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Feature Article

Clean Air Action Plans

Over the years, the EPA has launched several air pollution control measures. Air quality monitoring results show that not only has air quality greatly improved, but it has begun to stabilize in recent years. Since the Clean Air Action Plans (清淨空氣行動計畫) began in 2015, air pollution controls have been extended by way of an inter-ministerial mechanism that integrates functions and engages each level of government with local Air Pollution Control Plans (空氣污染防治計畫) and a focus on reducing PM_{2.5} emissions.

Understanding the close link between human health and air quality, the public has made increasing demands for higher quality air over the years.

The action plans are fortified with eight additional measures: promoting electric bikes (E-bikes), promoting electric buses (E-buses), promoting electric produce trailers, fitting diesel cars with soot filters, installing natural gas boilers in hotels, installing riverbed fugitive dust prevention mechanisms, promoting cooperation with mainland China in improving air quality, and conducting research on fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) control.

The government is slated to invest over NT\$39 billion throughout the course of the action plans from 2015 to 2020, during which local governments are tasked to carry out more than 300 air quality protection and improvement plans. Specific goals include: eliminating one million two-stroke motorcycles, promoting the purchase of 600,000 new electric motorbikes, replacing 2,858 diesel buses with electric ones, introducing 2,100 electric trailers to wholesale produce markets, installing soot filters on 38,000 diesel vehicles, requiring 100 hotels to install natural gas boilers, and installing fugitive dust control facilities along 3,000 hectares of riverbeds. It is expected that these measures combined will decrease annual

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particulate matters (PM₁₀) emissions by 33,000 tonnes (22%), annual PM_{2.5} emissions by 17,000 tonnes (24%), annual SO_x emissions by 33,000 tonnes (28%), annual NO_x emissions by 174,000 tonnes (40%), and will lower national annual average PM_{2.5} emissions by 23.4%.

Providing Guidance to Local Governments to Implement Air Pollution Control Plans

To ensure that local governments carry through with the air pollution control plans, the EPA has organized the Air Pollution Control Technology Advisory Taskforce, which visited each city and county to provide guidance and evaluate the status of implementation in 2015.

The Air Pollution Control Technology Advisory Taskforce is made up of 15 experts in the fields of air quality planning and management, stationary source pollution control, mobile source pollution control, and the establishment and protection of air quality purification zones. Apart from conducting reviews on the implementation reports of each county and city, the taskforce made onsite audits at six special municipalities in 2015.

The EPA explains that each local government has announced its own Air Pollution Control Plan, all of which fit under the umbrella of the central government's Clean Air Action Plan. The Air Quality Protection and Improvement Plans are executed each year with a budget of NT\$3.5 billion. A pragmatic approach is adopted to provide guidance to local governments in implementing pollution inspections and controls. The EPA is confident it will achieve the air quality improvement goals.

Focus on Reducing PM_{2.5}

Reinforcing the control of PM_{2.5} is a vital component of the Clean Air Action Plans, since the national PM_{2.5} average still falls short of the set standards. The plan will execute the following measures:

- I. Evaluate the implementation of the Clean Air Action Plans.
- II. Provide guidance to counties and cities to implement the controls that have been announced for years 2015 to 2020 in the Air Pollution Control Plans.

III. Reevaluate controls for factory pollution emission permits, relax restrictions on the use of clean fuels, and reevaluate the quarterly emission permits and the regulations on required responses to substandard air quality.

IV. Control measures according to Article 6 Paragraph 3 of the *Air Pollution Control Act*.

1. Once a city or county is classified as a grade III PM_{2.5} control zone, new or altered stationary pollution sources that emit pollutants such as particulate matters, SO_x, NO_x and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) above certain levels in the city or county's jurisdiction must adopt the best available control technology.

2. On 26 May 2015, the Best Available Control Technology for Stationary Pollution Sources was revised, requiring newly established stationary pollution sources in the grade III PM_{2.5} control zone to adopt better control measures.

3. On 11 August 2015, the *Regulations Governing Air Quality Models and Simulations* were revised to include PM_{2.5} on the list of items to undergo model simulation as well as to lower the thresholds of other pollutants required to be included in simulations.

4. On 30 December 2015, the *Newly Established or Altered Stationary Pollution Source Air Pollutant Emission Guidelines* were revised to state that new stationary pollution source emission limits have been greatly tightened from 15 tonnes to 10 tonnes for particulate pollutants, and from 60 tonnes to 10 tonnes for SO_x.

V. The EPA is considering making cities/counties the unit for the air pollution cap scheme, which will require existing pollution sources to sharply reduce emissions, and newly established or altered stationary pollution sources to obtain enough offsets for increased emissions so as to have their applications approved.

Room for Improvement

Preliminary air quality monitoring results of 2015 were released in January 2016. They showed that the nation's air quality has improved significantly over the past eight years. PM_{2.5}, one of the pollutants that

many citizens are concerned about, has improved by 20% while PM₁₀, SO₂, NO₂ and O₃ have all seen improvements ranging from 11% to 29%. The results attest to the effectiveness of the air quality improvement measures.

