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Feature Article

Taiwan Takes Action to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

Taiwan has put into effect numerous policies and schemes designed to save energy and reduce carbon emissions. In accordance with the trends and conclusions of the UNFCCC COPs, Taiwan is conducting a full inventory of its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and is formulating responses to global warming in order to have appropriate GHG mitigation actions in place. Planning out appropriate actions will start with establishing a legal framework. Concrete measures will include reducing emissions within government departments, taking full advantage of market mechanisms, strengthening public education and promotion, and seeking international cooperation. This multilateral approach will also include efforts to combine resources and manpower from government, industry, and academia to work on emissions reduction and adaptation policies and measures.

The 17th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 7th Session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC COP 17/ CMP 7) was held in Durban in December 2011. A wide variety of decisions were made at the Durban conference, including 19 decisions adopted by COP 17 and 17 decisions adopted by CMP 7. The decisions with regard to subsequent development of climate treaties and the Kyoto Protocol were abundant and diverse, all with far-reaching and

positive influences. Major items related to resolutions from past negotiations were also implemented, in particular regarding the equity basis established in the 2010 Cancun Agreements.

Carbon Reduction Target: Return to 2005 Level by 2020

On carrying out reduction of GHGs, since 2009 Taiwan has followed up on the content of the Copenhagen Accord, the most important outcome of the COP15 negotiations. In terms of reduction

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timetables and target setting, Annex I countries are obliged to announce their reduction targets for the period up to 2020; Non-Annex I nations are obliged to put forward Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs). Taiwan, as a Non-Annex I nation, will be drawing up NAMAs, but in addition will also announce 2020 emission reduction targets.

Taiwan has been formulating numerous strategies and targets related to energy conservation. These are as follows:

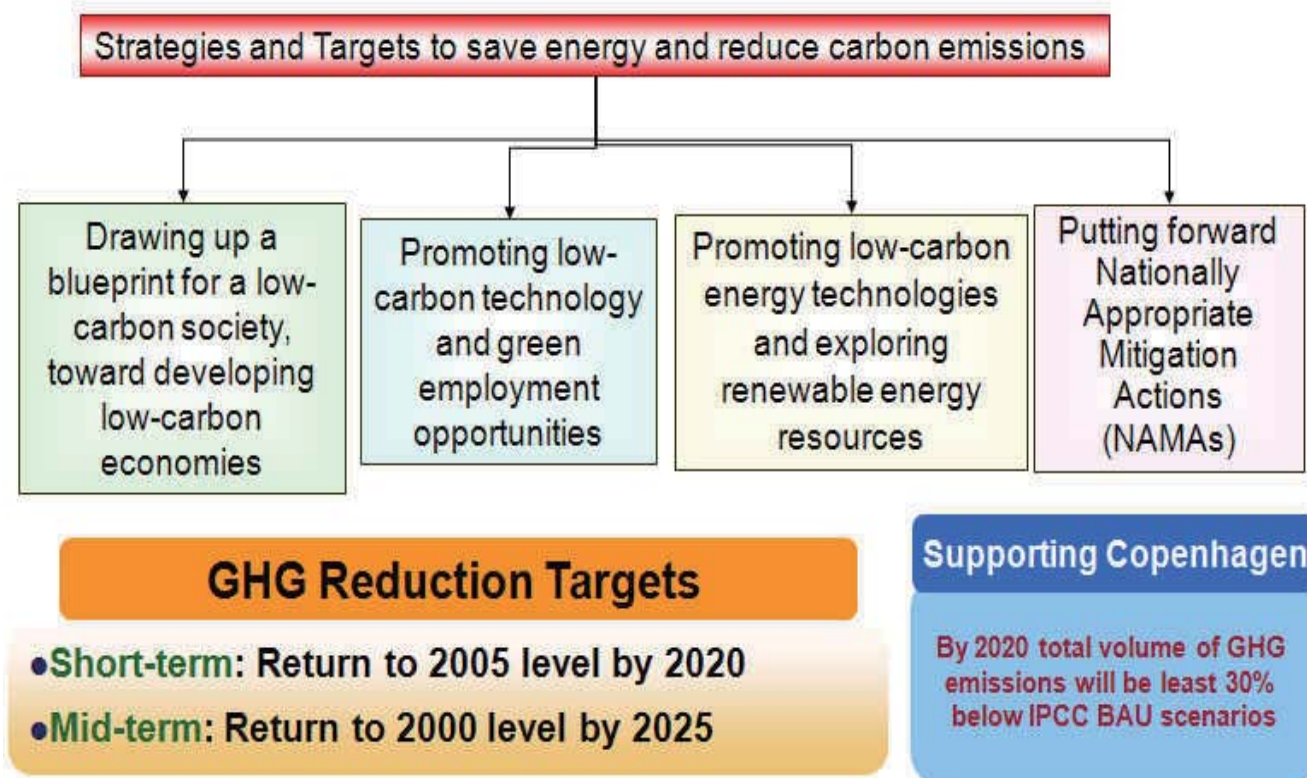
1. Drawing up a blueprint for a low-carbon society in response to the international trend toward developing low-carbon economies.
2. Transforming climate crises into economic opportunities by promoting low-carbon technologies and green employment opportunities.
3. Promoting low-carbon energy technologies and exploring renewable energy resources to lessen the demand for fossil fuels and enhance national energy security.

