Resources could also occur at this time.

## Waste Management

# Joint Reporting of Old Vehicles and License Plates to Promote Recycling

**From 1 July 2005, the EPA and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications will set up allied service counters at monitoring stations around the nation to handle citizens' declarations of unusable vehicles for recycling as well as procedures for checking discarded license plates and vehicles.**

To effectively control public reporting of unusable cars and avoid the ensuing problems with phantom cars and jalopies pieced together from various old parts, the EPA has developed a project to review and reform the existing recycle, clearance and disposal system for motor vehicles declared unusable. The project will be carried out in tandem with the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MOTC) and other related agencies. The EPA met with the MOTC on 26 November 2004, during which a consensus was



reached to launch the first stage of the program on 1 July 2005. At this time, the EPA and the MOTC will set up allied service counters at monitoring stations around the nation to handle citizens' declarations of unusable vehicles for recycling as well as procedures for checking discarded license plates and vehicles. After receiving approval to obtain a "Declared Unusable Flow Certificate," the user is finished with reporting procedures.

The EPA met with the MOTC on 26 November 2004, during which a consensus was reached to launch the first stage of the program on 1 July 2005. At this time, the EPA and the MOTC will set up allied service counters at monitoring stations around the nation to handle citizens' declarations of unusable vehicles for recycling as well as procedures for checking discarded license plates and vehicles. After receiving approval to obtain a "Declared Unusable Flow Certificate," the user is finished with reporting procedures.

The EPA is currently engaged in preparation and in-depth discussion with the MOTC regarding related measures. Any cars declared unusable should be sent to EPA/MOTC allied service counters at monitoring stations for recycling. All related procedures can be processed at the same counter. People who have legiti-

mate reason to reclaim the vehicle under their own custody must undergo cutoff examination and receive approval before they can have their vehicle back. Such cases will be recorded and followed up on to determine the custody status of the vehicle in order to safeguard public property rights. People who dismantle vehicles for used parts should apply with onsite certifiers for a second-hand usage permit.

Involving enterprises that recycle or dismantle vehicles and second hand part users, this system is expected to effectively reduce the occurrence of theft and eradicate black market channels for refurbished stolen cars, thus safeguarding public property rights and vehicle safety. At least one million vehicles can be recycled per year through this system, greatly increasing the number of discarded vehicles turned in for recycling, and cutting at least NT\$1 billion off of government expenses toward managing discarded vehicles. Moreover, the added value of reused parts can generate at least NT\$10 billion for the domestic resource recycling industry each year.

## EIA

# EIA Standards Revised to Encourage Citizen Participation

**A new era of citizen participation in environmental impact assessments has dawned. The EPA has announced a revised version of the *Criteria for Executing Environmental Impact Assessments* to strengthen citizen participation in EIAs. The new legislation demands developers to include local public views in the first stage of EIA reports. This greatly enhances citizens' rights to express their views about large development projects.**

Environmental impact assessments are currently divided into two stages. Those required by law to carry out an EIA must compile an EIA report, which is to be submitted to the EPA or local Environmental Protection Bureau (EPB) for review. This report is known as the First Stage EIA. After review by the EPA or EPB, if the development is suspected of having a serious environmental impact, the developer must proceed to the Second Stage EIA.

As for the timing of public hearings, according to current regulations, those developers whose First Stage EIA report has passed the review session should hold a public hearing after receiving a permit from the relevant competent authority and before beginning construction. Those developers required to proceed to a Second Stage EIA should make the EIA report open to the public after the announced expiration date; these actions should be simultaneously carried out along with the Second Stage EIA. The EPA explains that according to the

## News Brief

### **EPA Website Takes On a New Look in 2005**

The EPA put out a brand new website at the start of the New Year, showing a brand new face to the public. Qualifying as a Grade AA "unobstructed website," the new website greatly unifies environment related information, and features a special "Guide for the Blind" function for visually impaired users. The main unique feature of the new website is that the information headings and structure have been designed from the public's perspective, making it easier for the average person to read. Another highlight is that it allows users to rapidly retrieve the necessary information based on occupation or needs, with special sections for English speakers, children or businesspersons.

current status of reviews carried out by various levels of environmental protection agencies, about 75% of development activities pass the First Stage EIA, meaning that the EIA report has already passed reviews and a development permit has already been obtained before a public hearing has been held. Many citizens have protested this framework, as it often reduces the public hearing to a briefing on development that has already been permitted, giving citizens no opportunity to participate.

