



Environmental Policy Monthly

Environmental Protection Administration, R.O.C. (Taiwan)

Feature Column

Taiwan Promotes Environmental Diplomacy

With chances for conventional diplomacy limited by political factors, in recent years the EPA has worked hard through bilateral agreements and multilateral cooperation to open the doors for environmental diplomacy. During this time Taiwan has taken concrete actions to participate in international environmental affairs and make a name for itself on the international environmental stage.

Lacking membership to the United Nations, Taiwan is unable to participate in agreements set forth by the UN Environmental Programme. Political factors remain the greatest obstacle either barring Taiwan's participation or allowing only limited participation in international joint environmental protection work.

Taiwan's recent achievements in environmental diplomacy:

Environmental meetings: Environmental Cooperation with Central American Ally Nations

From 18~19 October 2006, the EPA held the "2006 Taiwan-Central American Allies Environmental Ministers Meeting" in Taiwan, during which Taiwan signed a mutual declaration with seven ally nations' environmental ministers and senior officials. The nations are Columbia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Belize, El Salvador, and Honduras. The crux of the agreement stressed

progress on greenhouse gas reductions and adjustments, improved environmental quality and sustainable management of the environment.

Important tasks laid down for exchange and cooperation between Taiwan and her Central American Allies over the three years of the agreement period:

1. Send delegates to Central America to establish liaison office:

Send delegates to serve at the Liaison Office established for the EPA in San Salvador, El Salvador by the Central American Commission on Environment & Development (CCAD)

Provide administrative support and technology consultation on an energy partnership plan with Taiwan

Help allies plan the formulation of pollution

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prevention management strategies and environmental information monitoring systems

2. Pursue new opportunities for climate and environmental diplomacy

Current plans prioritize establishment of a Chinese website with information on market conditions of clean development mechanisms (CDM) for Central American allies. Data on allies' existing or planned CDM projects can be collected by Taiwan's delegates, sent to local liaison officials, and then translated into Chinese for Taiwan's public and private organizations or other interested organizations. Taiwan will seek a better understanding of allies' latest information on responding to climate change, which can be used to pursue feasible greenhouse gas reduction cooperation opportunities in the future.

Asian-Pacific Allies Environmental Cooperation

The 2007 Taiwan and Asian-Pacific Allies Environmental Ministers Meeting was held on 25~28 July 2007 in Taipei. During a meeting on 26 July 2007, EPA Minister Winston Dang and ally representatives reached a consensus, with all sides agreeing to strengthen cooperation and exchange concerning response to climate change and environmental protection.

Bilateral Cooperation

1. Taiwan-US Bilateral Environmental Cooperation

The "Agreement between the American Institute in Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection" was signed on 21 June 1993. Through this agreement, which is based on a two-year implementing arrangement, the Taiwan EPA and the US EPA have successfully introduced advanced US pollution prevention technology and environmental management experience over the years. By the end of 2007, both sides had implemented over 136 projects stemming from this agreement.

2. Taiwan-Japan Bilateral Environmental Cooperation

The "First Taiwan-Japan Environmental Meeting" was held on 21 September 2006 in Taipei. Japan sent a delegation from its Ministry of the Environment, led by its International Cooperation Office to commence the first official talks on environmental cooperation between senior-level officials since Taiwan-Japan

diplomatic ties were cut.

The "Second Taiwan-Japan Environmental Meeting" was held on 26~27 December 2007 in Tokyo. A total of 45 officials from related departments on both sides attended this meeting and EPA Minister Dang led the delegation. Dang spoke as one of the distinguished guests and called on high-level officials in the Japanese government during his visit. The third bilateral meeting is scheduled to convene in Taipei this year (2008).

3. Taiwan-Canada Environmental Cooperation

Taiwan and Canada signed the "Taiwan-Canada Environmental Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding" in July 1996. This was implemented for six years during which both sides implemented 29 cooperation projects.

4. Other Bilateral Cooperation

The EPA works in unison with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Information in maintaining cooperative relations with the UK, Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Mongolia and the Philippines. Arrangements are frequently made for foreign administrators and legislative officials to meet with high-level EPA officials during their visits in Taiwan.

Multilateral Cooperation

1. Promoting the Establishment of the World Environment Organization (WEO)

President Chen appealed that "there is a critical need to establish a World Environment Organization (WEO)" during a speech at the international forum on Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development in May 2007. Since then during events here and abroad the President has frequently called on African, Asia-Pacific and Central American allies to jointly promote the establishment of the WEO and garner support from all world leaders.