4. Putting forward NAMAs to demonstrate Taiwan's commitment to international agreements and to avoid the possibility of boycotts against Taiwan interests.

As for Taiwan's GHG emission reduction targets and timetable, in the short term Taiwan aims to bring CO₂ emission levels down to 2005 levels by 2020, and in the medium term to lower them further to 2000 levels by 2025. Taiwan has also shown its commitment to the Copenhagen Accord by announcing to the world that by 2020 its total volume of GHG emissions will be at least 30% below Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) business-as-usual (BAU) scenarios.

As the EPA has pointed out, bringing greenhouse gas emissions down to 2005 levels by 2020 will mean that Taiwan's emissions in 2020 will be 45% less than BAU levels, assuming strong economic growth. If the rate of economic growth is low, emissions will still be 39% below BAU. Taiwan's projected reductions in relation to BAU are much better than some of Taiwan's economic competitors in the region (the South Korean projected reduction over BAU is 30%,

● Voluntary carbon reduction goals



▶ To save energy and reduce carbon emissions, four Strategies and Targets were set.

while Singapore's is 16%) and compare favorably to the IPCC recommendation that developing countries should aim for 15-30% reductions over BAU by 2020.

Strengthening the legal framework for the control of GHGs

In order to establish a legal basis for the control of Taiwan's GHGs, the EPA took steps to prepare the draft of the "Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act," which, when passed into law, shall serve as the ground on which various governmental agencies can operate where the control of GHG emissions is concerned. The Act was sent by the Executive Yuan to the Legislative Yuan for review and was on the priority list for the first sitting of the latter's 8th session. It passed the first reading in the Legislative Yuan on 6 April 2012, and was sent to the Legislative Yuan's Social Welfare, Health and Environment Committee for further review.

For the early establishment and understanding of Taiwan's greenhouse gas emissions baseline data, the EPA made use of the "Air Pollution Control Act" and announced on 9 May 2012, that "carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride and perfluorinated carbon are all air pollutants," so that industries which carried out early reductions could have clear legal protection. In the future, when the EPA promotes all kinds of greenhouse gas emission control in accordance with the Air Pollution Control Act, it will proceed under the existing framework of the draft of the "Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act," and abide by the progress and contents of the Act. Upon the successful completion and legislation of the Act, greenhouse gas management work should become more streamlined.

Carbon reduction is considered a key policy goal of the current administration. Before the implementation of the reduction efforts, however, it is vitally important to determine the carbon emission sources. In addition to announcing that carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride and perfluorinated carbon are air pollutants, in order to fully grasp the emission patterns of these pollutants, the EPA prepared the draft of "the third batch of public or private premises that should declare stationary sources of greenhouse gas emissions" in accordance

with Article 21 of the Air Pollution Control Act, while taking into account international management practices in dealing with the declaration of GHG emissions. The EPA hopes that the draft can serve as a basis for the follow-up management of GHGs and prompt industries to carry out early reduction work. After the draft is announced and passed into law, the EPA expects to control 90% of industrial GHG emissions directly. Besides processing the public announcement of the draft in accordance with the law, the EPA will also hold discussions and public hearings, and invite representatives from industry, academia, and governmental agencies to attend. It is hoped that announcements of the new law can be completed by the fourth quarter of 2012, so that early implementation of the GHG management strategy can be achieved.

