

**For discussion on
26 February 2024**

Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs

**Progress of the Preparation Work for the Regulation of
Disposable Plastic Tableware and Other Plastic Products**

PURPOSE

This paper reports on the latest progress of the various preparation work for the regulation of disposable plastic tableware and other plastic products for Members' information, and seeks Members' views.

BACKGROUND

2. Plastics are relatively cheap, light, durable, and are widely and extensively used in daily life. However, compared to many of their alternatives, such as paper, wood, and bamboo products, plastics are difficult to decompose and can remain in the natural environment for over a hundred years. In particular, plastics could be decomposed into micro-plastics, which can affect the marine ecosystem or enter into the food chain after entering into the sea, thereby causing far reaching harm to the environment and human health. In recent years, scientists have even discovered micro-plastics in human blood, which may affect body organs. In 2022, out of the 11 128 tonnes of municipal solid waste disposed of in landfills per day, 2 369 tonnes (approximately 21%) was plastic waste, with the disposal of plastic and expanded polystyrene (EPS) tableware accounting for 227 tonnes per day¹.

3. In recent years, “plastic reduction” and “plastic-free” have become an international consensus. Mainland China, neighbouring Macao, and other places in the world have implemented measures to reduce the use of plastics one after another in recent years. For example, Mainland China has banned the manufacture and sale of EPS tableware and plastic-stemmed cotton buds since end-2020; Macao has banned the import of EPS and disposable plastic tableware

¹ The statistics represent the quantities of overall plastic tableware disposed (including reusable and disposable plastic tableware). There are no further detailed breakdown figures for disposable plastic tableware.

at different times; the European Union has banned ten types of disposable plastic products, including tableware, straws, stirrers, plastic-stemmed cotton buds and oxo-degradable plastic products, etc. since July 2021; and Australia has also gradually launched similar regulatory measures on disposable plastic products in recent years.

SCOPE OF REGULATION

4. The Product Eco-responsibility (Amendment) Bill 2023, which gives effect to the relevant regulation, was passed by the Legislative Council on 18 October 2023, and will come into effect on 22 April 2024 (Earth Day). In the course of planning for the regulation, the Government has extensively consulted the public and carefully considered the actual situation in Hong Kong.

5. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) conducted extensive public consultation and engagement activities on the regulation of disposable plastic tableware and other plastic products respectively in the second half of 2021. The response from the public was very positive, with over 90% of the public expressing their support to regulate disposable plastic tableware by legislation. The EPD also made reference to the recommendations submitted to the Government in 2022 by the Council for Sustainable Development following a public engagement, to propose the regulation of a range of disposable plastic products.

6. Furthermore, the Government has fully taken into consideration the actual situation and relevant factors in Hong Kong. Firstly, in terms of the target of regulation, we aim to achieve plastic reduction at source by prohibiting the local sale and supply of regulated products. Therefore, the new legislation does not regulate the acquisition, purchase, or use of certain disposable plastic products by the public in their daily lives, in order to avoid causing excessive impact on their daily lives.

7. As for the regulated items, in terms of disposable plastic tableware, our considerations include whether the supply of alternatives to the regulated tableware is mature, available and affordable. Considering that takeaway is closely related to people's lives, under the design of the regulation, the tableware regulated in takeaway only covers plastic straws, plastic stirrers, plastic knives,

forks and spoons, and plastic plates, whereas containers commonly used for takeaway, including plastic cups, food containers, and soup bowls (apart from EPS-made containers²), can still be used as usual and are not affected. In fact, the prices of non-plastic alternatives (such as paper and wood, etc.) for straws, stirrers, knives, forks, spoons, and plates are not largely different from those of regulated plastic tableware. Many restaurants and eateries have already switched to non-plastic tableware.

8. In regulating other plastic products, our considerations include whether the relevant products are daily necessities (for example, inflatable cheer sticks, glow sticks, party hats are not daily necessities), and whether there are mature alternatives available in the market (e.g. plastic-stemmed cotton buds have already had many paper, wood, or bamboo-stemmed cotton buds as alternatives in the market).

9. The scope of the regulation is at **Annex 1**.

LATEST PROGRESS OF PREPARATION WORK

10. The support and participation of the trade and every member of the public are crucial to the successful implementation of the new legislation. Our primary task is to ensure that both the trade and the public are clear about the content and details of the regulation. Since the passage of the legislation in October last year, we have been actively launching a series of promotion and education measures to help all strata of the society to get prepared for the regulation. The major promotion and education measures are outlined in the ensuing paragraphs.