The function of such a World Environment Organization would not be to integrate or replace other international environmental organizations, but rather to act as a complimentary organization that can apply limited resources toward specific programs. From Taiwan's perspective, the WEO would provide a channel for international promotion of Taiwan's strong areas of environmental experience and technology. Such an organization would expand the international outlets for environmental talents and raise the environmental image of multinational corporations

so as to create a win-win situation for the economy and the environment. The WEO would work together with all the world's countries to coordinate and cooperate as a professional platform with the ultimate aim of reaching consensus on global solutions to environmental and development issues.

2. World Trade Organization

A cross-ministerial organization, the "International Trade Strategic Alliance Working Group," was established to promote foreign trade in accordance with Taiwan's accession to the WTO. The members of this working group are currently divided into small groups for trade services, trade and environment and technology trade barriers. The EPA is actively staying abreast of and responding to the latest developments in issues such as WTO trade and environment, and environmental services. In April 2007, the EPA sent delegates to the WTO Trade and Environment Committee and a special meeting to participate in the Doha Round negotiations.

3. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

The EPA is the leading administrative organization handling domestic affairs related to the Marine Resource Conservation Working Group (MRCWG),

one of APEC's eleven working groups. Taiwan was appointed Lead Shepherd of the MRCWG in 1998 and is responsible for publishing a periodical on APEC Marine Resource Conservation and Fisheries. Taiwan also holds APEC international meetings, deliberates the feasibility of projects, and has actively applied for APEC funding to attend the APEC Marine Resource Conservation Working Group meeting, hold the APEC corporate/private sector participation in marine environment sustainability roundtable discussion, and attend the Workshop on Implementation of Bali Plan of Action.

4. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Environmental Policy Committee

The EPA and the Ministry of Economic Affairs actively promote the bid to join the Environmental Policy Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as an observer. The OECD agreed in December 2005 to allow Taiwan become an ad-hoc observer of the Waste Prevention and Recycling Working Group. Taiwan was then invited to attend the September 2006 meeting of that group and participate and discuss waste issues on environmental safety and substance management.



▶ President Chen receives visit from Central American ally environmental ministers and senior officials

Stationary pollution source dioxin emission controls: According to the stationary pollution source dioxin emission standards, control levels are delineated, based on current domestic conditions, as either newly installed pollution sources and existing pollution sources. Control measures are implemented in two stages for existing pollution sources, with the first stage starting on 1 January 2007 with emission standards set at 2 ng-TEQ/Nm³ and the second stage starting on 1 January 2008 with emission standards set at 1 ng-TEQ/Nm³.

Dioxin control standards for steel industry smelting factories were promulgated on 16 June 2004. Pollution source control values were based on the current domestic situation and delineated as either newly installed pollution sources or existing pollution sources. Control measures were implemented in two stages for existing pollution sources, with the first stage starting on 1 January 2006 with emission standards set at 2.0 ngI-TEQ/Nm³ and the second stage starting on 1 January 2008 with emission standards set at 1.0 ngI-TEQ/Nm³.

Fourth stage emission standards for gasoline automobiles: To effectively and continuously promote air pollutant control work for Taiwan's gasoline automobiles, the third article of the Transportation Equipment Air Pollutant Emission Standards has set stricter fourth stage emission standards for gasoline automobiles, which was slated for implementation on 1 January 2008. For example, the standards call for stricter controls on HC and NOX for sedans and SUVs. For example, third stage emission control standards for HC were 0.155 g/km, and have been tightened by 71% to 0.045 g/km. NOX emission control standards were similarly tightened by 72% from the former level of 0.25 g/km to 0.07 g/km.

Low frequency noise controls: The Noise Control Emission Standards were promulgated on 5 November 2006. From 1 January 2008, low frequency noise controls were implemented for factories. This regulation subjects all factories generating low frequency noises (for example, noise from cooling towers, ventilation fans, air conditioners, and generators) to fines ranging from NT\$6,000 to NT\$60,000 if they are reported by citizens and fail to comply with low frequency noise control standards upon the second follow-up inspection. Failure to make the necessary improvements could be penalized by

suspension of business operations or suspended use of facilities.

Online application of water pollution prevention permit and reporting of monitoring results:

1. From 1 January 2008, the EPA has implemented the online application of water pollution prevention permits and reporting of monitoring results. Effluent discharge from public sewer systems, specialized sewer systems in industrial parks, and premises generating over 500 tonnes of wastewater per day (about 1,100 enterprises) are listed as the first targeted group required to use the Internet to apply for water pollution permits and report monitoring results. Moreover, from 1 February 2008, this targeted group may no longer submit paper applications or reports.
2. Online reporting benefits enterprises by allowing instant checking and copying of previous application/report data, so as not to require repeated filing of the same information. This saves a great deal of paperwork. The online system also provides an early warning function, effectively reducing the frequency of late penalties.
3. This measure of convenience to the private sector will be implemented in three stages for different targeted groups. The second group includes enterprises with permitted maximum wastewater generation of over 100 tonnes and under 500 tonnes per day, to take effect on 1 July 2008. The third group includes specified enterprises with permitted maximum wastewater generation of under 100 tonnes per day, effective on 1 January 2009.
4. This measure will benefit over 3,000 enterprises.