To rectify this problem, the EPA revised regulations in 2004, hoping to move up the scheduling of public hearings and increase methods for public participation. While this regulation was being revised, developers were worried that holding public hearings in advance would have an impact on development plans, and increased citizen participation would prolong the time required to compile EIA reports. As full citizen participation and environmental action are already global trends, it behooves developers to cease evasive behaviour and take initiatives to engage in constructive dialogue with the public.

According to the newly revised work criteria, developers can publicly invite local citizens or related organizations to meetings concurrently during the period it takes to compile EIA reports. The developer can share accurate data with citizens by recording the dates of surveys and investigations on the environmental status of the proposed development site. This method should not prolong the work schedule. Developers can also take steps beforehand to understand the concerns of citizens and related groups, and come up with response measures in advance. Doing so will shorten the time required to supply this information later when their EIA report undergoes review.

The revised regulation, promulgated on 22 December 2004, requires that

developers publicly invite local citizens or related organizations to convene a meeting before their EIA report is written up. Developers are also required to compile a report on what measures they have done to communicate with citizens and how they have responded to citizen

concerns. An advisory stipulation has also been added, recommending developers to deem whether it is necessary to hold further public hearings, meetings or discussions to publicly display plans or use other appropriate means to allow citizens to participate and express their views.

### Green Procurement

## 23 Government Agencies to Purchase Environmental Products

**Following up on the government green procurement program, the EPA will prompt further source reductions through the *Resources Recycling Act* by stipulating 23 government agencies to give preference to green products when making procurements. Over 60% of expenditures in each product category should go toward green products. This stipulation is expected to take effect in the first half of 2005.**

In leading the development of a market for environmentally preferable products, the EPA can advance resource recycling and reuse, government procurements account for a large part of the nation's consumption of resources, and should bear the responsibility to set an example in leading the green consumption movement. The power of government procurement can help create a favorable environment for production and marketing of environmentally preferable products as well as increased reuse of resources. The *Resource Recycling Act* (資源回收再利用法) has related regulations for enforcing such demands.

The *Resources Recycling Act* was put in place on 3 July 2002. Article 22 of the Act stipulates that procurements by government organizations, public schools, publicly managed businesses/organizations, and military organizations are required to give preference to certified environmentally preferable products, products made from domestic renewable resources, or reused

products made from a specified ratio or greater of renewable raw materials. Among these, priority should be placed on purchasing from these three types of products, as determined by the central competent authority in discussion with the relevant organizations. Based on this stipulation, the EPA has drawn up a draft "Green Product Categories for Preferential Procurement by the First Group of Government Organizations, Public Schools, Publicly Operated Businesses/Organizations, and Military Organizations." A public hearing was held on 6 January 2005 to solicit views on this regulation, after which it may be promulgated.

According to the *Resource Recycling Act*, the green product categories for preferential procurement, as renewable resources categories should possess feasible economic or recycling technology, after making an assessment, the EPA in the current stage first takes green products list as the first batch of publicly announced targets for preferential procurement. The product categories were chosen by referring to

the list of categories used in the 2004 "Government Green Procurement Promotion Plan." Depending on whether announced categories of renewable resources, reused products technology and market supply and demand, functions among other factors to proceed with making adjustments to the announced categories. To ensure that government agencies can make a balanced procurement of green products, at least 60% of the annual amount of money spent on purchases towards products for which green product categories exist should go toward green products. This stipulation will take effect six months after it is promulgated.

