

Teaching Topic:

How to be Wise with Waste: The Waste Management in EU and Hong Kong¹

Relevant concepts / terms

- Waste management (Web-based Resource Platform for Liberal Studies → Resources → Relevant Concepts → NSS Liberal Studies)
- Sustainability (Web-based Resource Platform for Liberal Studies → Resources → Relevant Concepts → NSS Liberal Studies)
- European Union (EU) (Please refer to http://europa.eu/index_en.htm)
- Recycling (please refer to <http://www.recycling-guide.org.uk/> or <http://www2.epa.gov/recycle/recycling-basics>)

Suggested questions for enquiry

- What is the EU's approach to waste management? (Hints: prevention, preparation for re-use, recycling, energy recovery, disposal, etc.)
- How does the EU enforce the waste reduction target among its twenty-eight member states?
- Hong Kong Government published a consultation document in early 2012 to suggest introducing “Municipal Solid Waste Charging” as a means to reduce the generation of solid waste. To what extent do you think this policy would be effective?
- It is said that Hong Kong has an imminent waste problem. What do you think are the major causes of the waste problem in Hong Kong? (Hints: Low environmental awareness, rapid economic development, etc.)
- “Incineration of waste is a double-edged sword² to the Hong Kong community”. Do you agree with this statement? Why?

Suggested examples for enquiry provided by the Resource Package (Resource Package P.105)

- **Public consultation on Municipal Solid Waste Charging:** The Government published a consultation document in early 2012 to suggest introducing “Municipal Solid Waste Charging” as an economic means to reduce the generation of solid waste. Teachers may consider guiding students to study the extent to which the policy would be effective in reducing solid waste, and its impact on the citizens if it is to be implemented.

¹ Part of the information used in this Resource Sheet comes from the learning material “*Topic 2: Waste Management*” developed by the European Union Academic Programme Hong Kong. Retrieved from http://europe.hkbu.edu.hk/euap/young_europe/module2/Waste%20Management_Learning%20Materials_English.pdf

² “A double-edged sword” refers to something that causes both advantages and problems.

- **Hong Kong's ecological and carbon footprints:** Teachers may guide students to draw reference to the report on Hong Kong's ecological and carbon footprints and then to discuss the extent that the behaviours of Hong Kong people are in line with the requirements of environmental protection and sustainable development.

Relevant news / cases / data / commentaries / pictures (Directly relevant or closely relevant topics)

- **News relating to waste management in Hong Kong:**

- Environmental Protection Department, HKSAR. (2014, February 13). "An Overview on Challenges for Waste Reduction and Management in Hong Kong." Retrieved from http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/waste_maincontent.html
- Unknown. (2014 April 8). "Trial of Waste Disposal Charge." *China Daily Hong Kong Edition*. Retrieved from: http://www.chinadailyasia.com/hknews/2014-04/08/content_15129367.html
- Lau Tsz-ching. (2014 April 3). "Government's waste strategy is not feasible." *South China Morning Post*.
- Ada Lee. (2014 March 29). "Landfill expansion, incinerator plans clear first hurdle." *South China Morning Post*.
- Elvis W.K.Au. (2014 March 28). "Unfair to compare one-stage UK example with HK waste plant." *South China Morning Post*.
- Kelly Ip. (2014 March 27). "Public Support claimed in bid to lay waste to piles of trash." *The Standard*.
- Cheung Chi-fai. (2014 March 14). "Waste plant essential despite cost: lawmakers." *South China Morning Post*.
- Qi Luo. (2014 March 14). "Costs climb for leftover food plant on Lantau." *The Standard*.

- **News relating to waste management in Europe and other places:**

- Steven Borowiec, Andrew Gumbel and Richard Orange. (2014, March 27). "Food Waste Around The World". *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/mar/27/food-waste-around-world>
- Unknown. (2014 January 14). "European Parliament Demands Recycling Targets in EU War on Plastic Waste." *Euronews*. Retrieved from <http://www.euronews.com/2014/01/14/european-parliament-demands-recycling-targets-in-e>