Combining governmental and non-governmental forces to strive towards mitigation and adaptation

Echoing this year's Earth Day pledge, "Mobilize the Earth," the EPA urges all citizens to change their lifestyle habits so our society as a whole can realize green living together. Individuals should reduce their carbon consumption, and spread their actions of caring for the earth to family members, businesses, and every corner of society. In collaboration with The Society of Wilderness, the EPA held the "Earth Hour Lights Off" activity from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. on 31 March 2012, which attracted enthusiastic participation and warm responses from many civilian groups and individuals.

To lend support to the 2012 "Earth Day," the EPA also held an Earth Day carnival event on 21 April 2012. The event was entitled "2012 Low carbon green life, giving earth as much oxygen as it needs." Through the appeal and support of celebrities, people's awareness was raised that Earth Day is not just an annual environmental festival, but a key that opens the door to sustainable development. People need only to make some small changes and think ahead, they can end up "loving themselves" while "loving the earth" at the same time.

Integrating governmental and civilian resources, Taiwan is undergoing carbon reduction and adapting to climate change from every stratum of society. In order to collect opinions on how to cope with climate change from domestic NGOs, officials, experts and

academics, the EPA, starting from October 2011, held four "World Café" sessions in the northern, central, southern, and eastern parts of Taiwan. These activities centered on the theme of "Taiwan 20XX--What should Taiwan prepare for in the face of climate change" and expanded into related issues of regions, resources, health and biodiversity. In all of the "World Café" sessions, the heads of each assigned table guided group members to enter into topic discussions, allowing participants to personally discuss the importance of climate change, thereby garnering consensus in a bottom up manner. In addition, the EPA held the opening session of the "National Conference on Climate Change" on 19 May 2012.

Modeled on the "World Café" format, the conference upheld the principles of "public participation," "effective communication" and the core principles of "establishing partnerships, initiating dialogues, participating jointly, and facing consequences together," in the hope that key issues and specific suggestions could be collected from the participants. These specific suggestions will become the topics for discussion in the sum-up conference on climate

change, which will be held on 5-6 June 2012. President Ma Ying-jeou will personally attend on 6 June and listen to the summary reports from various civilian groups. In his inauguration speech delivered on 20 May 2012, President Ma specifically mentioned that "creating a green, low-carbon environment" is one of the five pillars for national development. In line with his remarks, Taiwan's government will encourage the private sector to expand its investments in green industry, green buildings, and green production, making green industries become a bright spot in promoting employment and growth, and allowing Taiwan to become a "low carbon green island" step by step. Policywise, the Taiwan government will be keen to create the driving force of carbon reduction and the promotion of investment in green energy industries, while implementing the "pay by user" principle, to further create a win-win situation for consumers and manufacturers. To conclude, President Ma vowed to adhere to the tenets of sustainable development for our next generation, leaving them with a clear sky, clean air, abundant water resources, and verdant mountains, forests, streams, wetlands, and oceans.

Noise Control

Penalty on Noisy Vehicles to Be Strictly Enforced from May 1

To prevent excessive noise on public roads from the racing of vehicles with modified engines, starting from 1 May 2012 the EPA will be requesting local environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) to join with local police forces to set up inter-county vehicle noise checkpoints at places and times that are known to be favored by owners of modified vehicles and large motorcycles. Owners of vehicles found to be causing noise pollution will be fined NT\$1,800~\$3,600.

The EPA points out that 217 checkpoints were set up during a major crackdown on vehicle noise pollution last year, in which 3,729 vehicle checks were conducted. Of these, 929 checks found modified vehicles producing loud engine noise, and testing resulted in 296 fines, or 32%. The crackdown clearly shows that vehicles with modified engines do indeed adversely affect the peace and quiet of local neighborhoods.

The EPA receives many letters from members of the public complaining about noise at night caused

by street racing on certain roads. The EPA has thus decided to coordinate with local environmental protection bureaus from May to September of this year to reinforce a clampdown on noise pollution caused by the racing of illegally modified vehicles. Vehicle noise checkpoints will be set up at places and times that are known to be favored by street racers.