Support to the trade

11. We have been having close communication and meetings with various trades, including the catering, retail, and hotel trades, to explain to them the scope

² Since EPS is very light and fragile, it can easily be broken into small pieces and flow into the sea. It is most detrimental to the environment as the EPS may be consumed by marine life inadvertently, thereby causing their suffocation or intoxication. Therefore, EPS tableware (including plates, containers, soup bowls and cups) cannot be sold or provided under the new legislation. Mainland China and Macao have also respectively banned the production, sale and import of EPS tableware in earlier times.

of regulation, understand their different concerns and worries, and provide appropriate assistance and support to help ensure a smooth transition.

12. Targeting the catering trade, since the end of last year, we have been progressively conducting compliance surveys before the implementation of the regulation through on-site visits to some 20 000 small and medium-sized eateries. Through assessing their compliance level by questionnaires, we assist them in understanding the scope of regulation and getting prepared for the regulation, thereby hoping to assist them in adjusting their mode of operation for complying with the regulatory requirements. We anticipate to have visited over 12 000 eateries by end-February this year. In addition, the Environment and Conservation Fund also plans to subsidise local/environmental organisations to visit around 7 000 small-sized eateries in different districts from March to April this year to reinforce promotion and education for them, and give out non-plastic tableware samples for free for their use to help ensure a smooth transition. To assist the trade in understanding which alternatives comply with the regulation with a view to facilitating the trade in the early adoption of more environmental-friendly non-plastic tableware (such as paper or plant fibre) in lieu of the disposable plastic ones, we have engaged the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency (HKQAA) to establish a “Green Tableware Platform” (<https://www.greentableware.hk/>) early in January 2022. To ensure that the products meet the plastic-free requirement of the regulation, the HKQAA will review the tableware to be placed on the platform in each application through assessing information such as material testing reports, certifications and product samples, etc. Currently, the platform has enlisted more than 45 tableware suppliers and over 480 non-plastic disposable tableware products.

13. For the retail and hotel trade, we have been aware of the concerns from some trade representatives on the feasibility to search for suitable alternatives. In response, the EPD has recently launched the “Cut the Plastics” online information platform (<https://www.cuttheplastics.hk/index.php/en/>). Apart from providing information to the public and the trade on the regulation and alternative options of various plastics, it also has a dedicated page for the hotel trade to provide information on the suppliers of reusable/non-plastic hotel toiletries. We will update the website from time to time to provide more latest information to the trade. Besides, hotels are allowed to provide disposable plastic toiletries to customers at a charge. This could promote environmental protection and at the same time avoid causing too much hassle to tourists’ visiting Hong Kong.

14. Besides, since January this year, we have been distributing trade-specific promotional leaflets to approximately 11 000 retail stores and 1 800 hotels and guesthouses to help them better understand the regulatory requirements. We have also been maintaining close communication and contact with various trade associations, including briefing them on the details of the scheme through meetings and briefings and sending them letters to explain the legal requirements, etc., thereby introducing the scope of regulation to their members from various perspectives.

15. In addition to promotion, we understand that different trades may have various concerns about the details of the regulation. As such, we have been proactively providing education and training to help the trades comply with the regulatory requirements. Since January this year, the EPD has been organising around 50 online and offline training sessions to provide comprehensive and focused training for different sectors (including the catering, retail, and hotel sectors, etc.) to address their questions about the regulation at an early stage. We estimate that about 1 700 people will have participated in a total of 19 training seminar as at end February this year.

16. In addition to the series of promotion and education for the trades as mentioned above, we have been paying close attention to the trades' feedback and concerns as individual trades or businesses may still be unfamiliar with the regulation. We endeavour to promptly respond to their queries and provide appropriate assistance. For instance, having noticed that some retailers (such as pharmacies) had previously expressed that they were unfamiliar with the details of the regulation, we promptly reached out to the relevant trade associations to explain the scope of regulation and organised focused training sessions specifically addressing the concerns of relevant trades. We also welcome different trade members to contact the EPD for participating in the training sessions which are being conducted progressively³.