Although Taiwan's air quality has been on a steady path of improvement, the EPA realizes that the public holds expectations for even better air quality. Based on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) recently announced Better Life Index, Taiwan still has room for improvement in terms of air quality compared to other nations on the OECD list of developed nations.

The stated goals of the Clean Air Action Plans are to reinforce the integration of ministerial powers, strengthen cooperation between central and local governments and promote all-citizen participation. Methods focus on practical results in the short term and tightened controls in the long term to ensure reduction of air pollution emissions. Meanwhile, to achieve air quality improvement objectives, the plan promotes cross-strait exchanges to address the long-range transport of air pollutants (LRTAP) that affect Taiwan's air quality.



▶ The Air Pollution Control Technology Advisory Taskforce inspects a China Steel raw material storage site as part of a performance evaluation done by the Kaohsiung City Environmental Protection Bureau.

Water

Water Pollution Control Measures and Permit Review Regulations Revised and Renamed

On 19 January 2016, the EPA promulgated revisions to the *Water Pollution Control Measures and Permit Application Review Regulations*, renaming it as the *Water Pollution Control Measures and Permit Application Review Management Regulations* (水污染防治措施計畫及許可申請審查管理辦法). Several changes have been made in response to the 2015 amendments to the *Water Pollution Control Act* (水污染防治法) and the collection of water pollution fees.

The revision came in response to the 4 February 2015 amendments to the *Water Pollution Control Act* in order to comply with the implementation of

significant measures such as pollutant disclosure and risk assessment, information disclosure, total effluent quantity controls to protect farmland water bodies,

the use of slurry from anaerobic livestock manure fermentation as fertilizer, and the strengthening of management for permit application procedures. The major amendments are outlined below:

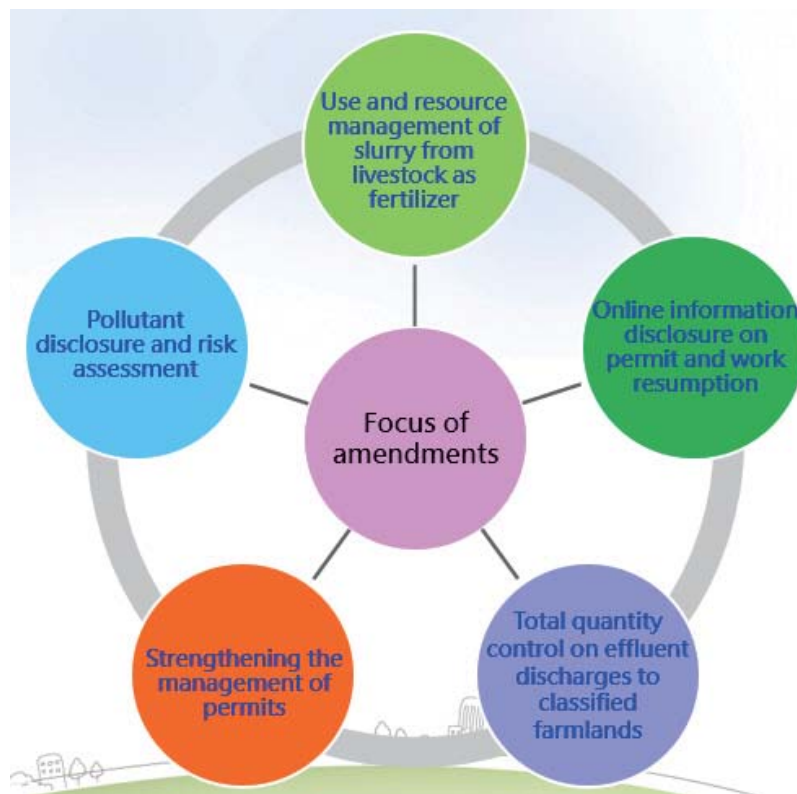
1. Announced industries applying for water pollution control measures or discharge permits should disclose pollutant types, concentrations and quantities. For categories of pollutants not covered under the *Effluent Standards*, but suspected by the competent authorities to be harmful to the ecosystem or human health, industries must submit a risk assessment or management report within 18 months.

An enterprise applying to resume work or operation shall submit its water pollution control measures and waste sludge treatment improvement plan, upon which the competent authority shall convene a review meeting with experts and scholars as well as stakeholders or public interest groups. The minutes and content of this review meeting shall be made available to the public. To protect specified farmland waterbodies by diminishing the risks of contaminating irrigation canals with wastewater, it was also added that permit issuance by the local competent authority must adhere to the total quantity control management measures for the announced effluent total quantity control zones.

2. To simplify the permit application process, the submission of water pollution control measures and the application for a discharge permit are not necessary if all slurries from anaerobic fermentation of livestock manure are used as fertilizer.