Revised Waste Collection and Treatment Regulations:

1. The EPA announced revisions to two regulations, Industrial Waste Clearance Vehicles Required to Install GPS (應裝置即時追蹤系統 (GPS) 之事業廢棄物清運機具) and GPS Specifications and Operation/Maintenance Guidelines for Industrial Waste Clearance Vehicles Required to Install GPS (事業廢棄物清運機具即時追蹤系統規格及操作維護事項), regarding the fifth batch of targeted vehicles. Approximately 1,240 more waste clearance vehicles have been added to the fleet requiring tracking and management. This measure will take effect in three stages respectively from 1 June 2007, 1 September 2007 and 1 January 2008.
2. For those enterprises that have used containers or

tankers to transport waste that is non-compliant with effluent standards and dispose of it in the environment, from 1 January 2008, according to the Waste Disposal Act (廢棄物清理法), these clearance vehicles must install GPS devices and pass EPA examination to obtain operating permit documents before they may engage in clearance operations.

Toxics-free Homes – Eliminating Toxic Chemical Substances from the Home Environment

The EPA has worked hard to reduce the use of toxic chemical substances in the home environment. The following items are banned, effective 1 January 2008:

1. Asbestos in the manufacture of boards, conduit, concrete, and fiberglass boards
2. Mercury in the manufacture of thermometers
3. Nonylphenol and nonylphenol polyethoxylates (NPEOs) in the manufacture of household cleaning agents

Increased handling fees for containers with PVC

In 2004 the EPA implemented a measure to increase extra fees by 30% for containers and

containers with PVC accessories. These fees have been collected for over two years. Currently the extra fees do not provide enough incentive for enterprises to make the switch to other materials. After giving thorough consideration to extending this control policy on PVC, on 1 January 2008 the EPA announced raised recycling, clearance and treatment fees for manufacturers of containers with PVC accessories. The former fee rate increase of 30% has been increased to 100% to ensure further reductions in the use of PVC and encourage a switch to more environmentally preferable alternatives.

Adjusted fee rates for motor vehicle recycling, clearance and treatment:

1. Recently international raw material prices fluctuations have caused variations in the cost of related domestic industries. The EPA has revised motor vehicle recycling, clearance and treatment fee rates in order to effectively reflect market conditions and stabilize the resource recycling fund.
2. Effective 1 January 2008, recycling fee rates have been adjusted to NT\$3,500 for automobiles and NT\$700 for motorbikes. This revision will affect over 350 motor vehicle manufacturers and importers.

New environmental measures effective 1 January 2008

• Stationary pollution source dioxin emission standards set at 1 ng-TEQ/Nm ³ for existing pollution sources
• Dioxin control standards for existing pollution sources tightened from former level of 2.0 ng I-TEQ/Nm ³ to 1.0 ng I-TEQ/Nm ³ .
• Fourth Stage Emission Standards for Gasoline Automobiles
• Factories regulated for low frequency noise
• Online application of water pollution prevention permit and reporting of monitoring results
• Enterprises that have used containers or tankers to transport waste that is non-compliant with effluent standards and dispose of it in the environment are subject to Waste Disposal Act regulations
• Toxics-free Homes – Eliminating Toxic Chemical Substances from the Home Environment
• All related departments and local environmental protection agencies are required by law to exchange water quality information according to the Environmental Water Quality Monitoring Information Electronic Exchange Working Guidelines
• Increased handling fees for containers with PVC
• Recycling fee rates have been adjusted to NT\$3,500 for automobiles and NT\$700 for motorbikes.

Water Quality

Dioxin Regulated under Drinking Water Quality Standards

Considering the health risks caused by exposure to dioxin and other pollutants in drinking water, the EPA promulgated revisions to Article 3 of the Drinking Water Quality Standards on 2 January 2008. Dioxin and chlorite have been added to the list of regulated pollutants and regulations have been revised for lead and bromate. Taiwan is the second country in the world after the US to set dioxin control standards for dioxin in drinking water.