Furthermore, to prevent racers from notifying each other of the location of checkpoints and moving their activities to a neighboring county, each local EPB will coordinate with their counterparts in neighboring

counties to set up mobile checkpoints at the same time on similar sections of public roads. Experience has shown that employing this method can do much to prevent racers from evading checkpoints and continuing to disturb the peace.

In addition to receiving fines, owners of vehicles found to cause excessive noise will be ordered to improve

their vehicles within a stated deadline and have the vehicle re-inspected at a designated test station, until the vehicle meets noise pollution control standards. The EPA urges vehicle owners not to unnecessarily modify their vehicles or engage in activities that may cause noise pollution and disturb the peace. All the citizens of Taiwan are entitled to live in peaceful and harmonious environments.

Waste Management

Online Reporting Requirement for Chinese Disposal Operators to Improve Cross-Border Waste Management

In recent years there has been increased interaction between Taiwan and China and a need for management of cross-border waste disposal, with China becoming a destination for Taiwan's waste. As a result, the EPA has set up an online reporting system for mainland operators who handle waste from Taiwan.

Currently, Taiwan operators who wish to export waste must abide by the Waste Import, Export, Transit and Transshipment Management Regulations. The regulations govern formats, categories of items, contents, and frequency for online reporting of industrial waste whenever it is produced, stored,

cleared, disposed of, reused, exported, or imported. Previously, Taiwan's Government Service Network Management Regulations had prevented Chinese IP addresses from connecting with Taiwan government agency Web sites (all those ending in "gov.tw") and as a result operators in China who received waste

http://exportcnn.epa.gov.tw) instead of written reports.'"/>

Solid Waste Export Report System

From July 2012, operators in China who receive waste from Taiwan will be able to submit online reports to the EPA through the Solid Waste Export Report System (<http://exportcnn.epa.gov.tw>) instead of written reports.

from Taiwan were unable to submit online reports to the EPA. Written reports were submitted instead, but this resulted in processing delays and hence inferior control over waste exports to China, with the possibility of major oversights occurring.

One of the EPA's goals is to make the management of industrial waste faster, more efficient, and more convenient for the public. To this end, there will soon be a Solid Waste Export Report System set up within the security zone of Taiwan's Government Service Network that will allow Chinese operators to easily and quickly file online reports. This improvement will also allow the EPA to be able to verify cross-border joint report forms online.

The EPA has already built a test Web site for waste export reporting and expects to hold an explanatory meeting within the next two months. The EPA hopes that Taiwan operators who sign contracts with waste disposal operators in China will fulfill their obligations to use the system.

The EPA expects the system to become fully operational before the end of July 2012 so that all waste sent to China is accounted for in online reports. The system accords with environmental protection laws that promote the digitalization of information to reduce labor and the usage of paper. The system will also facilitate accuracy and easy access to statistics for exported waste so that waste can be tracked online from its initial creation to its final disposal.

Waste Management

CCTV to Be Installed to Prevent Illegal Dumping

In order to enhance the current system of managing waste clearance and disposal operators, and also to address operating practicalities, the EPA has pre-announced revisions to the Permit Management Regulations for Public and Private Waste Clearance and Disposal Organizations.

Of the major incidents of environmental pollution in recent years, some of the most high-profile have been cases of illegal dumping or discoveries of suspected waste industrial chemicals, such as copper sulfate, in animal feed. To address these problems the EPA is conducting a full review of the Permit Management Regulations for Public and Private Waste Clearance and Disposal Organizations and intends to amend the regulations to allow stricter management of waste disposal operators, so that such incidents do not happen again.

The main points of the latest amendments are as follows:

- Disposal operators must install closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras within a month of the day that the revisions come into effect. Locations for the cameras, their specifications, inoperative time allowed due to malfunctions, and how recordings must be stored will all be covered by the amendments.

- Disposal operators should also indicate clearly on the packaging of waste what the waste can be used for to prevent industrial chemicals from being used for non-industrial uses.

- When applying for operating permits, waste clearance and disposal organizations should submit signed agreements stating that they accept the burden of proof should they be accused of profiting illegally from their operations, as well as handing over the illegal profit once convicted.