3. To make actual permit management more flexible and practical, details are now to be given in the water pollution control measures and permit application documents. This includes the scale of manufacturing equipment, production or services related to wastewater and sludge generated, data showing that original wastewater quality is improved or that original wastewater quantity is low, or descriptions of treatment procedures in special circumstances such as rainstorms or blackouts.

4. It has been added that if any change made to the water pollution control measures or related permits or documents require enterprises to carry out improvement work or to test system functions, the period of validity of the water pollution control measures or permits shall be recalculated up to a maximum period of five years, after review and approval by the issuance agency.



► Amendments to Water Pollution Control Measures and Permit Application Review Management Regulations.

First Effluent Total Quantity Control Zone Approved

The EPA has approved the Taoyuan City government's Shinjie River and Puhsin River Basin Wastewater Total Quantity Control Methods in accordance with Article 9 of the *Water Pollution Control Act* (水污染防治法).

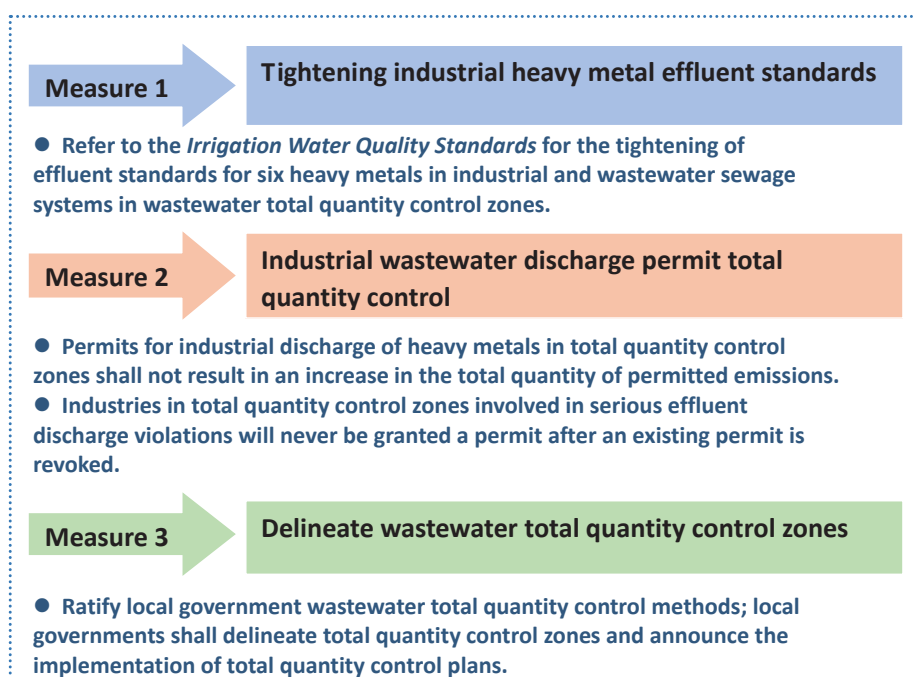
Since the Act was promulgated in 1974, this is the first such case in the nation, which has become a milestone for the future of river remediation and industrial wastewater control.

To protect water bodies and the environment, the EPA has given priority to improving the quality of irrigation water sources for specified agricultural lands. From 2015 the EPA began assisting Taoyuan City, Changhua County and Taichung City in implementing waterbody heavy metal total quantity controls. Looking at the current status of waterbodies, the EPA and local governments drew up a map to zone areas for total quantity control measures, and formulated total quantity control methods. Revisions were made to the *Effluent Standards* (放流水標準) and the *Water Pollution Control Measures and Permit Application Review Regulations* (水污染防治措施計畫及許可申請審查辦法), paving the way for enacting total quantity control regulations. These two regulations were amended and promulgated on 6 January and 19 January 2016, respectively.

The EPA's approval of the Taoyuan City Government's total quantity control methods was done in accordance with Article 9 of the *Water*

Pollution Control Act. Both the Shinjie River and the Puhsin River require special protection measures, as the catchment areas for these rivers include rainwater runoff and industrial wastewater from the Huangchien River, an upstream tributary. The waterbodies are used to irrigate 950 hectares of farmland, and long-time irrigation has resulted in increasingly serious problems of heavy metal contamination. With 145 hectares of this land now listed as soil pollution control sites, there is an urgent need to improve the quality of these irrigation water sources.

With this ratification, the Taoyuan City Government will designate the Shinjie River and Puhsin River basins as total quantity control zones to be managed according to a classification system. Class 1 total quantity control zones are distributed in the Chungli and Luzhu Districts. Class 2 total quantity control zones include a total area of some 10,000 hectares. The Chungli Industrial Park and Advanced Semiconductor Engineering Company are both part



▶ Three measures have been taken to protect waterbodies in effluent total quantity control zones.

of the industrial park sewer systems located within a Class 1 total quantity control zone. Printed circuit board manufacturers are the main industry located in the Class 2 total quantity control zone. A total of 27 industries will eventually be included in the total quantity control zone system and subject to stricter controls.