According to World Health Organization classification of carcinogens, lead and bromate are possible carcinogenic substances in the human body, chlorite is a suspected carcinogen, and dioxin is a confirmed carcinogen in the human body. After gathering extensive data from the WHO and progressive nations on related control trends, the EPA further referenced toxic management research information and domestic treatment technology, inspection and analysis methods and previously accumulated domestic scientific data. After thorough deliberation of this data and an overall evaluation, it was decided to include these substances under regulatory control in the Drinking Water Quality Standards (飲用水水質標準).

Dioxin is a persistent pollutant and human carcinogen that does not readily dissolve in water. Currently apart from the US' control standards on dioxin in drinking water, no other countries have set drinking water quality control standards for dioxin. The EPA indicates that to prevent suspicions or scares of dioxin in drinking water, the revised Drinking Water Quality Standards stipulated that water purification plants with large-scale pollution sources within a 5 km radius shall undergo monitoring twice annually with water quality subject to a maximum value of 12 pg-WHO-TEQ /L (picogram-WHO-toxin equivalent per liter).

The Environmental Analysis Laboratory (EAL)

conducted a background survey on the raw water intake of Taiwan's water purification plants as well as the purified water after treatment and found that dioxin levels of raw water sources ranged from 0.010~0.079 pg-WHO-TEQ /L, while post-treatment dioxin content ranged from 0.002~0.017 pg-WHO-TEQ /L, both far below control standards.

The EPA pointed out another important outcome of this revision to the Drinking Water Quality Standards is tightened maximum values of lead from the former 0.05 mg/l to 0.01 mg/l, effective from 25 December 2013. As for newly revised controls on chlorite, water supply systems with added gaseous chlorine dioxide disinfectant are subject to chlorite control values of 1.0 mg/l, effective immediately. Regarding revisions to bromate control facilities, water supply systems are subject to restrictions on the addition of bromate disinfectant; all water supply systems now must adhere to the bromate control value of 0.01 mg/l, effective two years from date of promulgation.

Additionally, the EPA is taking steps to revise controls on levels of impurities in drinking water quality treatment agents sodium hypochlorite and calcium hypochlorite. Apart from original restrictions on heavy metals arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury and chromium, a new restriction has been added to limit bromate to under 50ppm (mg/kg).

Water Quality

Guidelines Set to Speed Up Water Quality Monitoring Data Exchange Online

The EPA recently promulgated the Environmental Water Monitoring Data Electronic Exchange Operating Guidelines. The Guidelines emphasize the principle of collective exchange to ensure water quality monitoring information of various agencies can be rapidly integrated and provided to government agencies, academic groups and the public.

The monitoring of water quality and hydrology of water bodies in Taiwan is the duty of various different agencies. Due to varying monitoring objectives, monitoring data lacks consistent planning and upkeep. Some data format is incompatible or varies in accuracy, requiring extra manpower and expenses to ensure data format transfer and accuracy of content. This added burden restricts the flow and application of data so much as to cause redundant investment in monitoring resources. To improve this situation, from 2004 the EPA has followed the Executive Yuan's River and Ocean Water Quality Protection and Improvement Plan in planning the integration of different agencies' environmental

water quality monitoring data. The establishment of the National Environmental Water Quality Monitoring Data Network served to complement this initiative.

The former method of integrating water quality and hydrology monitoring data of different agencies and different water bodies consisted of asking agencies to conduct multiple discussions and countless onsite interviews. After continuous research and revision of the framework, verification mechanisms and exchange processes, active cooperation among each agency finally produced the Environmental Water Monitoring Data Electronic Exchange Operating Guidelines (環境水質監測資料電子交換作業規範). This provides regulations to help all agencies rapidly

carry out water quality monitoring data exchange and complete related analysis, which make it more conducive to public inquiry.

The EPA indicates that the Guidelines were jointly drawn up by the Council of Agriculture, the Water Agency, various reservoir management bureaus, tap water companies, Taipower, county and municipal environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) and the EPA. The Guidelines allow transmission and effective integration of different agencies' water quality

monitoring data over the Internet. Not only does this save on domestic monitoring resources, but also saves a large amount of paper as well as the time required to compile data. The Guidelines are regarded as a breakthrough in water quality monitoring as they provide detailed standards for the EPA to check against the National Environmental Water Quality Monitoring Data Network (<http://www.epa.gov.tw/wqm>).

Toxic Substance Management

Several Toxic Chemical Substance Regulations Promulgated

Several revisions on regulations regarding the management of toxic chemical substances have been announced or promulgated within the last year in response to prior revisions to the Toxic Chemical Substances Control Act.

