

Drink Without Waste

Submission to Public Engagement on the Control of Single-use Plastics

Drink Without Waste (DWW) welcomes the Council for Sustainability Development's Public Engagement on Control of Single-use Plastics aimed at tackling the 'plastic pandemic' in Hong Kong. *Drink Without Waste* strongly supports regulation of unnecessary single-use plastics. In order to map out a comprehensive plan on plastic management, we believe the government can learn from the previous pilot schemes to identify effective and cost-efficient strategies.

Ground rules: Clean and separated plastics

We ran a successful trial scheme "Recycling Fund: Neighborhood Bottle Reward Scheme", funded by Recycling Fund, for 11 months from 2020 to 2021. The scheme offered 5 cents reward for the return of plastic bottles. The scheme attracted primarily cleaners. We recovered over 1,244 tons of plastic beverage bottles, mainly PET bottles, from household, building and street cleaners. In support of the cleaners, residents and businesses started to keep plastic bottles separate from other waste.

Similar schemes can attract other plastics. However, to maximize the value of the material recovered, it is important to instill from the start the need for keeping it clean – removing contamination and separation of the different types of plastics. Mixing PET bottles with other types of plastics, and worse, contamination, will significantly impact the value and costs. Therefore, the *DWW* campaign promotes clean recycling and separation at source as ground rules.

Making sure everyone (and all government departments) is on board

People enjoy dining outdoors. However outdoor seating at restaurants to dine using multi-use cutlery is a challenge due to land, planning and building regulations. The result is that people who hope to eat take-away purchases outdoors in public spaces can only do so relying on single-use plastics. Another example, are government water fountains which are deemed unhygienic and unsafe in times of Covid-19. The result is unnecessary single-use plastic waste from bottled water. However, few departments are making an effort to replace fountains with bottle refill stations which are safe to use. These are just two examples to highlight the level of concerted effort required to reduce waste from single-use plastics.

Your sincerely,

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Chairman, Single Use Beverage Packaging Working Group

Drink Without Waste is an initiative of the Single-Use Beverage Packaging Working Group, an alliance of participants from across the beverage value chain, resources management and NGOs, which seeks to reduce 70-90% of beverage packaging going to waste by 2025. Visit www.drinkwithoutwaste.org for information and our research:

- Press Release in response to the launch of the consultation on producer responsibility (<https://bit.ly/3ccDfFD>)
- Position statement on a producer responsibility scheme for beverage packaging (<https://bit.ly/391YzeX>)
- Presentation "Packaging Exchange" (<https://bit.ly/3r6ZosX>)
- Consumer survey: Plastic bottle recycling – public attitudes and behaviours (<https://bit.ly/3r9iM8T>)