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Feature Article

Carbon Label System Reaches a Decade in Taiwan

Taiwan launched the Carbon Label in 2009 and became the 11th country in the world to do so. As the product carbon footprint labeling system enters its 11th year, the EPA continues to improve the system and urges enterprises to disclose their products carbon footprints, apply for the label and commit to carbon reduction. Taiwan expects to sign agreements with other advanced countries to mutually recognize each others' carbon labels on imported and exported products.

The carbon footprint of a product (CFP) is the total amount of greenhouse gases emitted over the product's entire life cycle, from cradle to grave. Carbon labels are used to provide CFP information for consumers to refer to when shopping. Through media promotion, the public are encouraged to change their consuming behaviors. Businesses are also spurred to examine manufacturing processes and supply chains and jointly commit to carbon reduction to fulfill corporate responsibilities and build an environment-friendly image.

Carbon footprint labels, also known as carbon labels or carbon emission labels, are labels that disclose the amount of carbon emitted by enterprises, manufacturing processes, products (including services) and individuals. A product's carbon footprint is calculated by totaling the greenhouse gases generated over its life cycle, from sourcing of raw materials, manufacturing, distribution, sales and consumer use, to waste recycling and treatment, and by converting the amount to carbon dioxide equivalents. The Carbon Reduction Label, the first

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carbon label in the world, was launched in 2006 by Carbon Trust, which was established in 2001 in the UK.

11th country in the world to promote carbon labels

Carbon emission sources throughout different stages of a product's life cycle become transparent under the carbon labeling system. In this way, enterprises are encouraged to adjust parts of their manufacturing process that generate more carbon, and consumers are also urged to use products in a correct manner. Together, the carbon emission from products life cycles can be maximally reduced.

So far, countries like Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, Thailand, the UK and the US have already promoted policies concerning carbon footprints and set up relevant systems in striving to build a low-carbon society. This has also brought opportunities for enterprises to lower carbon emissions and has strengthened corporate brands and reputations. In 2009, the Taiwan EPA started to formulate the local carbon labeling system, and in September of the same year, it held a label contest and selected the best design from 1,286 submissions and designated it as Taiwan's official carbon label. Taiwan had become the 11th country to have joined the ranks of nations with carbon labels and has now entered the

second decade of promoting carbon labeling.

Promotion of the carbon labeling system in two stages

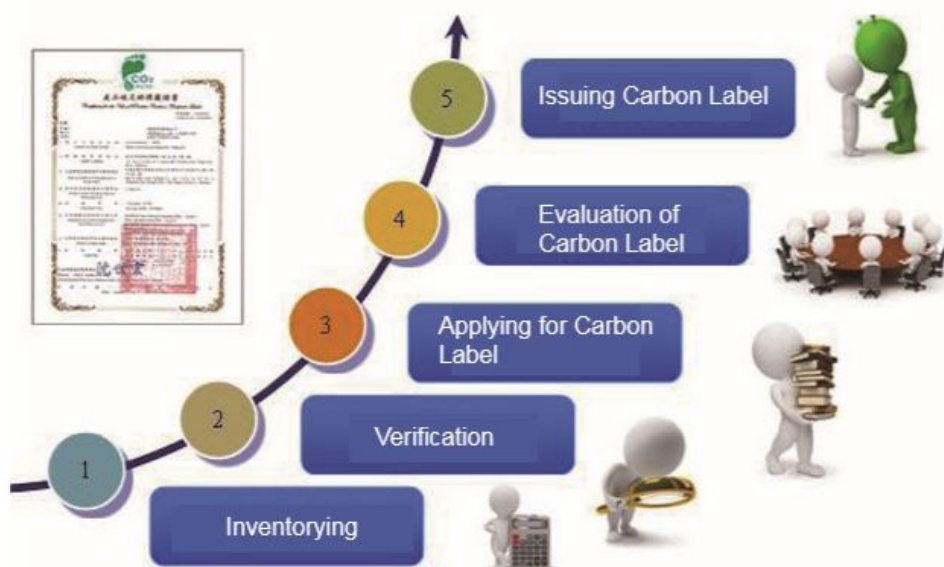
Taiwan's carbon labeling system is promoted in two stages:

1. Promoting CFP disclosure

Currently, there is no unified international standard for countries to develop relevant complementary measures for CFP labeling systems. Since there are few certified products in the early stage of carbon labeling system promotion, the carbon footprints of products of the same categories cannot be compared. Therefore, the first stage aims to encourage enterprises to analyze and disclose their CFPs.