³ Enrollment links for the training sessions:

Retail trade:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeUvrEgliHzuSYGkx5pBhlfCvy9X1Kpc17sHs9dnbccBvrK3Q/viwwform>

Catering trade:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfDX0pOz7BlytCPHD1R9F8x75x76IbMjZrXYk5psSTpaeSlcQ/viwwform>

Hotel trade:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScCq5xA6pJ4Nau0R5F356YsEjysdOPhrpEWgpYPCPGI4DJtqQ/viwwform>

Promotion and education for the general public

17. To let various strata of the society understand the content of the regulation, we are progressively launching a comprehensive promotional and educational campaign. Starting from 1 February this year, we have progressively initiated a series of extensive promotional initiatives, such as releasing promotional videos and audios, trade-specific promotional clips, posters, and advertisements, etc. through various channels (including television, radio, public transportation stations and vehicle exteriors, restaurant storefronts, building lobbies and external digital screens, news and lifestyle mobile applications and websites, etc.). These initiatives aim to introduce the regulation in the daily lives of the general public, so as to raise public awareness and understanding of the regulation and encourage the public to support “plastic-free” in practice. Moreover, the recently launched “Cut the Plastics” online information platform (link in paragraph 13) provides one-stop information for the public, including the scope of regulation and various alternatives to plastic products. We will update the website from time to time to provide more latest information.

18. Furthermore, we have been keeping a close tap on the questions raised by the public and have taken proactive and prompt actions to address their misconceptions and concerns on the regulation via various online platforms, including the Tamar Talk, *news.gov.hk*, and the Big Waster Facebook page. We also created infographics to address common questions from the public in a lively and easy-to-understand manner (examples at [Annex 2](#)) to ease their concerns as early as possible, thereby minimising unnecessary misconceptions and panic-buying in the market.

19. To encourage more members of the public and eateries to go “plastic-free” and practise waste reduction at source, we will continue, through different channels (such as supporting community programmes that offer reusable meal box lending services, etc.) to promote various “plastic-free” campaigns which aim at reducing the use of disposable plastic tableware and encouraging the use of reusable ones. In September last year, we launched the “Bring Your Own Container” Campaign to encourage the public to bring their own containers when buying takeaways. Moreover, we collaborated with the catering industry to organise the third “Plastic-Free Takeaway, Use Reusable Tableware” promotional and public education campaign (the Campaign). Under the

Campaign which runs from 18 November last year to 30 April this year, the public can earn stamps and redeem rewards through the “Plastic-Free Rewards” mobile application when they choose not to take disposable tableware or containers when ordering takeaway from over 750 participating eateries. These activities not only demonstrate our commitment to cultivating a “plastic-free” culture, but also enable the catering trade and the public to jointly prepare for the implementation of the regulation of disposable plastic tableware on 22 April.

ASSISTING THE TRADES IN COMPLYING WITH THE REGULATION

20. At the resumption of second reading debate on the Amendment Bill last year, the Government stated that non-compliant businesses would mainly be issued advice or warning during the first two months after the legislation comes into effect. Given that the regulated plastic products are widely used in the market, there will be a process for changes to take place. We also understand that certain trades, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, may require some time to adjust their business operation.

21. To better assist the trades in keeping up with the pace of “plastic reduction” and “plastic-free”, we will adopt a progressive enforcement model by designating the first six months following the implementation of the regulation on 22 April as an adaptation period. During this period, the EPD will arrange staff to proactively inspect relevant business premises, and will focus on promotion and education, as well as providing appropriate advice to help businesses to comply with the requirements under the new legislation. After the six-month period, we will adopt a risk-based enforcement model and take enforcement actions against those “non-compliant black spots” with repeated non-compliance records. The EPD will also establish a hotline to address enquiries, complaints, and receive reports of violation from the public and the trades.

ADVICE SOUGHT

22. In view of the above various promotional and educational measures targeting at both the trades and the public, and taking into account the six-month adaptation period after the regulation comes into place, we are confident that the regulation could commence smoothly on 22 April. In the upcoming period of

about two months' time, we will continue to explain the scope of regulation to the trades and the public before the regulation comes into force, and provide appropriate assistance and support to facilitate a smooth adaptation by businesses and the public.