Among the pollutants targeted under the Taoyuan City total quantity control system are copper, zinc, nickel, total chromium, hexavalent chromium and cadmium. According to the EPA's latest regulations for Class 1 total quantity control zones, industries that generate or discharge wastewater containing any one of these six heavy metals will not be issued permits for new applications, and will not be allowed to make changes or increase their heavy metal emissions or total quantities. If after five years the water quality of the waterbody in question is still not suitable for irrigation or if there are still serious pollution concerns,

the responsible enterprise will not be granted a permit again after its existing permit expires. Once a permit has been revoked or canceled due to violations, a violating enterprise will never be granted a permit again. In addition, if an enterprise located in a Class 1 or Class 2 total quantity control zone plans to discharge wastewater into waterbodies of concern, the wastewater must be treated until it meets the tightened effluent standards before the enterprise may discharge it.

The EPA and local governments are working together closely to revise regulations so as to prevent heavy metals in industrial wastewater from affecting irrigation water quality. It is apparent that these efforts are bearing results. In the future, the EPA will continue to review the delineation of total quantity control zones proposed by the Taichung City and the Changhua County Governments.

Water

Four Industries Required to Disclose Types and Amounts of Pollutants in Effluent

On 4 February 2016, the EPA announced the *Industries Required to Disclose Concentrations and Quantities of Pollutants that May Be Contained in Wastewater Effluent* (應揭露排放廢(污)水可能含有之污染物及其濃度與排放量之事業). This regulation stipulates which industries are required to disclose pollutants in their effluents, as well as the categories of pollutants to be disclosed. Benchmarks have been identified for pollutants suspected of harming the ecosystem or human health.

The EPA promulgated the amendments to the *Water Pollution Control Act* (水污染防治法) on 4 February 2016 to strengthen risk management and address substances not subject to the Effluent Standards. It has been added to Article 14-1 of the Act that industries must disclose which pollutants and the quantities thereof that may be contained in their effluents. To Article 14-2, it has been added that industries must submit a risk assessment report and management measures for pollutants that are suspected to be harmful to the ecosystem or human health.

The industries affected by the amendments include manufacturers and handlers of large quantities of chemical raw materials in the petrochemical and chemical industries, as well as three industries known for high turnover rates of raw materials: the optoelectronic materials and components

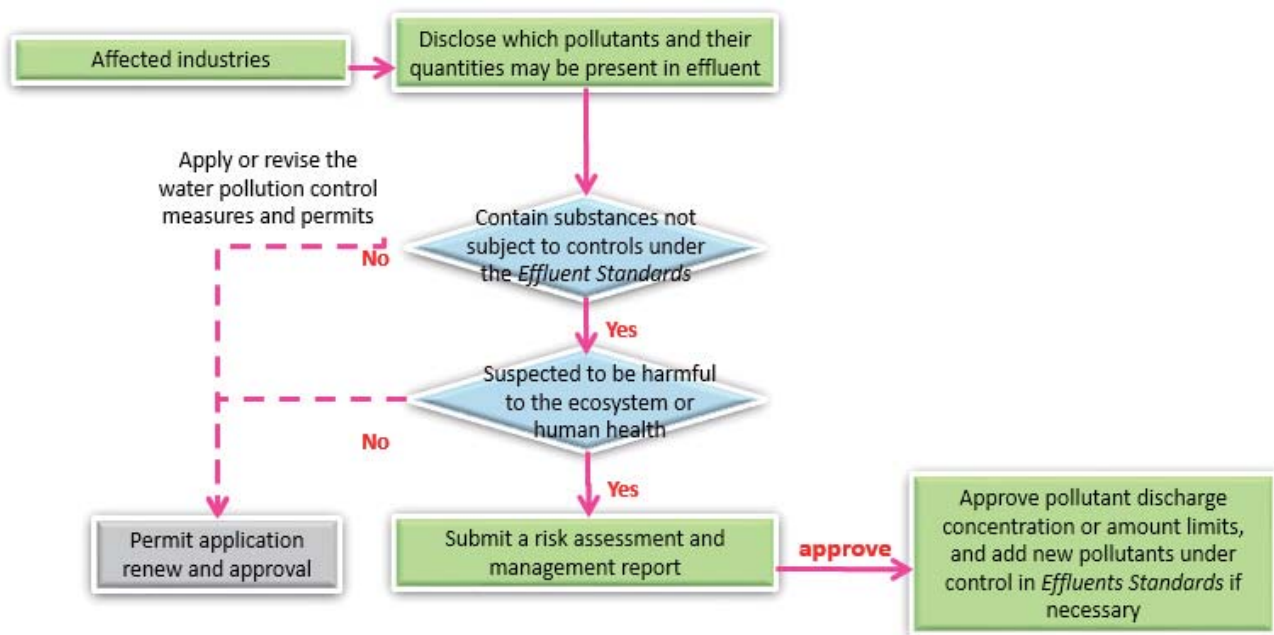
manufacturing industry, the wafer fabrication industry, and the semiconductors manufacturing industry. The regulations apply to enterprises whose approved effluent discharge amount (or pipeline amount) as stated in their water pollution control measures and permit is 10,000 m³/day or above.