Via carbon footprint analysis, enterprises can understand the amount of a product's greenhouse gas generated in each stage throughout its life cycle and further devise carbon reduction strategies. Measures include using environment-friendly raw materials, reducing or recycling packaging, improving shipping efficiency, and demanding suppliers to lower their carbon footprints. Besides cutting down carbon emissions and forming green supply chains, these measures can help lower production costs at the same time.

Consumers can support manufacturers' disclosure



▲ From Carbon Footprint to Carbon Reduction: promoting in stages

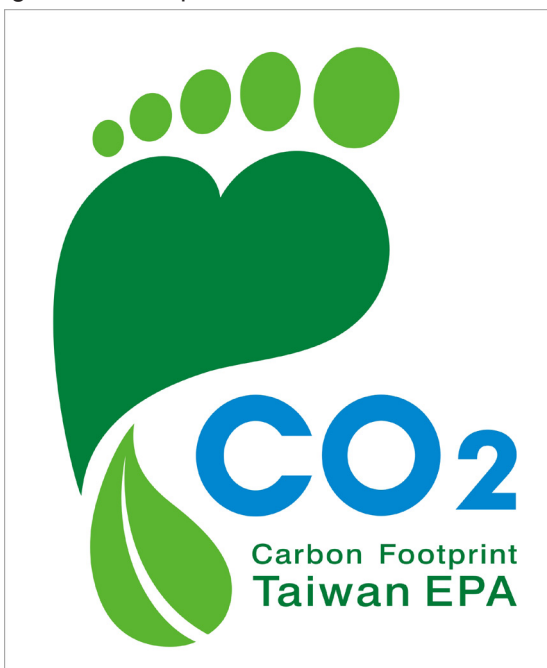
of product carbon footprints by choosing products with carbon labels as well as following instructions on proper usage and waste treatment to lower the overall carbon emissions.

2. Developing a carbon reduction labeling system

Taiwan's carbon reduction labeling system is based on the current Carbon Label. Enterprises can use the carbon footprint stated in the Carbon Label certificates or in the carbon footprint documents issued by a third-party verification body as baselines for reduction to formulate practical reduction commitments and implementation measures. After the EPA evaluates and confirms that these promises are fulfilled, a product will be certified with a carbon reduction label.

In the future, products certified with carbon reduction labels will be combined with the green point system and even possibly be included in the preferential procurement lists of government agencies. This provides incentives for enterprises to apply for the labels and will certainly help to cut greenhouse gases and build green supply chains.

Likewise, consumers can choose carbon reduction label certified products and contribute in mitigating climate change when shopping, ultimately building a green consumption trend.



 The Carbon Footprint Label in Taiwan

Specific achievements

(1) Certified Carbon Footprint Label products

From January 2018 to 26 March 2019, the EPA added six new product categories, revised regulations for 50 product categories, and certified 176 products with the Carbon Label. In total, the EPA has announced regulations for 98 Carbon Label product categories and certified 800 products with the label.

(2) Maintained Carbon Label promotion and communication platforms

Communication and coordination meetings have been regularly held with attendance of representatives from industry, government agencies, academia, and civil organizations in order to take into account opinions from all stakeholders. In addition, meetings to research and review carbon footprint labeling regulations and systems are also held to collect data, analyze international carbon footprint labeling trends, and research and review Taiwan's own system.

(3) Assisted enterprises in calculating CFPs and applying for the Carbon Label

1. The EPA implemented the Assistance Plan for Product Carbon Footprint Demonstration Cases, picking out candidates for demonstration and taking inventory of and auditing each product's carbon footprint.

2. Training seminars were organized in order to enhance the professional capacities of carbon footprint auditors, provide opportunities for them to share experiences and learn from others, and ensure audit quality.

(4) Completed guidelines for calculating carbon footprints of products and services

The EPA formulated the *Guidelines for Calculating the Carbon Footprint of Products and Services* (產品與服務碳足跡計算指引) by referencing the life cycle assessment methods established in PAS 2050 and ISO/DIS 14067.1, and announced the Guidelines to the public in February 2010. Future revisions will be carried out based on the content of the officially announced ISO 14067.

The Guidelines allow enterprises to examine the carbon emissions from the entire life cycles of their products and services and also the current emission statuses of their supply chains. Now with the greenhouse gas emissions disclosed, consumers are able to choose environment-friendly products and are reminded to adopt emission-cutting measures when using them before discarding them for final disposal or recycling.

