

Major achievements in Hong Kong-Guangdong Environmental Collaboration in 2018

* Implemented various measures under the PRD Air Quality Management Plan and followed up on their progress and results to continuously improve regional air quality. New measures implemented in Hong Kong included increasing the use of natural gas for power generation; carrying forward the new round of Air Quality Objectives review; requiring all vessels within Hong Kong waters (irrespective of whether they are sailing or berthing) to use low-sulphur marine fuel with sulphur content not exceeding 0.5 per cent starting January 1, 2019; and tightening the emission standards for newly approved non-road vehicles to Euro VI from January 1, 2019. Meanwhile, new measures in Guangdong included guiding cities within the province to prepare a sectoral plan for air quality compliance; imposing specific air pollutants emission limits for steel, petrochemical and cement industry; putting forward measures to combat PRD regional ozone pollution; commencing remedial actions against industrial enterprises with irregularities; promoting the electrification of public transport and the use of motor fuels meeting the National VI standard; and striving to advance the implementation of the National VI emission standards for motor vehicles;

* The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network showed that the annual concentration levels of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and respirable suspended particulates in the region in 2017 decreased by 77 per cent, 26 per cent and 34 per cent respectively when compared with 2006¹;

* Both sides agreed to incorporate Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) concentration as a routine monitoring parameter in the PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network. Preparatory work commenced;

* Completed the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Joint Regional PM_{2.5} Study;

* Established a joint scientific research group and launched a study on post-2020 regional air pollutant emission reduction targets and concentration levels;

¹ Hong Kong and Guangdong set up the PRD Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network in November 2005. The report on monitoring results in 2006 is the first annual report of the regional monitoring network. In September 2014, Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao enhanced the regional monitoring network and renamed it as Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network.

- * Proactively took forward the cooperation and exchange regarding air quality forecasting work;
- * Communicated and exchanged information on the implementation of pollution reduction measures in both sides and the coastal water quality in the Pearl River Estuary in accordance with the jointly prepared Pearl River Estuary Water Quality Management Co-operation Plan;
- * Continued to develop sewage treatment facilities and sewage collection systems, and to strengthen pollution discharge control to jointly protect the water quality of Deep Bay (Shenzhen Bay) and Mirs Bay;
- * Implemented various environmental monitoring and control measures and planning requirements, including stringent control of construction projects at Dongjiang River Basin stepping up on environmental monitoring and control and industrial pollution prevention, enhancement of environmental facilities at Dongjiang River Basin, establishment of the Integrated Environmental Management of the Dongjiang River Basin Joint Conference to further safeguard the water quality of Dongjiang; expedited the implementation of the river chief system in the cities within basin area, established leadership teams at municipal level to comprehensively implement the river chief system and established river chief system offices; and to safeguard the water quality of Dongjiang and Shenzhen Reservoir through putting forward various measures on environmental enforcement and pollution abatement in Heyuan, Huizhou, Dongguan and Shenzhen;
- * Fostered close collaboration and exchange on issues including the establishment, management, publicity and public education of nature conservation areas; techniques on native rural tree seedlings propagation; woodland enhancement work; as well as hill fire monitoring and fighting. Conducted site visits on conservation of rare marine species and research on marine resources; and fostered exchange and cooperation in areas including joint enforcement action against illegal fishing and technical training; and;
- * Continued the trial run on the notification and alert system on marine refuse to issue alerts and notify relevant government departments for appropriate follow-up actions in response to the potential areas affected by massive amounts of marine refuse in the waters of Hong Kong and the vicinity of the Pearl River Estuary; and exchanged views on ways to further enhance cooperation and responsiveness regarding cross-boundary marine environmental incidents.