- Other items that lend themselves to stricter evaluation and management will also be revised, such as canceling clearance permits, reinstating clearance and disposal permits, clarifying permit application evaluation procedures and time limits for acceptance/refusal.

The EPA expects the revisions to the permit management to become law by 30 June 2012. No time will then be wasted in implementing the new provisions that will give the waste management

system greater depth and range. The EPA is also urging disposal operators to install CCTV cameras

according to the regulations to avoid violating the law after the deadline passes.

Environmental Inspections

EPA to Conduct Full Inspections of Solar Cell Factories

The discovery that Neo Solar Power Corp. had disposed of high-strength alkaline liquid waste as if it were ordinary industrial waste led it to become the first solar industry manufacturer to be prosecuted under illegal profiteering laws. The EPA has reason to believe that other solar cell manufacturers have been engaged in similar illegal practices and is concerned that this category of manufacturing operation may become a new source of pollution that could cause considerable harm to the environment. The EPA has already notified environmental protection bureaus nationwide to carry out full inspections of solar cell factories so that similar incidents will not be allowed to occur again.

During the manufacture of solar cells, the wafers must be washed with alkaline solutions of pH value over 12.5. An alkaline solution of this strength is extremely corrosive, and if it seeps into soil or groundwater it can have detrimental effects on groundwater and crops, and adversely affect human health. In addition, alkaline solutions contain heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, copper, and nickel which can remain in soil and groundwater as residues. If the human body absorbs excessive amounts of heavy metals, damage can occur to brain, urinary system and endocrine system functions. The EPA would like to emphasize that even though solar

power is a clean energy source, pollution from solar cell manufacturing operations will not be tolerated.

The EPA is currently conducting a full investigation into solar cell manufacturing, and at a recent joint meeting to discuss ongoing operations the EPA requested local environmental protection bureaus to begin inspections of solar cell factories. The EPA has also sent out follow-up notifications to local government environmental protection bureaus nationwide to remind them of the seriousness of the problem and to ask for their cooperation in the EPA's own investigation.

Environmental Education

First National Environmental Education Awards Confer Prizes of up to NT\$1 Million

The EPA is keen to promote environmental education throughout every stratum of society and to this end will hold the First National Environmental Education Awards Contest, for which the top prize will be NT\$1 million. All eligible organizations and individuals are welcome to enter. The deadline for submitting applications is 30 June 2012.

The First National Environmental Education Awards will be held to commend outstanding performances in promoting environmental education and also to broaden the impact of environmental education. The six categories of participants are: private enterprises, schools and colleges, government

agencies, citizen groups, local communities, and individuals. Six outstanding candidates will be selected for commendation from each category. The winners of the top award in the citizen group and local communities categories will not only receive a trophy but will also be given a cash prize of NT\$1

million. The winner of the top award in the individual category will receive a cash prize of NT\$100,000. Further information on the awards' categories and participation procedures is provided in the Guidelines for the National Environmental Education Awards.

In order to augment the promotion of environmental education by local government agencies, the evaluation procedure for the awards will start with local governments accepting applications from eligible parties. The local governments will then conduct the first round of evaluations by selecting the best candidate in each of the six categories. The EPA will then review the list of selected candidates and conduct the final selection for the national winners.

Local governments will also present suitable awards at public ceremonies to the first round candidates who do not reach the national finals.

The EPA warmly welcomes all eligible candidates to put their names forward along with all the necessary information before the 30 June deadline. For more information, please call the EPA helpline at (02)2311-7722 ext. 2725. All candidates must fill out the application form, which can be viewed and downloaded from the EPA Web site's Environmental Education Management Information System page under National Environmental Education Awards (<http://eeis.epa.gov.tw/eeaward/>).

Soil & Groundwater

Penalty Scale Revised for Violations of the Soil and Groundwater Remediation Act

The latest revisions to the Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Act were announced in February 2010, requiring revisions to regulations governing financial penalty scales. The EPA recently finished this task, and on 17 April 2012 announced revisions to the Financial Penalty Scales for Violations of the Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Act.

The Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Act (SGPRA) was promulgated on 24 February 2009. Revisions to Article 57 were announced on 3 February 2010 to create a scale of fines that differ proportionally depending on the severity of violation. The EPA has thus been working on revisions to the Financial Penalty Scales for Violations of the Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Act that accord with the amendments. The EPA's revisions were announced on 17 April 2012 and went into effect on the same day. The main points are as follows:

1. Fines must be within the limits set out by the SGPRA and must be calculated using the formulae in the attached table. However, competent authorities have the option to penalize serious offenders with the maximum financial penalty as set out in the aforementioned act.

2. Consonant with Article 24 Paragraph 1 of the Administrative Penalty Act is the addition that the total amount of fines for multiple violations of the SGPRA

must not be less than the total of the minimum fines for each violation.

3. In accordance with Article 18 of the Administrative Penalty Act, the EPA added a regulation stating that competent authorities are obliged to recover the amount of illicit gains in each case and reduce the amount of fines for offenders whose financial resources are limited.

4. A regulation governing time periods, methods, and scope for calculating illicit gains has been added.

5. Enterprises listed in Article 8 Paragraph 1 and Article 9 Paragraph 1 of the SGPRA are exempt from the penalties laid out in Articles 8 and 9. The competent authorities that have announced the exemption should find other methods to deal with these enterprises should they commit violations, and set out conditions for the cessation of fines.

Soil Pollution Assessment Personnel Online Management System Now in Operation

In order to augment the current system for assessing and testing for pollution in the soil and groundwater of land in industrial use, the EPA has formulated the Soil Pollution Assessment Personnel Management Regulations, which will lead to more specialized assessments and inspections. A Soil Pollution Assessment Personnel Reporting System has also been established.

The Soil Pollution Assessment Personnel Reporting System (which is part of the Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Network, URL: <http://sgw.epa.gov.tw/public/>) has been completed and started functioning online on 20 April 2012. The system will allow soil pollution inspectors to register online and will provide them with information on how to submit reports online. The Web site has also been designed to help the public understand the soil pollution assessment system by providing an education and guidance section, a FAQ section, downloadable information, and a queries function.

Although the system was set up primarily for the use of soil pollution assessment personnel, in the spirit of public disclosure of information it also holds some of their relevant background information. This allows manufacturers and other members of the public to

quickly check if an inspector is registered with the EPA and find a qualified inspector to conduct a professional assessment should the need arise.

The EPA also runs soil pollution assessment personnel training courses for qualified candidates. A brief introduction on the courses and details on times and dates can be found on the Environmental Professionals Training Institute Web site: <http://www.epa.gov.tw/training/index.html>. Trainees are issued a certificate upon successful completion of the course and can then apply to be registered with the EPA. When the new soil pollution assessment system is formally implemented in the near future, only registered soil pollution assessment inspectors will be able to carry out the types of assessments and inspections specified in Articles 8 and 9 of the Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Act.

Zero Tariffs for Users of Hydrogen Fuel, CNS-Certified Natural Gas, and LPG

In order to simplify procedures for enterprises submitting attachments to environmental protection agencies for review, the EPA has combined the procedures for evaluating users of CNS-certified natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). The EPA has also revised the Stationary Source Air Pollution Control Fees so that users of hydrogen fuel, CNS-certified natural gas, and LPG no longer have to pay these tariffs.

The EPA has long encouraged operators of public and private premises to adopt low-pollution gaseous fuels. To this end, when the Stationary Source Air Pollution Control Fees came into effect in 1998, the EPA added an economic incentive for public and private enterprises: a fee exemption for users of hydrogen fuel, natural gas or other low-pollution gaseous fuels.

However, in recent years the manufacturing operations of a number of enterprises have changed

dramatically. They are now using gaseous products so complex that the EPA can not easily determine whether or not they count as low-pollution gaseous fuels. In order to simplify procedures for enterprises submitting attachments to environmental protection agencies for review, the EPA has combined the procedures for evaluating users of CNS-certified natural gas and LPG. In the interests of encouraging enterprises to adopt cleaner manufacturing processes and fuels to improve air quality, the EPA has also revised the Stationary Source Air Pollution Control

Fees so that users of hydrogen fuel, CNS-certified natural gas, and LPG no longer have to pay these tariffs.