To clarify guidelines on which items must be disclosed, the EPA has referred to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Group 1 carcinogenic agents, as well as the Ministry of Labor's Priority Management Chemicals including Category 1 Carcinogen, Category 1 Mutagen or Category 1 Reproductive Toxicant. Inapplicable substances have been deleted, leaving the list at 129 chemical substances.

In addition, to provide consistent benchmarks for identifying chemical substances suspected to be

harmful to the ecosystem or human health, the EPA has announced the *Water Pollution Control Act Risk Assessment and Management Report Working Guidelines* (水污染防治法風險評估與管理報告作業規

範) . The Guidelines also ensure that enterprises and the competent authorities have a guide to follow when writing or reviewing risk assessment reports.



► Implementation of the "Industries Required to Disclose Pollutant Concentrations and Quantities that May Be Contained in Wastewater"

Toxic Substance

Management Regulations on Chemicals Listed in Montreal Protocol Revised

Military and aviation industries still need to use halon agents in certain equipment, for example the halons in fire extinguishers used on aircrafts, which require permits that must be applied for. To simplify the process for aviation industry operators that need to import halon fire extinguishers, the EPA has revised certain articles in regulations governing the use of chemicals listed in the Montreal Protocol.

To comply with the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, on 4 May 2007, the EPA promulgated the *Management Regulations Governing Chemical Substances Listed in the Montreal Protocol* (蒙特婁議定書列管化學物質管理辦法) on 4 May 2007 in accordance with the *Air Pollution Control Act* (空氣污染防制法) . The regulations contain 23 articles. .

Although nations that comply with the Montreal Protocol are prohibited from importing products containing chemicals that damage the ozone layer, certain exceptions have been made for products related to aviation or military use. In addition, the International Civil Aviation Organization has clearly

stipulated regulations regarding where the halon fire extinguisher is to be installed as well as the schedule for phasing out in the use of halons on the aircraft.

Since it is still deemed necessary for military and aviation operations to use halon fire extinguishers, and the users of halons in aircraft must first obtain a permit issued by the industry competent authority, the EPA has decided to simplify the required procedures for the import of halon fire extinguishers by aviation enterprises. Revisions have been made to the methods for listing halon fire extinguishers as controlled substances, and the industry competent authority that is responsible for conducting reviews.

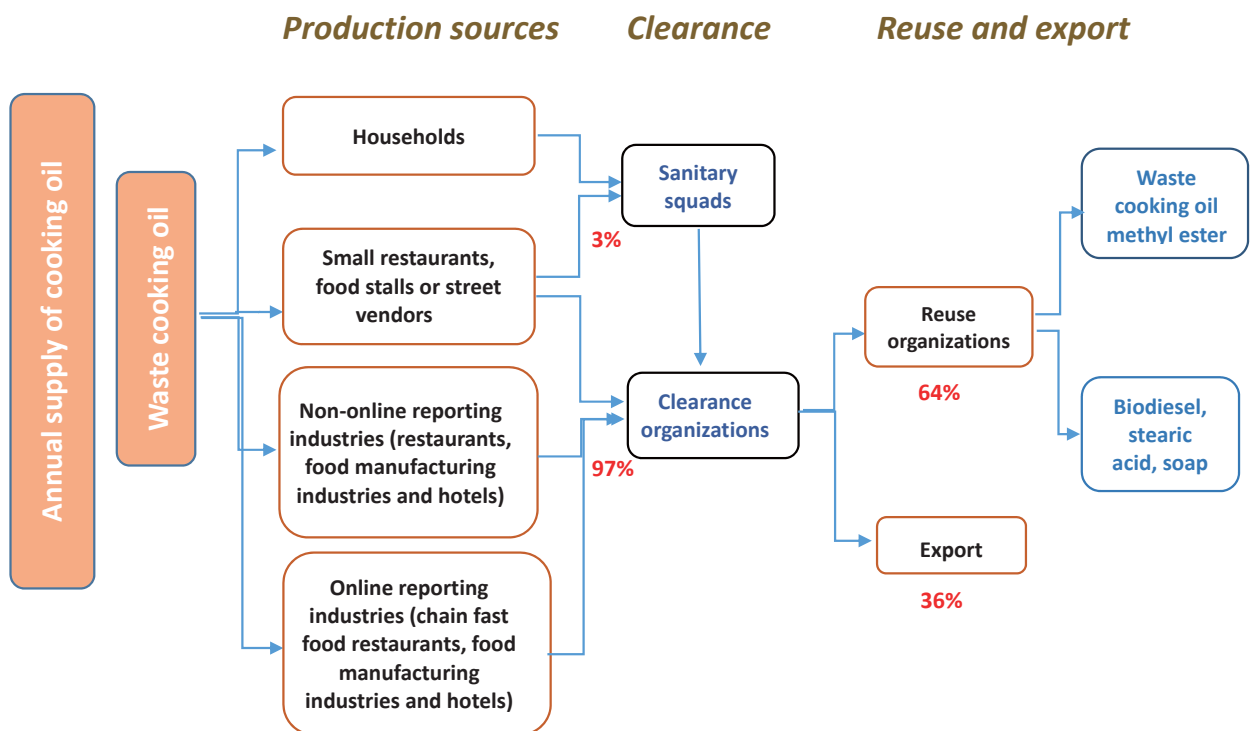
Tracking Agents Shown Helpful for Waste Cooking Oil Flow Management