Responding to revisions made to the Toxic Chemical Substances Control Act (毒性化學物質管理法) promulgated by the President on 3 January 2007, as well as to complement the UN's promotion of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification & Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), the EPA has referred to Taiwan's national standards CNS 15030 Z1501 on chemical classification and labeling in setting the Toxic Chemical Substances Labelling and Substance Safety Data Management Regulations (毒性化學物質標示及物質安全資料表管理辦法). This regulation asks toxic chemical substance handlers to clearly label all containers and handling premises as required, and have material safety data sheets (MSDS) on hand at all times. This will, on the one hand, prevent the occurrence of any possible hazardous incident, and the other hand, facilitate instant appropriate handling of emergency incidents.

The EPA indicates that the focus of this regulation requires manufacturers and importers, the main handlers of such substances, to label all containers and packaging. All purchasers of such substances must maintain clear and complete labeling of contents. Users must label containers and packaging used in redistribution or mixing of toxic chemical substances. The Regulations also clearly stipulate that manufacturers, importers, retailers and handlers are each obligated to prepare MSDSs. MSDSs and labels should be made for mixed chemicals according to their harmfulness and toxicology.

The EPA has furthermore promulgated the Toxic Chemical Substances Emergency Response, Testing and Warning Equipment Regulations (毒性化學物質

應變器材及偵測與警報設備管理辦法), which clearly stipulates the labeling of emergency response, testing and warning equipment on matters relating to installation, configuration, operation, inspection, maintenance, calibration, and recordkeeping.

In accordance with the UN Globally Harmonized System of Classification & Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), the Council of Labor Affairs in Taiwan is responsible for implementation of the "Chemical Management Promotion Plan to Comply with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification & Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)," cross organizational coordination and negotiation, and joint decision of implementation dates to reduce the impact of changing systems on enterprises, with regard to manufactured chemical products and international trade issues. The implementation date of this regulation was set for 31 December 2008. Until then, the Toxic Chemical Substances Container Packaging Handling Premises Equipment Labeling and Material Safety Data Sheet Guidelines (毒性化學物質容器包裝運作場所設施標示及物質安全資料表設置要點) will continue to be applicable. In response to the 3 January 2007 promulgated revisions to the Toxic Chemical Substances Control Act, the EPA has deliberated the originally separate Toxic Chemical Substances Handling Permit Working Guidelines, the Toxic Chemical Substances Handling Registration and Reference Working Guidelines, and the Permit Application Guidelines for Handling Toxic Chemical Substances Volumes under the Minimum Control Restriction Value and merged them into the Toxic Chemical Substances Permit Registration

Permit Management Regulations (毒性化學物質許可登記核可管理辦法). In the future toxic chemical substances handlers can learn all about all application requirements in this merged regulation, which can be viewed on the EPA's website at <http://www.epa.gov.tw/main/index.asp>.

According to the abovementioned Toxic Chemical Substances Permit Registration Permit Management Regulations promulgated on 17 December 2007, if toxic chemical substances handlers are penalized more than twice within one year of receiving a penalty or have not engaged in handling for three consecutive years, the EPA can withhold extension of permit,

registration and verification certificates concerning toxic chemical substances.

Based on revisions made to the Toxic Chemical Substances Control Act, the EPA has also revised and promulgated the associated enforcement rules of that act, which specify the fourth category of toxic chemical substances handlers shall submit toxic chemical substances MSDS, disaster prevention data charts, facility plans and internal plans to the local competent authority for reference before handling to help meet the disaster response requirements in the event of a toxic disaster incident.

Climate Change

EPA Attends Climate Conference in Bali

EPA Deputy Minister Chang Feng-teng led a delegation to the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the UN FCCC and the Third Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP13/MOP3) to keep abreast of developments to the latest issues and build up Taiwan's reduction and adaptation capacity. The delegation took part in nine high-level talks to ensure Taiwan's voice is heard on the international stage.

2007 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and former US vice president Al Gore share the Nobel Prize for awakening the world to the importance of the greenhouse effect. While not a party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) or the Kyoto Protocol, Taiwan recognizes its role as part of the global village and is willing to bear responsibility for responding to climate change and reducing greenhouse gases. Both government and citizens have followed these issues with great interest.

The Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the UN FCCC and the Third Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP13/MOP3) was held from 3~15 December 2007 in Bali, Indonesia. To strengthen exchange with other nations at the meetings, the Taiwan delegation, led by EPA Deputy Minister Chang Feng-teng, contained representatives from each related ministry as well as experts, scholars and local government officials. Delegates eagerly participated in this event to stay abreast of developments in related issues and build Taiwan's capacity to make reductions and adapt to changes. The delegation took part in nine high-level talks to ensure Taiwan's voice is heard on the international stage, as well as operated a booth and side-event meetings for two days. This was the first time for Taiwan to hold a side-event meeting focusing on Taiwan's voluntary reduction measures.