23. Members are invited to take note of the latest progress of the various preparation work, and offer views.

Environment and Ecology Bureau
February 2024

Annex 1

Regulation of Disposable Plastic Tableware and Other Plastic Products

Implementation Date: 22 April 2024

Disposable plastic tableware		Sale	Takeaway	Dine-in
1.	All expanded polystyrene (EPS) tableware (including plates, food containers and cups)	Banned	Banned	Banned
2.	Plastic straws	Banned	Banned	Banned
3.	Plastic stirrers	Banned	Banned	Banned
4.	Plastic forks, knives, spoons	Banned	Banned	Banned
5.	Plastic plates	Banned	Banned	Banned
6.	Plastic cups	Can continue to be sold	Can continue to be used	Banned
7.	Plastic cup lids	Can continue to be sold	Can continue to be used	Banned
8.	Food containers including plastic bowls and plastic boxes	Can continue to be sold	Can continue to be used	Banned
9.	Lids of food containers including plastic bowls and plastic boxes	Can continue to be sold	Can continue to be used	Banned
Other disposable plastic products		Sale	Free distribution	Manufacture
1.	Plastic stemmed cotton buds	Banned	Banned	
2.	Balloon sticks	Banned	Banned	
3.	Inflatable cheer sticks	Banned	Banned	
4.	Glow sticks	Banned	Banned	
5.	Party hats	Banned	Banned	
6.	Umbrella bags	Banned	Banned	
7.	Plastic food sticks	Banned	Banned	
8.	Plastic toothpicks	Banned	Banned	
9.	Non-medical use transparent gloves	Can continue to be sold	Banned	
10.	Plastic packaged tissue paper for promotional use	Can continue to be sold	Banned	
11.	The following plastic products for use in hotel rooms:	Can be provided at a charge	Banned	
	(i) toothbrushes			
	(ii) toothpaste			
	(iii) shower caps			
	(iv) razors			
	(v) nail files			
	(vi) combs			
	(vii) small sized shampoo, body wash, conditioner, lotion and hand wash			
	(viii) disposable plastic bottled water			
12.	oxo-degradable plastic products (regardless of disposability)	Banned	Banned	Banned

Information released on different online platforms by the EPD
regarding the regulation
(Chinese Only)

GOV NEWS.HK

管制即棄塑膠 一圖看清

實施日期 2024年4月22日

即棄膠餐具	銷售	外賣	堂食
已有成熟的替代品 所有發泡膠餐具 (包括杯、碗、飯盒) 膠飲管 膠攪拌棒 膠叉、膠刀、膠匙 膠碟	×	×	×
未有成熟的替代品 膠杯、膠碗、膠飯盒 (包括蓋、封口膠膜)	可以繼續銷售	外賣可以使用	



GOV NEWS.HK

管制即棄塑膠 一圖看清

實施日期 2024年4月22日

其他即棄塑膠產品	銷售	免費供應
有成熟替代品 膠柄棉花棒 雨傘袋 食物膠籤 膠牙籤	×	×
非生活必需品 氣球棒 充氣打氣棒 熒光棒 派對帽		



管制即棄塑膠 一圖看清

實施日期
2024年4月22日

其他即棄塑膠產品

銷售

免費供應

鼓勵減少使用

即棄膠手套
(醫療用途除外)

宣傳用塑膠包裝紙巾

可以繼續
銷售

可收費
提供

供在酒店客房使用的
以下即棄塑膠用品：

- 牙刷 ·牙膏
- 浴帽 ·剃刀
- 指甲銼 ·梳
- 小樽裝洗髮露、
沐浴露、護髮素、
潤膚露和洗手液
- 膠樽裝水



管制即棄塑膠 問與答

Q 政府以甚麼準則制訂
需受管制的塑膠產品？

- 為推廣「走塑」文化，我們的大原則是應盡量淘汰／減少使用即棄塑膠製品。
- 我們應只在必要及沒有合適非塑膠替代品的情況下才使用即棄塑膠製品。
- 就管制哪類即棄塑膠製品而言，我們的主要考慮因素包括有關產品是否必需品；是否有合適而價格合理的替代品；以及其對環境的影響程度。



管制即棄塑膠 問(與)答

Q1 一般市民在日常生活中
會否很容易誤墮法網?

法例只規管商戶銷售或供應相關產品，不規管市民。市民購買或使用受管制即棄塑膠產品不會犯法。舉例來說，食肆在外賣中提供膠叉、膠刀會觸犯法例，但顧客接收或使用這些膠叉、膠刀並不犯法。市民在外地網站購買或旅行帶回即棄塑膠產品，均不犯法。



管制即棄塑膠 問(與)答

Q2 幼童用的塑膠食具
是否受管制?

