

Public consultation on Scheme on Regulation of Disposable Plastic Tableware launched

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (July 9) released a consultation paper on the Scheme on Regulation of Disposable Plastic Tableware. The Scheme aims to reduce the use of disposable plastic tableware at source with a view to minimising the impacts of plastic pollution on the ecological environment and human health, and helping to reduce carbon emissions to mitigate climate change. The two-month public consultation will end on September 8, 2021.

An EPD spokesman said, "The newly announced Waste Blueprint for Hong Kong 2035 proposed to strive towards achieving waste-free seas, whereas eliminating plastic at source is the most fundamental way to prevent plastic waste from entering the marine environment. Facing the imminent problems of marine plastic pollution and climate change, places around the world have been committed to discouraging the use of single-use plastic products (including disposable plastic tableware) and exploring the use of alternatives. As a coastal city, Hong Kong shall not ignore the issue and has to pay extra attention to the problem of plastic pollution and its impact on the environment."

The Government had conducted a study on the feasibility, scope and mechanism of regulating disposable plastic tableware. Having taken into account overseas experience and the local situation, the study report suggested introducing legislation in phases to regulate disposable plastic tableware, including expanded polystyrene (EPS) tableware, straws, stirrers, cutlery (such as forks, knives and spoons), plates, cups, cup lids, food containers (such as bowls and boxes) and food container covers, with exclusions under individual special circumstances.

The Scheme has proposed the control of disposable EPS tableware in the first place by banning the local sale of disposable EPS tableware and the provision of EPS tableware by catering premises to customers, while non-EPS disposable plastic tableware should be regulated progressively in two phases. The first phase consists of banning the provision of all types of disposable plastic tableware by catering premises to customers for dine-in services as well as the provision of straws, stirrers, forks, knives, spoons and plates by catering premises to customers for takeaway services. In the second phase, takeaway services can be regulated in the same manner as dine-in services.

Members of the public are welcome to submit their views through the dedicated website at www.rdpt.hk or by email, post or fax to the EPD during the consultation period.