Taiwan's side-event meeting and display booth

opened up numerous opportunities for exchange. This especially caught the attention of the Japanese media. Several media groups from Tokyo Shimbun and the Sankei Shimbun interviewed the Taiwan delegation.

Discussions spanning over an entire day and attended in person by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon finally resulted in the formulation of the Bali Roadmap on the afternoon of 15 December 2007. An agreement was reached to arrange the agenda for global climate change negotiations and consultations, which shall be completed by 2009.

Although the meeting did not produce clear-cut reduction objectives and timelines as everyone had hoped for, developed nations did agree to come up with straightforward negotiation results regarding post-Kyoto reduction obligations before 2009. Developing countries were also requested to make reductions and provide transparent, quantifiable, and verifiable data. From Taiwan's perspective as an emerging industrialized nation, this development attested to the need for Taiwan to promptly initiate a concrete response strategy.

Now entering the stage of post-Kyoto talks, there is an urgent need for perspectives and practical experience of developing nations. The Taiwan delegation just happened to have such a focus at this event, and its eagerness to share Taiwan's experience and planning concepts with the international community was appreciated.

Recycling

Recycling Fee Rate Substantially Increased for Containers with PVC Labels

From 1 January 2008, the increase in the recycling and treatment fee rate for containers with PVC shrink labels will be raised from 30% to 100%. Addressing the impact this may have on related businesses, the EPA has given the industry a three-year grace period. Alternative materials for container labels are already available to the industry.

Leading containers and packaging toward more environmentally preferable design and materials, on 20 June 2007 the EPA announced that from January 2008 fees for container recycling and treatment would be increased to encourage container product manufacturers to switch from using shrink labels containing PVC. After careful deliberation and in order to gain wider support, the EPA allowed a three-year grace period for manufacturers to make the switch.

The manufacture of PVC plastic uses vinyl chloride monomer (VCM), a confirmed carcinogen that has harmful effects on both human health and the environment. Discarded labels have high recycling and treatment costs and little reuse value. Both here and abroad, most of this type of waste is either incinerated or landfilled. To prevent the generation of dioxins and acid rain due to the incineration of PVC, labels containing PVC have become prioritized as a target of use restrictions.

The EPA points out that it is not easy to recycle or reuse PET plastic bottles in any country due to their PVC shrink labels, causing the market for such labels to gradually decline. Currently Japan primarily uses OPS shrink labels, while PET labels have a higher market use trend in Europe. Some countries have

stopped using PVC entirely and Korea has already banned the use of PVC labels.

PVC shrink film manufacturers have always held a wait-and-see attitude and have not provided a timely response to the trend of using more environmentally preferable materials for container products, meaning that changes could impose an impact on the industry. According to EPA estimates, involuntary loss of employment due to change of policy could be as high as several hundred people. To avoid impacts on the economy and employment status, the EPA will draw on the assistance and guidance of related policy resources of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Council of Labor Affairs.

Seeking balanced development of economic development and environmental protection, careful consideration was given to the formulation of this measure and the fact that currently there are already alternative materials to PVC accessories on container products. Therefore, keeping in line with existing policies to gradually promote products using environmentally preferable design and packaging materials, the EPA has decided to increase the recycling, clearance and treatment fee rate of containers with PVC accessories by 100%. Related industries are asked to comply with this policy.

Air Quality

Motorbike Exhaust Inspection Deadline Relaxed

Making it more convenient for motorbike owners to deal with regular exhaust inspections, the EPA has announced that starting 1 January 2008, the inspection timeline will be relaxed to within one month before and after permit issuance. Vehicle owners possessing motorbikes three years since manufacture date, should have their vehicles checked according to inspection deadline regulations in order to maintain environmental air quality.

The EPA indicates that the large number of motorbikes in Taiwan makes this vehicle a major source of air pollution. In order to effectively improve pollution from motorbike exhaust, the EPA began implementing motorbike exhaust regular inspection system and establishing the concept of regular maintenance and inspection from 1998.

After a decade of establishing the regular inspection system for motorbike exhaust, the nation now has over 2,300 motorbike inspection stations. During this time, the number of motorbikes inspected per year has increased from one million to seven million. The rate of motorcycle owners that go in for inspections is increasing and the rate of substandard test results

is decreasing. Statistics over the years of test data shows that each year those motorbikes that come in for regular inspection have lower pollutant concentrations and lower rates of substandard test results compared to those motorbikes that are not inspected on a regular basis. This attests to the substantial achievements of this system.