A table attached to the Stationary Source Air Pollution Control Fees, which was revised on 5 August 2008, gives the fee rates for volatile organic compounds (VOCs) for the first period (1 January 2007-31

December 2009). The EPA has also taken into consideration the fact that the first-period formula for calculating VOC tariffs is still being used by public and private enterprises to calculate second-period tariffs. The EPA has thus added explanatory content to the first-period VOCs fee calculation regulations so that the aforementioned enterprises need not waste time consulting the revised regulations.

Air Quality

Twelve EPBs Commended for Best Air Quality

On 26 April the EPA held an awards ceremony at which the following seven local government environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) were commended for outstanding performance in maintaining and improving air quality in 2011: Taipei City, Kaohsiung City, Taoyuan County, Hsinchu County, Yunlin County, Chiayi County, and Penghu County. Five other environmental protection bureaus were judged to have had the best performances in individual pollution prevention categories: New Taipei City, Taichung City, Tainan City, Hualian County, and Taitung County.

The EPA conducts annual assessments of the performances of local government environmental protection bureaus in maintaining and improving air quality. The assessments are based on six criteria: overall planning and emissions management; preservation of unique local characteristics and area controls; administration of regulations and quality of service; air quality improvement; public reaction to and degree of satisfaction with implemented policies; and degree of administrative cooperation with central government policies.

The evaluation for the 2011 awards took into account the different allocation and uses of resources in each of Taiwan's special municipalities, counties and cities. For the first time the "Outstanding" awards were based on overall scores for bureaus in three categories: special municipalities, counties and cities on the main island of Taiwan, and counties and cities on outlying islands. Two candidates in the special municipalities category were commended for outstanding performances: Taipei City and Kaohsiung City. Four candidates in the Taiwan category were commended for outstanding performances: Taoyuan County, Hsinchu County, Yunlin County, and Chiayi County. And in the outlying islands category one candidate won the "Outstanding" award: Penghu County.

Of the other local government environmental protection bureaus that did not win "Outstanding" awards, five were commended for having the highest scores in individual pollution prevention categories: Taichung City for Air Quality Management Planning; Hsinchu City for Stationary Source Pollution Controls; Tainan City for Mobile Source Pollution Controls; Taitung County and Hualian County for emission control zones.

The EPA points out that although the air quality figures for 2011 showed considerable improvement, other negative factors such as the slow increase in the overall burden on the environment, changes to global climate patterns, and the dramatic increase in long-range aerial transportation of pollutants to Taiwan are still present. Further improvement of air quality will therefore require continuous effort by central and local government environmental protection agencies. The EPA will continue interdepartmental cooperation to improve air quality and protect public health – as is expected of it by Taiwan's citizens – by working with local governments to review and improve existing systems and regulations.

Taiwan Cradle-to-Cradle Strategic Alliance Established to Promote Green Industries

The EPA is keen to promote cradle-to-cradle design concepts and strategies that can stimulate technological development and help turn Taiwan into a global center for green manufacturing and economic development. The EPA thus assisted the Industrial Technology Research Institute and the German institute EPEA GmbH to host the Taiwan Cradle-to-Cradle Strategic Planning Alliance Establishment Conference and Signing Ceremony on 2 April 2012. The conference saw active cooperation between representatives of government, industry, and academia, and EPA Minister Stephen Shu-hung Shen was invited to give a speech.

The cradle-to-cradle design concept is based on mimicking natural systems by regarding all materials as nutrients that should be kept cycling in nature. From the perspective of nutrient management, three principles are key to the design system: regard waste as food, use renewable energy, and enhance diversity. At the product design stage, careful thought is put into product outcomes so that all materials are kept in continual circulation. Two types of cycles are examined: ecological cycles and industrial cycles. Products of ecological cycles are made up of biodegradable raw materials which are ultimately returned to the ecological cycle in the form of nutrients. The materials of products from industrial cycles on the other hand are continually looped back into the industrial cycle in the form of non-toxic materials and clean energy and water so that it is no longer necessary to utilize materials or processes that damage the environment, or waste energy and water. Appropriate planning of recycling channels for all materials ensures that the product supply chain, the product itself, and the recycling and reuse methods are environmentally friendly.