On 11 January 2016, the EPA announced that the tracking agents developed by its Environmental Analysis Laboratory had been approved and can be added to waste cooking oil to facilitate the tracking of its flow without affecting the quality of other products when the oil is reused, or otherwise hampering the manufacturing processes of the reuse products. Furthermore, animal testing was done and the results showed that even if the oil were illegally added to food for animals, it would not cause health effects in the animals.

In the interest of confirming whether tracking agents can be effectively used in tracing the flow of waste cooking oil, the EPA found it necessary to test the actual procedures that would be used. Thus in 2015, the Taoyuan City Environmental Protection Bureau was invited to cooperate in trials of adding tracking agents to waste cooking oil. This cooperation between central and local governments has already produced results in each stage of operations, including the adding of agents, inspecting samples over time and analyzing test results. The results showed that the flow of waste cooking oil can be effectively tracked from its source (eg, restaurant or food stall), to legitimate collection channels – whether they are individual recyclers or clearance organizations – and then to the reuse organizations. The agent can be detected all

along the waste flow, showing that adding tracking agents to waste cooking oil is a feasible measure that can facilitate the management of the flow of waste cooking oil.

The EPA stated that the trial was conducted in two parts. The first task was to analyze the effect of added tracking agents on the quality of recycled products. For this part, the EPA invited two reuse organizations to add the tracking agent into waste cooking oil before reusing the oil for manufacturing purposes. Care was taken to pilot operations or real manufacturing procedures in the reuse organizations. The products were then given to the Environmental Analysis Laboratory to monitor the tracking agents. The reuse organizations were also asked to simultaneously



conduct their own quality control tests on the products and then evaluate the same sets of data taken from control tests of the same product to which the tracking agent had not been added.

A number of tests also showed that there was no significant difference between products to which tracking agents had been added and products without tracking agents. Test data components included water content, acidity, iodine content, cold filter clogging point, free glycerol, viscosity, density, ester content, flash point, and pour point of the product as well as the oil wear test .

To find out whether waste cooking oil laced with tracking agents could have long term health effects on animals if the oil were illegally reconstituted into animal feed, the EPA commissioned the Department of Animal Science and Livestock at the National Pingtung University of Science and Technology to conduct tests on pigs. Analysis of results showed no significant differences on piglet development.

As there is flexibility for adjusting the composition of tracking agents, the EPA stated that if there is a need for further management measures in the future, the Environmental Analysis Laboratory can develop different tracking agents based on the recycling channels in different regions.

Climate Change

Regulations on Greenhouse Gas Accreditation and Verification Organizations Announced

To ensure the accuracy of data on greenhouse gas emissions and reductions, the EPA has sought out third party inspection organizations to carry out greenhouse gas verification and accreditation work. To define this work, the EPA referred to the tasks originally implemented under the *Air Pollution Control Act* (空氣污染防治法) and drafted of the *Greenhouse Gas Accreditation Organizations and Verification Organizations Management Regulations* (溫室氣體認證機構及查驗機構管理辦法) in accordance with Article 16 of the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Management Act* (溫室氣體減量及管理法) .

On 7 January 2016, the EPA promulgated the *Greenhouse Gas Accreditation Organizations and Verification Organizations Management Regulations* (hereafter referred to as the Regulations) with a total of 23 articles. The Regulations are based on Article 16 Paragraph 2 of the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Management Act* and serve as the guidelines for managing greenhouse gas accreditation organizations and verification organizations.

The Regulations derive their content from the guidelines of existing regulations, but more clearly specify: the conditions under which greenhouse gas accreditation organizations can be entrusted; the verification organization permit application and review process; details to be followed by the verification organizations when handling greenhouse gas verification and auditing work; central competent authority inspection procedures; and guidelines on handling verification organization violations as well as revoking the entrusting of services to the accreditation organizations.

The EPA states that verification organizations covered under the scope of the Regulations must be internationally accredited or a domestic subsidiary company of an accredited international company, and that they must obtain certification from the central competent authority or other entrusted certification organizations to apply for an verification organization permit under the Regulations.