To effectively raise the rate of motorcycles that come in for inspection and to make it more convenient for owners to get their vehicles inspected, the EPA has announced revisions to stipulations on the inspection deadline. Prior regulations stipulated the inspection

deadline to within one month of issuing the license. Now the deadline has been relaxed to one month before or after license issuance. Therefore if a motorbike license is issued in February, in the past an inspection would be required every year in February and March. From 2008, however, in this same example, inspections can begin starting in January. In addition, inspection time complements motorcycle driving license renewal time. This offers motorbike owners the convenience of making just one stop at the regular inspection station to handle driving license renewal and exhaust inspection at the same time.

Eco-labeling

Green Production and Green Consumption Revitalize Taiwan

The EPA held a joint awarding ceremony for the "Corporate Environmental Awards," the "Green Marketing Award," and the "Green Consumer Contest" on 12 December 2007. Awards were granted to ten corporations, eight retailers and three green consumers.

EPA Minister Winston Dang attended to offer praise and encouragement, mentioning that the government, corporations and citizens should establish a partnership to confront environmental problems and promote concrete actions for joint management of green production, green marketing and green consumption. Only in this way can all sides co-exist and enjoy a high quality environment.

The EPA states that in order to promote green production, it has already held 16 corporate environmental protection awards and encouraged 171 businesses to put equal emphasis on production and environmental protection. Award recipients included not only manufacturers but also extended to the service industry, including medical service and power generation. For example, Tzu-chi General Hospital Dalin Branch received an award this time for implementing a health quality improvement circle (HQIC) within the hospital and computerizing all administrative work, promoting waste reduction, energy conservation and water conservation. This effectively saved costs and implemented environmental education and advocacy.

In promoting green marketing and green consumption the EPA requests all government agencies to practice green procurement. This initiative has expanded this year to include promotion in the private sector, including providing guidance to nearly one thousand retail outlets in establishing green shops. Businesses were encouraged to participate in the Green Marketing Awards, create channels

for online procurement of environmental products and vitalize marketing channels to let enterprises and organizations or the average citizen go through actual shops or the Internet to easily purchase environmental products. In the future the EPA will also actively manage market sales of Green Mark products to ensure that environmental products conform to specification standards and guarantee the rights and interests of consumers.

This time at the Green Marketing Awards, 17 stores participated and according to their formulation of green marketing policy, environmental management of sales venues, methods and outcomes of selling environmental products, after conducting paper audits and onsite inspections, eight of the most outstanding businesses were selected. Award recipients not only included well-known domestic chain stores such as B&Q, Geant, Carrefour, and the Taiwan Sugar Corporation, but even more praiseworthy was Lijiaoshihye (立交實業). Despite being a small- to medium-size business, Lijiaoshihye not only promotes green marketing policies and concise plans, its environmental product procurement reached 89.9%. With sales revenue reaching over NT\$22 million, it has computerized document management, and has gotten involved in the community, government agencies and organizations to promote green consumption. These factors won unanimous favor with the selection committee and earned the company first place.

Integrating the new trends of electronic services to

provide citizens with a handy procurement channel for Green Mark products, the EPA has launched the Environmental Product Online Store, which has already been visited more than 120,000 times. To further encourage the public to make good use of this

website and obtain green consumption information and shop for environmental products, the EPA held the environmental product Green Consumer Contest, and presented awards to the top three spenders on listed products.

News Briefs

New Chinese Version EPA Website Launched

Working to provide more convenient services, the EPA completed a new Chinese version website in 2007, and launched it on 1 January 2008 (<http://www.epa.gov.tw>). The updated Chinese website has the following special features:

1. Information on development of special topics, providing the latest in environmental news in a timely and lively manner
2. Division into sections for citizens, businesses, researchers and students, and customized webpage settings to let users arrange the information the way they want
3. Function to allow classified searching for policies and services, letting citizens quickly find the environmental information they're looking for
4. Diverse webpage formats for PDAs, mobile phones and children, as well as educational material for students to download

The EPA points out that service and satisfaction were the primary requirements in the organization and planning of information on the new Chinese website. The new website provides a whole new Internet experience with a more consistently user-friendly server interface and website design. In planning the structure of data on webpages, effort was taken to reduce the data server levels to allow users to quickly and conveniently obtain the information they need.