(5) Certified verification bodies

According to the *Operating Guidelines for Promoting Product Carbon Footprint Labeling* (推動產品碳足跡標示作業要點), carbon footprint verification organizations are required to obtain certification from certification organizations after 1 January 2016.

A total of four companies in Taiwan, namely BSI Taiwan, TÜV Rheinland Taiwan Ltd., Bureau Veritas Certification and SGS, comply with relevant regulations and have obtained certification as verification organizations.

(6) Organized working group meetings to harmonize carbon footprint product categories rules among Korea, Taiwan and Thailand

On 11 April 2018, the Asia Carbon Footprint Network (ACFN) organized working group meetings to harmonize carbon footprint product category rules (CFP-PCR) among Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand. The collaboration aimed to develop harmonized PCR that all three countries can abide by. The meeting concluded with initial consensus on PCR for alcohol-free beverages and skin and hair cleansers. Edible oils were also chosen as the product category for the trial third PCR project.

Future outlook

The EPA has established the carbon information disclosure service platform and the calculation software providing convenient access for enterprises in Taiwan to calculate CFPs. In the future, relevant government agencies will continue to hold explanatory meetings and provide training to help enterprises and industry associations and organizations calculate carbon footprints and apply for the Carbon Label. Those in need will be assisted with familiarizing themselves with the carbon labeling system and to develop skills to calculate CFPs on their own. The public will also be educated and guided to learn the meaning behind the Carbon Label.

The EPA has set up the Taiwan Product Carbon Footprint website (<http://cfp.epa.gov.tw>) where enterprises can submit electronic applications for CFP labeling certificates. The EPA will also keep track of global trends and adjust the direction of the CFP labeling system as well as complementary measures based on unified international standard practices. Furthermore, The EPA is looking forward to signing agreements with advanced nations to promote bilateral recognition of CFP labels on exported and imported products.

Via carbon labeling policies, the EPA hopes to increase the competitiveness of local low-carbon products, raise consumer awareness of carbon label products, and work toward sustainable consumption and production patterns for a low-carbon economy.

Air

Environmental Agencies Take Action in Response to Poor Air Quality in Western Taiwan

Western Taiwan experienced poor air quality on 2-3 October 2019, which the EPA explained was caused by transboundary pollution brought in by southwestern winds. Around the same time, horizontal and vertical atmospheric dispersion conditions became poorer because of reduced wind speeds and a lower inversion layer in the morning. Pollutants were prone to accumulate, leading to mostly orange or even red alerts for the AQI level. The EPA sought to improve air quality by coordinating with the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) and the Taiwan Power Company to cut electricity output and reduce emissions.

The EPA stated that six counties/cities (New Taipei City, Taichung City, Chiayi County, Kaohsiung City, Pingtung County, and Penghu County) voluntarily set up local response centers and one county (Yunlin County) set up a local control and command center in response on 2 October 2019. Seven counties/cities (Taipei City, Hsinchu City, Taichung City, Chiayi County, Kaohsiung City, Pingtung County and Penghu County) voluntarily set up local response centers and one local government (New Taipei City) set up a local control and command center in response on 3 October 2019. In total, regional governments conducted 372 factory inspections, issuing notifications for voluntary controls and emission reduction; found 56 open-air burning incidents during patrols; improved coverings for building materials at construction sites; carried out sprinkling and other fugitive dust control measures at 265 sites; and cleaned a total of 2,800 kilometers of main roads and traffic-heavy streets. Other efforts included inspecting 119 restaurants, patrolling and inspecting exposed areas of rivers 10 times, and inspecting 5,462 motor vehicles at roadsides. It encouraged residents to take four measures to reduce use of private vehicles, and publicized 83 measures to promote prevention and control of air pollutants.

In addition, the EPA coordinated with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Taiwan Power Company to lower electricity

outputs and emissions from Taichung Power Plant, Hsinta Power Plant, Hsieh-ho Power Plant, and Linkou Power Plant. Electricity output was lowered by 215,603,000 kWh on these two days, leading to 105 metric tons of SO_x reduction, 99.4 metric tons of NO_x reduction and 7.6 metric tons of total suspended particles (TSP) reduction.

The EPA reminded the public to check the latest air quality changes by visiting the Taiwan Air Quality Monitoring Network website (<http://taqm.epa.gov.tw>) and the i-Environment website (<http://ienv.epa.gov.tw>). Different alert levels can be set up with the “Environment Info Push” app on smartphones for better protection.