As Minister Shen pointed out in his speech, countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and the US are encouraging all sectors of their societies to adopt cradle-to-cradle principles. These nations have already established cradle-to-cradle exchange platforms to concentrate the capabilities of public and private organizations in one place and stimulate creative applications for cradle-to-cradle concepts. The current administration would like to see Taiwan become a "cradle-to-cradle island," and to this end the EPA assisted private bodies in establishing the Cradle-to-Cradle Strategic Planning Alliance. The alliance will draw on talent in government, industry, private organizations, and society as a whole, and will

create a free and open platform for the exchange of cradle-to-cradle knowledge and ideas. It is hoped that the unhindered cooperation between members of the alliance on cradle-to-cradle concepts, designs, and planning will help more of Taiwan's brands reach the international market.

At present, the alliance has 28 members and is continuing to add more. The alliance hopes to continue receiving support and input from government, industry, and academia, from both Taiwan and overseas. The government always supports any endeavor that promotes the development of a knowledge economy and social welfare based on the sustainable use of resources and that helps to raise the international competitiveness of Taiwan's industries.

The alliance is planning to hold occasional training courses, lectures, symposiums and workshops that will offer basic cradle-to-cradle training that will include related knowledge, methods, and case studies. The alliance also plans to seek exchanges and friendship with international cradle-to-cradle enterprises and social organizations. Their Web site (<http://www.c2cplatform.tw/>) will act as a platform and will also provide information on related events. Of the 400 products worldwide that have already gained cradle-to-cradle certification, two are produced in Taiwan: Lung Meng Tech. Co.'s stone paper and Minlan Fabric Industrial Co.'s polypropylene (PP) cloth. The Cradle-to-Cradle Strategic Planning Alliance aims to help other Taiwan products win cradle-to-cradle accreditation so that more Taiwan brands can find a market overseas.

News Briefs

Guidelines for the Establishment of the EPA Tamsui River Pollution Remediation Working Group Revised

In 1988, the Executive Yuan approved the Tamsui River Remediation Plan Preliminary Project and the EPA was tasked with integrating central and local government manpower and resources. Following Executive Yuan approval of the Guidelines for the Establishment of the EPA Tamsui River Pollution Remediation Working Group in 1990, the EPA set up a working group to promote and supervise the work of remediating the Tamsui River system.

The main points of the latest revisions to the guidelines are as follows:

- The membership of the working group has changed in response to adjustments in local government agencies after the ministries of the Executive Yuan were reorganized and after Taipei County became New Taipei City.
- The remediation plan has shown initial success and both Taipei City and New Taipei City now hold regular Tamsui River remediation meetings, including the Tamsui River Revitalization Scheme meetings and the Tamsui River Sewage System Construction Management Committee meetings. Therefore the EPA working group now needs only to focus on supervising the remediation work, and the frequency of working group committee meetings has been reduced.

Environmental Performance of Five EPBs Rated as Excellent

The EPA recently announced results for the performance evaluations of local environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) in 2011. The overall performance of five cities and counties – Taipei City, New Taipei City, Taoyuan County, Tainan City, and Yilan County – were judged to have been "excellent." The assessment index used by

the EPA encompassed 19 items, including air quality and cleanliness of water resources.

The five bureaus were commended not just for overall performances that were consistent with EPA policies, but also scored highly by creating new practices that took into account the unique features of the environments under their jurisdiction.

Regulations on Records of Toxic Substance Handling and Release Amounts Simplified

The EPA recently completed revisions to the Toxic Chemical Substances Handling and Release Amount Records Management Regulations. The main points of the revisions are as follows:

1. So that handling records for toxic chemical substances and reporting forms reflect actual requirements more accurately, the EPA has removed the tables from the above regulations. In future, such tables will be announced by the central competent authority.
2. Reporting for Class I, II and III toxic chemical substances must now be done on a monthly basis in order to strengthen controls of the movement of toxic chemical substances and to facilitate extraordinary inspections.
3. In order to simplify administrative procedures for operators, volumes of toxic chemical substances that remain unchanged no longer need to be reported every month. A single report submitted before 1 October every year is now acceptable.
4. Handlers of Class I, II, III and IV toxic chemical substances who wish to notify local competent authorities that they are ceasing to handle toxic chemical substances, must first submit handling records and release records of amounts.

Details of the above revisions have been published on the EPA Web site dealing with environmental regulations: <http://ivy5.epa.gov.tw/epalaw/index.aspx>.

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