在塑膠餐具方面，法例只管制即棄的產品，不包括可重用塑膠餐具。幼童用的塑膠食具可以重用，不受影響。



管制即棄塑膠 問(與)答

Q3 醫院診所可否繼續提供
膠匙羹給小朋友或病人食藥？

可以。

醫院診所為小童或病人等進食藥物而提供的即棄塑膠產品(例如膠匙羹)，在法例下屬於醫治或醫療程序的情況可獲豁免。

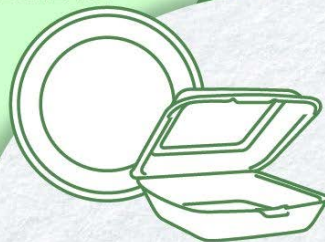


管制即棄塑膠 問(與)答

Q4 為何要減少使用
即棄塑膠產品？

塑膠難以分解，可在環境中殘留極長的時間，更加會分解為微塑膠，對環境生態以至人類健康均可以造成深遠的禍害。

所以，「減塑」、「走塑」已成為國際間的共識，無論內地以及世界其他地方，近年都相繼加強減少使用塑膠物料的措施，並探索使用其他替代品。



管制即棄塑膠 問與答

Q5 4月22日後商店是否不能售賣即棄膠柄棉花棒、膠牙籤、膠柄牙線棒、牙縫刷? 市面上有什麼替代品?

牙縫刷並非法例管制的產品。

膠柄牙線棒並未納入現階段的管制。

膠柄棉花棒及膠牙籤將在4月22日納入管制，商戶不能銷售或免費供應相關產品。市場上已有不少替代品，例如木柄或紙柄的棉花棒、竹/木牙籤、竹柄牙線棒、傳統牙線、水牙線機等。



管制即棄塑膠 問與答

Q6 4月22日後，會否禁止餐廳使用外賣飲品(例如珍珠奶茶)的透明膠杯和膠蓋/膜，或有熱湯(例如雲吞)和餐飲等外賣的即棄塑膠容器?

不會。4月22日後，餐廳仍可向外賣顧客免費提供膠杯、膠碗、膠飯盒及膠蓋等，但不能提供膠叉、膠刀、膠匙，亦不能提供所有用發泡膠製成的膠杯、膠碗、膠飯盒。

餐廳亦不能向堂食顧客提供即棄餐具和即棄塑膠食物容器。



管制即棄塑膠 問與答

Q7 4月22日管制實施後，
市民可否自備膠袋盛載雨傘？

可以。

法例不規管市民，市民可以自備膠袋盛載雨傘。



管制即棄塑膠 問與答

Q8 4月22日管制實施後，會否對入住
本地酒店的旅客帶來不便？

4月22日管制實施後，酒店只是不可免費提供塑膠梳洗用品，但可在分開收費下提供這些用品。

酒店亦可免費提供非塑膠梳洗用品。

旅客亦可自攜本身的梳洗用品。旅客自攜塑膠梳洗用品不會觸犯法例。

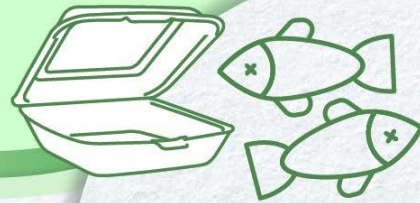


管制即棄塑膠 問與答

Q9 為何禁止所有發泡膠餐具？
是否禁止運輸及包裝用發泡膠？

發泡膠非常輕，容易破碎並流入海洋，導致海洋生物誤食、窒息或中毒等，對環境及海洋生態的影響特別嚴重。事實上，內地及澳門早已禁止使用發泡膠餐具。

運輸及包裝用發泡膠並非法例管制的產品。

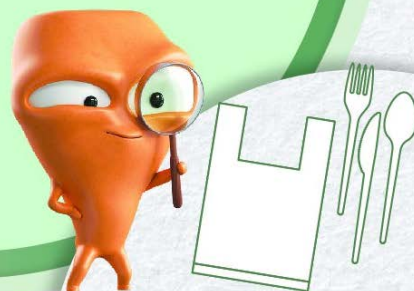


管制即棄塑膠 問與答

Q10 為何全面禁止氧化式可分解塑膠產品？

氧化式可分解塑膠產品在天然環境會分解成微塑膠，不利環保。

歐盟和新西蘭等地已就這類產品作出類似管制。



「突發」4月22日後所有牙籤、牙線棒、棉花棒同牙縫刷都有得賣？

#1 大嘍鬼 · 2024-1-29



錯！只有即棄膠牙籤同膠柄棉花棒
將在4月22日納入管制！

膠柄牙線棒並未納入現階段的管制！

牙縫刷更完全不屬於新法例下受管制的產品！👁️