- [u-war-on-plastic-waste/](#) (Video Length: 1 min 12 sec)
- R.E.J. Bunker. (2014 April 1). "Misleading statistics on incinerator." *South China Morning Post*.
 - Kelly Ip. (2014 March 27). "Public support claimed in bid by waste to poles of trash." *The Standard*.
 - Jason Groves. (2014 March 30). "How UK chases waste targets other European countries just ignore: Attempt to reach goal of recycling half of all rubbish by 2020 blamed for death of weekly bin round." *MailOnline*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2592967/How-UK-chases-waste-targets-European-countries-just-ignore-Attempt-reach-goal-recycling-half-rubbish-2020-blamed-death-weekly-bin-round.html>
 - Unknown. (2014 April 6). "Supermarket 'Bogof' deals criticized over food waste." *BBC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-26908613>
 - News Desk. (2014 Apr 2). "Recycled EU glass could make two Egyptian pyramids." *Prague Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.praguepost.com/economy/38122-recycled-eu-glass-could-make-two-egyptian-pyramids>
 - Tom Kenning. (2014 April 6). "Big Interview: Paul Ozanne." *Materials Recycling World (MRW)*. Retrieved from: http://www.google.com.hk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=newssearch&cd=23&ved=0CC4QqQIoADACOBQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mrw.co.uk%2Fopinion%2Fbig-interview%2Fbig-interview-paul-ozanne%2F8660891.article%3Fblocktitle%3DOpinion%26contentID%3D2198&ei=_VNDU-neA6iziQeai4DwAw&usq=AFQjCNHQunR0I8NU5TWA8QzarKQZryL70w
 - Unknown. (2014 April 7). "Oxfam: Buy one get one free deals cause food waste." *BBC News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-26923505> (video length: 1 minute 13 seconds)
 - James Murray. (2014 April 7). "How an ambitious waste strategy could slash the EU's carbon footprint." *Business Green*. Retrieved from: <http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/analysis/2338310/how-an-ambitious-waste-strategy-could-slash-the-eus-carbon-footprint>
 - Janez Potocnik. (2014 April 7). Role of the EU industry to lead the green economy. *EUROPA Press Release*. Retrieved from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-14-303_en.htm?locale=en

Assessment items (Directly relevant or closely relevant topics)

- The Environmental Impact Assessment Reports on the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Project (ED 06)
- Switching Off Engines of Idling Vehicles and Electric Vehicles (ED 16)
- Energy Development in Hong Kong (ED 17)
- Electric Vehicles (ED 44)

Learning objects (Directly relevant or closely relevant topics)

- The Problem of Environmental Pollution (LO_2008_0033e)
- The Pros and Cons of Building Nuclear Power Plants (LO_2009_0345e)
- Toxic Waste and Environmental Degradation (LO_2009_0336e)

Relevant or comparable examples for enquiry

- **Landfilling in European countries:** While Hong Kong's landfills are likely to be expanded, several European countries such as Austria, Belgium, Germany, Denmark and Sweden have imposed a restricted or complete ban on landfilling. Not more than 3% of waste ends up in landfills in these countries. The rest gets incinerated, recycled or composted. (Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. (2013 March 4). Environment in the EU27. Retrieved from: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/8-04032013-BP/EN/8-04032013-BP-EN.PDF)
- **The second hand shops in Belgium:** “Reuse” is considered as a form of waste prevention. De Kringwinkel is the biggest second-hand shop in Belgium, with 108 branches all over the country. (European Union Academic Programme Hong Kong: Europe's largest social franchise. Retrieved from: <http://www.socialfranchising.coop/uploaded/KOMOSIE.pdf>)
- **The anti-junk mail “STOP PUB” campaign in France:** French households receive an average of 15kg of unwanted mail each year which accounts for 5% of household waste. The French government came up with a simple solution to tackle this problem. (European Union Academic Programme Hong Kong: Waste Prevention Best Practice Factsheets. Retrieved from: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/prevention/pdf/Stop_Pub_Factsheet.pdf)
- **The rubbish crisis in Naples, Italy:** A rubbish crisis broke out in Naples in 2010. It shows how serious the problem with waste could be if no proper action was taken. According to the EU, Italy faces big fines if it fails to clean up thousands of

tones of rubbish lying around the city of Naples.

- BBC News Europe. (2010 Nov 26). Naples rubbish crisis: EU warns Italy of big fines. Retrieved from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11851657>
- Time. (2010). Garbage Wars in Naples. (Photos) Retrieved from: http://content.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1702831_1516458,00.html
- Al Jazeera English. (2011 June 25). Naples residents set fire to rubbish. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1hawBcZVB0> (Video Length: 1 minute 45 seconds))

Other resources

- European Union Academic Programme Hong Kong. *Module 2: Waste Management in the European Union (Suitable for F.4 – F.6)*. Retrieved from http://europe.hkbu.edu.hk/euap/young_europe/learningmodules.html
- European Commission. *Environment: Waste*. Retrieved from <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/>
- European Commission. *European Reference Model on Municipal Waste Management*. Retrieved from <http://www.wastemodel.eu/>
- The University of Copenhagen. *ReUseWaste*. Retrieved from <http://www.reusewaste.eu/>
- World Nuclear Association. *Waste Management: Overview*. Retrieved from <http://www.world-nuclear.org/info/nuclear-fuel-cycle/nuclear-wastes/waste-management-overview/>
- Hong Kong Waste Management Association <http://www.hongkongwma.org.hk/>
- Green Power. *Hong Kong's Zero Food Waste*. Retrieved from http://www.greenpower.org.hk/html/eng/2013_6.shtml
- HKSAR. (Last update: 2014 January). *Municipal Solid Waste*. Retrieved from <http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/environment/waste/msw.htm>
- HKSAR. (Last update: January 2014). *Waste & Recycling in Hong Kong*. Retrieved from <http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/environment/waste/wasterecycinhk.htm>
- HKSAR Environmental Protection Department. (Last update: 2010 August 13). *Waste: Problems & Solutions*. Retrieved from: http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/prob_solutions/msw_strategic.html