Greenhouse gas accreditation organizations should meet the following requirements:

1. Comply with the ISO/IEC 17011 requirements jointly issued by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and be a member of the International Accreditation Forum.
2. They must have already signed the international greenhouse gas related multilateral recognition arrangements. Or, if such arrangements have not yet been established, they must have at least already signed the international management system

and product verification multilateral recognition arrangement, and promise that they will sign all the necessary arrangements within two years.

Upon the date of implementation of the Regulations, the EPA gives six months to apply for changes in qualifications for the one greenhouse gas

accreditation organization and eight verification organizations that have already obtained operative status through the original regulations. This will make it easier for organizations to continue through with current accreditation and verification work and thus ensure the accuracy of Taiwan's greenhouse gas emissions and reductions data.

Air

Regular Inspections Effective in Phasing Out Two-stroke Motorcycles

Given the nation's high density of motorcycles, the EPA has adopted a range of measures to restrict pollution emissions: gradually tightening emission standards for new vehicles, requiring all motorcycles to undergo regular exhaust emission inspections, encouraging citizens to report heavy-polluting motorcycles, raising the quality of fuels for vehicles, stepping up the phase-out of old two-stroke motorcycles, and promoting the use of low-polluting vehicles. Thanks to regular reinforced inspection at the local level, a total of 770,000 two-stroke motorcycles have been phased out in the past seven years, effectively reducing air pollution.

As of the end of 2015, Taiwan had approximately 13.7 million motorcycles registered, 1.8 million of which were two-stroke. Motorcycles are mostly concentrated in Taiwan's six major cities, with the most scooters being in New Taipei City, and the most two-stroke ones being in Kaohsiung City. In 2015, a total of 8,532 inspection operations were carried out resulting in the inspection of 4.77 million vehicles. These locally administered motorcycle inspections included patrols, roadside inspections, pulling over of suspect vehicles, and inspections based on vehicle registration plates.

▶ *The number of two-stroke motorcycle retirements subsidized by the EPA, 2008-2015.*

Year	Number of subsidies
2008	51,607
2009	89,449
2010	74,249
2011	77,533
2012	89,895
2013	139,328
2014	133,731
2015	117,081
Total	772,873

The rate of motorcycles showing up for regular inspection reached 69.5%. This consisted of 73.69% of the total four-stroke motorcycles compared to 54.48% of the total two-stroke ones. A total of 265,000 two-stroke motorcycles were retired as a result of regular inspections.

Two-stroke motorcycles are heavy polluters, emitting 18 times the hydrocarbons and two times the carbon monoxide of four-stroke ones. To reduce the pollution emissions of two-stroke motorcycles, the EPA has been enforcing the fourth stage emission standards since 2004. Two-stroke motorcycles in Taiwan have already been taken off the production line as they are unable to comply with emission standards. For those still in use, the EPA has been offering subsidies since 2008 as an incentive to replace the old vehicles. More heavy-handed measures have been required in Kaohsiung City and Taipei City where air quality purification zones have been locally delineated based on the actual state of pollution. The riding of two-stroke motorcycles will be restricted or banned in designated areas after the set deadlines.

From 2008, the EPA has been providing subsidies to phase out two-stroke motorcycles, and on 20 July 2015 promulgated the *Regulations Governing Subsidies for Scrapping Two-stroke Motorcycles and Purchasing New Two-wheeled Electric Vehicles* (淘汰二行程機車及新購電動二輪車補助辦法).

The regulations increased subsidies and requested local governments to tack on additional subsidies to increase incentives for citizens to scrap their two-stroke motorcycles more quickly. As of the end of 2015, subsidies had been given to retire over 770,000 two-stroke motorcycles, with 120,000 being

retired in 2015 alone. The number of registered light motorcycles, mostly two-stroke ones, has dropped from an all-time high of 4.6 million in 2003 to 1.88 million in 2015, a decrease of nearly 2.72 million vehicles in a period of 12 years.

Noise Control

Noise Control Guidelines for Large Scale Events Issued

The EPA has formulated the *Guidelines for Noise Control of Large Scale Events* (大型活動管制噪音指引). Local governments, activity organizers and venue providers are required to fulfill their responsibilities for noise control and management before and during events so as to ensure a peaceful environment. In this regard, preventive measures such as noise reduction for the sound source, change of the sound transmission path, and the protection of the noise receiver, etc., should all be rigorously enforced.

The main points of the guidelines include:

1. Before the event, the organizer should submit a noise control plan and make commitments to enforce noise control measures, such as banning the use of loudspeakers at night-time, and forbidding hand-clapping, jumping and other noise-generating behaviors.
2. The venue provider should review the organizer's noise control plan before the activity takes place. The venue provider also needs to take better noise reduction measures such as installing sound-absorbing materials.
3. The local government should hold a meeting before the event with the organizer and the venue provider to incorporate the guidelines into the venue under management rules or the rental contract. During the event, the local government also needs to conduct inspection to ensure that noise control rules are complied with.