Green Living Information Website Launched

To integrate Green Mark related information online and provide more convenient service, the EPA has integrated the "Green Mark Information Station," the "Government Green Procurement Online System," the "Electronic Document System," and the "Environmental Product Online Store" into a single green living information network. Integrating green consumption and Green Mark related information systems, the EPA officially launched its Green Living Information Website (<http://greenliving.epa.gov.tw/>) on 1 January 2008. This single service portal provides citizens, environmental product manufacturers, vendors and government agencies a single portal to access information on green consumption, the Green Mark, and related products. The website has a special section for children as well as an English webpage.

EIA Review Approves Expanded Water Usage for Sixth Naptha Cracker

On 10 December 2007 the EPA convened the Environmental Impact Review Committee to review the "Sixth Naptha Cracker Fourth Period Expansion Plan Environmental Impact Statement Review Conclusion Changes and Third Environmental Impact Differences Analysis Report." After the Executive Yuan ratified the use of 860,000 tonnes of water per day at the Yunlin Offshore Foundation Industrial Park, it agreed to let developers modify original Sixth Naptha Cracker Fourth Period Expansion Plan Environmental Impact Statement Review Conclusions to increase the usage of water by 345,495 tonnes per day. During dry periods when there is not enough water, the developers must provide their own source of water. After the developers provide the necessary supplementary information the plan will be sent to the EPA for review.

Nonylphenol Banned from Manufacture in Household Cleaning Agents

Nonylphenol and nonylphenol polyethoxylates (NPEOs) are known to disrupt the endocrine system, do not easily break down in the environment and are bioaccumulative. Classified in the Toxic Chemical Substances Control Act (毒性化學物質管理法) as Class I toxic chemical substances, these two chemicals are regulated under this Act. From 1 January 2008, these substances were banned from manufacture in household cleaning agents and related businesses are furthermore required to conduct reports, install monitoring or warning equipment, draw up hazard prevention and emergency response plans, and install special technicians.

EPA Offers e-Calendar for a Lucky Year of the Rat

The EPA welcomes all to the New Year by offering a environmental calendar for free download. The EPA explains that using electronic calendars can reduce the use of paper and thereby decrease the generation of carbon dioxide, not only protecting the environment but saving money. The electronic calendar can be downloaded and used as a desktop background or sent to friends as a gesture of goodwill. The calendar can be found on the EPA's website under "Convenient service > Downloads > Other > 2008 Environmental Calendar" <http://www.epa.gov.tw/ch/DocList.aspx?unit=7&clsone=539&clstwo=508&clsthree=0&busin=4097&path=9157>

Activities

Drawing Held for "Environmental Hotel Competition" Voters

The EPA has just launched the "2008 National Environmental Hotel Competition" on the Internet. Those who participate in the contest have a chance at winning a drawing with prizes including an environmentally friendly notebook computer and other environmental products. Details on this activity are online at <http://www.buygreentw.net/>.

The EPA explains that 117 hotels received recommendations from the public to take part in the "2008 National Environmental Hotel Competition." From 21 December 2007 to 15 February 2008, people were asked to nominate their favorite environmental hotel. So far over 50,000 entries have been received. The second stage is the selection process, where people can choose the best environmental hotel from a list of the top 50 hotels recommended in the first stage (one selection allowed for each of two categories of hotels: standard hotels and tourist hotels). This selection process will determine the top five standard hotels and the top five tourist hotels in terms of environmental performance.

"Clean and Toxics-Free Homes" Educational Event

To more widely promote the concept of environmental sanitation and safe use of environmental agents, the EPA held a "Clean and Toxics-Free Home" educational event from 25~31 December 2007 in Kaohsiung on the three

main themes of "Hands off! Be smart with environmental agents," "Methods for handling toxic substances," and "Preventing Dengue in the Home." The event featured educational displays and posters on environmental sanitation and safe use of chemical agents, DIY toxics-free pest extermination methods, and prizes for answering environmental know-how quiz questions. The purpose of this activity was to spread accurate concepts on preventing dengue, getting to know household toxics, and using environmental agents safely. More details on this "Clean and Toxics-Free Homes" event can be found online at http://ivy3.epa.gov.tw/cleanup_taiwan/index.html.

Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation Workshop

Drawing on the US' experience in applying onsite chemical oxygen remediation technology to improve soils, the EPA cooperated with the USEPA in holding the "Soil and Groundwater Pollution Site Onsite Chemical Oxidation Remediation Methods Workshop" from 5~6 December 2007. The content of this seminar will be used as a model and reference for applying such remediation technology on soil and groundwater pollution sites in Taiwan. The two experts invited by the EPA for this seminar were Dr. Scott Huling, senior specialist from the USEPA Research and Development Office National Risk Management Research Laboratory, and Mr. Richard Lewis, senior hydrogeologist from Environmental Resources Management (ERM), US.

 **New Chinese Version
EPA Website**

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