In addition, among the 23 product categories include four categories – energy efficient CFL fluorescent light bulbs, computer mouse, computer keyboards and personal computers – for which there are not yet any products with the Green Mark ecolabel. To forestall the potential problem that there are no products available to choose from, the EPA will take 23 kinds of Green Mark product criteria, and according to their properties combine with four large kinds of 14 category products, after making this combination, each product's annual purchase ratio should remain above 60%. Attendees at this month's public briefing showed support of this method and the revision plan will likely become promulgated in the near future.



*The Green Mark ecolabel*

## News Briefs

### *Major Environmental Policies to Take Effect from 1/2005*

	Implementation Date	Policies and Measures
1	1.1.2005	"Compulsory Sorting of Waste Plan": First stage to be implemented in ten counties and cities. Citizens must sort garbage into three categories: waste, resources, and food waste.
2	1.1.2005	Motorbikes owners can wait three years after manufacture date before required to regular annual exhaust checks.
3	1.1.2005	Container attachments (caps, handles, labels, etc.) are now listed as recyclables. Related recycling, clearance & disposal fees will be collected from manufacturers.
4	1.1.2005	Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Act designates 18 industries required to provide soil and groundwater pollution test data before transferring land ownership.
5	1.1.2005	Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Act designates 18 industries required to provide soil and groundwater pollution test data before transferring land ownership, or establishing/suspending/terminating operations.
6	1.1.2005	Fee rates for benzene, toluene, xylene, and ethylbenzene will be adjusted downward as per guidelines on soil and groundwater pollution fees and fee rates for certain chemical substances.
7	1.7.2005	EPA and Ministry of Transportation and Communications to set up allied service counters at exhaust monitoring stations requiring citizens to turn in both vehicle and license plate when declaring a vehicle unusable.
8	1.7.2005	Nationwide restriction on use of liquid fuel with over 0.5% sulfur content.
9	1.7.2005	Implementation of the Third Phase Vehicle Noise Control Standards to harmonize with related standards in the EU.
10	1.7.2005	Implementation of low frequency noise control standards, targeting businesses and entertainment establishments as a priority.

## News Briefs

### New Mercury Analyzer Produces Results in Minutes

The EPA Environmental Analysis Laboratory has recently acquired an advanced spectrum mercury analyzer to assist investigations into the environment fate of mercury. The instrument has a high degree of sensitivity and can rapidly analyze one sample in only seven minutes. Compared to current analysis equipment, which takes five hours per sample, this new technology greatly expedites analysis work and is more suitable for use in onsite environmental pollution investigation, remediation and in determining risk boundaries as it can quickly provide accurate data to facilitate immediate decision making. The EAL is currently investigating the environment fate of mercury in the severely polluted Erren River Basin, and gaining a better understanding of the fate of mercury in the local atmosphere, water bodies and river biota. Further steps can then be taken to strengthen the effectiveness of tracking and control over mercury pollution, thereby minimizing its health threat.

### One, Two, Three – Recycling is Easy!

To educate the public on the Compulsory Garbage Sorting Policy, which took effect on 1 January 2004, EPA Minister Juu-En Chang and CTS (華

視) General Manager Jiang Hsia (江霞) made an appearance in an educational commercial. The two geared up in baseball uniforms and stepped up to the plate, asking citizens to help the Compulsory Garbage Sorting Policy hit a homerun every time. The commercial draws on the nation's hottest sport of baseball as the background with Minister Chang cracking three line drives, one after another, sym-

bolizing the three categories of waste. Jiang Hsia played the role of sportscaster. Helping citizens remember to separate trash into three categories—resources, food scraps and general waste—the EPA has come up with the phrase, "One, two, three, recycling is easy." Citizens are hoped to not only pick up on this catchy slogan but also put the words into action.

*Clip from educational TV commercial with Jiang Hsia (江霞) (left) and EPA Administrator Juu-en Chang (張祖恩)*

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For inquiries or subscriptions to the printed version, please contact:

Environmental Policy Monthly  
Environmental Protection Administration  
Office of Science and Technology  
Advisors  
41, Sec. 1, Jhonghua Rd.,  
Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.  
tel: 886-2-2311-7722, ext. 2207.  
fax: 886-2-2311-5486  
e-mail: [uemail@sun.epa.gov.tw](mailto:uemail@sun.epa.gov.tw)

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