On 29 December 2015, the EPA sent notices to local governments requesting that all event-organizers and venue providers comply with the guidelines and fulfill their planning and management responsibilities. Anyone in violation of the noise control standards will be subject to a fine between NT\$3,000~30,000. Currently, most local governments have notified event organizers and venue providers to comply with the guidelines. Some local governments have further incorporated these guidelines into their autonomous regulations on safety of large scale events.

The EPA maintains that the guidelines focus on taking preventive measures which are doubly effective in that they can reduce the workload on local environmental protection bureaus. It hopes that the event organizers and the venue providers can implement the noise control measures before events take place so as to reduce noise nuisances.

News Briefs

Amendments to Regulations on Ocean Dumping Fee Collection Preannounced

To ensure port navigation safety, there is a practical need for ocean dumping of marine mud produced from dredging of ports and waterways. The EPA referred to prevailing international practices before preannouncing

the amendments to the *Regulations Governing Collection of Ocean Dumping Fees* (海洋棄置費收費辦法), which substantiate the polluter pays principle.

The Regulations were amended in compliance with relevant provisions of the *Marine Pollution Control Act* (海洋污染防治法), taking into consideration the state of implementation of Taiwan's ocean dumping permits. The amendments include: specifying fee rates and terms for the volume of ocean dumping, methods by which fees are calculated, fee rates for different kinds of dumping, payment of the fees, and relevant regulations pertaining to audits by competent authorities. The amendments also stipulated that fees will be collected from 1 July 2016.

As ocean dumping differs in content and volume, from a practical standpoint, the previous fee calculation methods were complicated and controversial. Thus the EPA amended the fee collecting regulations by taking stock of prevailing international practices, most of which were based on the weights or volumes of the dumping. The EPA also has simplified the administrative procedures for the collection and payment of the dumping fees. In addition, all the collected fees will be incorporated into the Water Pollution Control Fund, a special fund of the central competent authority dedicated exclusively to the control, monitoring and treatment of marine pollution, and to other items related to marine environmental protection research or training.

Volkswagen Taiwan to Recall Cars in Batches for Modifications

A review panel comprising experts, scholars, and the representative of the Consumer Protection Committee was convened by the EPA on 14 January 2016. The panel reviewed and approved the recall and rectification plan submitted by Volkswagen Taiwan. It was planned that from March 2016 onward, Volkswagen Taiwan will recall 18,798 affected vehicles in batches for modifications. As per the demands of the panel, Volkswagen Taiwan shall complete the recall and rectification of vehicles with 2.0 engines by October 2016 and recall/rectify vehicles with 1.6 engines by June 2017.

Volkswagen Taiwan plans to recall and rectify the affected vehicles in stages. The 2.0 engine applies to Audi, Skoda and Volkswagen passenger cars and commercial vehicles, totaling 10,454 vehicles needing software updates. The rectification period shall commence from March 2016 and end by October 2016. The 1.6 engine applies to Skoda vehicles, and Volkswagen passenger cars and

commercial vehicles, totaling 8,343 vehicles needing software updates as well as the installation of super airflow switching devices. The rectification period shall commence in October 2016 and end by June 2017. The 1.2 engine applies only to one of Volkswagen passenger cars, which also requires a software update to be completed before June 2016. Car owners can expect the rectification work to take from 30 minutes (for software updates) to one hour (software updates and installation of airflow switching device).

EPA's Environmental Incidents Specialist Teams Acquire ISO Certification

To standardize the preparation for, prevention of and response to toxic accidents, the EPA's three Environmental Incidents Specialist Teams acquired ISO certification in 2015. Taiwan's environmental incident response capacity is thus aligned with international standards. In so doing, standardization has been introduced to make systemic management more complete and response mechanisms and instrument maintenance more secure, thus enhancing the quality and operational safety of disaster prevention.

At present, the EPA has three Environmental Incidents Specialist Teams for northern, southern and central Taiwan, respectively. The northern team is managed by a group from Chung-Yuan Christian University, the central team is managed by a group from National Yunlin University of Science and Technology, and the southern team is managed by a group from the National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology. In 2015, all three teams acquired ISO 9001: 2008 Quality Management System Certification.

As Taiwan is a densely populated island with limited land space and numerous chemical factories run by small-and-medium sized enterprises, toxic incidents are prone to happen. Thus Taiwan needs to continually strengthen its incident prevention and response technology capacity and enhance the effectiveness of its incident response system. Attaining ISO certification shows that Taiwan is able to achieve the objectives of incident prevention, enhance the professional knowledge and skill of its specialists, and promote international exchanges. It is hoped that by virtue of the ISO certification, the skills and processes for responding to environmental incidents will be standardized, while ensuring the quality and safety of operations.

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