▲ Onsite plant inspection



▲ Street-washing trucks reduce road dust.

Air

Sulfur Limit for Fishing Vessel Fuel Lowered to 0.5% to Improve Air Quality

The EPA actively coordinated with CPC Corporation to keep improving air quality by lowering the upper limits for sulfur content of domestic fishing vessel fuels. The limits will fall from 1.0% for Class A vessels and from 3.5% for Class B vessels, both to 0.5%. This is expected to reduce annual SOx emissions by approximately 4,340 metric tons.

The EPA stated that improving the composition of fuels can directly reduce pollution from combustion engines and is one of the most effective measures to improve air quality. The EPA has lowered the sulfur content of automobile gasoline and diesel fuels to 10ppm (0.001%), effectively cutting down automobile SOx emissions.

Environmental monitoring data of the EPA shows that atmospheric sulfur dioxide dropped from 5.2 ppb in 2005 to 2.7 ppb in 2018, a reduction of 48%. The EPA actively coordinated with CPC to lower the

sulfur content of fishing vessel fuels in order to further improve air quality and protect the public's health.

CPC also affirmed its efforts as a state-run corporation to comply with various policies while continuing to produce high-quality fuel products. Upon stock replacement, the sulfur content of fuels for Class A and B fishing vessels will be lowered to 0.5%. The EPA noted it will keep working on improving air quality by evaluating composition standards for fuels used by mobile pollution sources and promoting the use of cleaner fuels.

Monitoring

Guidelines Announced for Establishing and Operating Air Quality Monitoring Stations

On 9 September 2019, the EPA announced the *Air Quality Monitoring Stations Establishment and Monitoring Guidelines* (空氣品質監測站設置及監測準則) specifying types and establishing guidelines for air quality monitoring stations. The goal is to properly implement air quality monitoring and enhance the value, accessibility and applications of environmental information.

The *Air Quality Monitoring Stations Establishment and Monitoring Guidelines* was formulated based on Article 13 of the *Clean Air Act* (空氣污染防治法), which states that the central competent authority shall establish air quality monitoring stations and provide regular public reports of the state of air quality along with original data from cities, towns, and townships where petrochemical industrial areas are located, and from appropriate points selected by competent authorities at all levels.

The EPA specified the types of air quality monitoring stations and test items in the Guidelines after referring to the site selection and numbers of monitoring stations in the US, EU, Japan and other countries. According to the monitoring purposes, the stations can be classified as ones that monitor

for long-term national air quality trends and ones that reflect regional pollution characteristics and form comprehensive monitoring station networks.

The EPA noted that to ensure the quality and openness of the monitoring data, the Guidelines also added regulations concerning quality assurance proposals, monitoring maintenance records, data effectiveness and online access. The purpose is to construct a self-reinforcing framework for planning and management of monitoring, so as to enhance air quality monitoring and improve the establishment of monitoring stations. As a result, quality reference data for formulating air pollution control policies and measures and for assessing control results can be provided.

| Municipality, county, and city populations (thousands) | Required number of monitoring stations |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 0-249 | 1 |
| 250-499 | 2 ⁽³⁾ |
| 500-749 | 2 |
| 750-999 | 3 |
| 1,000-1,499 | 4 |
| 1,500-1,999 | 5 |
| 2,000-2,749 | 6 |
| 2,750-3,749 | 7 |
| ≥ 3,750 | 8 |

▲ Minimum number of regular air quality monitoring stations required

Monitoring

Monitoring System Put Under Inspection and Control to Deter Illegal Emissions

Addressing recent concerns about forged data from continuous emission monitoring systems (CEMS), the EPA expressed that there have always been inspection and control measures that detected previous violations. Competent authorities have in the past strengthened inspections and issued penalties. For the first stage, the *CEMS Control Regulations* (連續自動監測設施管理辦法) added data retrieving as well as a mechanism for treatment system archiving, audit, and comparison. Now coming to the second stage, a draft revision of the regulations will be completed by the EPA before the end of October 2019.

The EPA explained that previous major incidents of forged CEMS monitoring data were the result of enterprises having installed simulating programs on the data retrieving and control systems to replace the correct monitoring data. Based on the current CEMS Control Regulations, private and public venues are not allowed to change the data retrieving and control systems at will once their own programs are approved by the monitoring facilities. They are required to monitor and send and report the correct data online. Audit and control measures are now in place in response to relevant violations, and the environmental authorities have already intensified inspections and issued penalties accordingly.

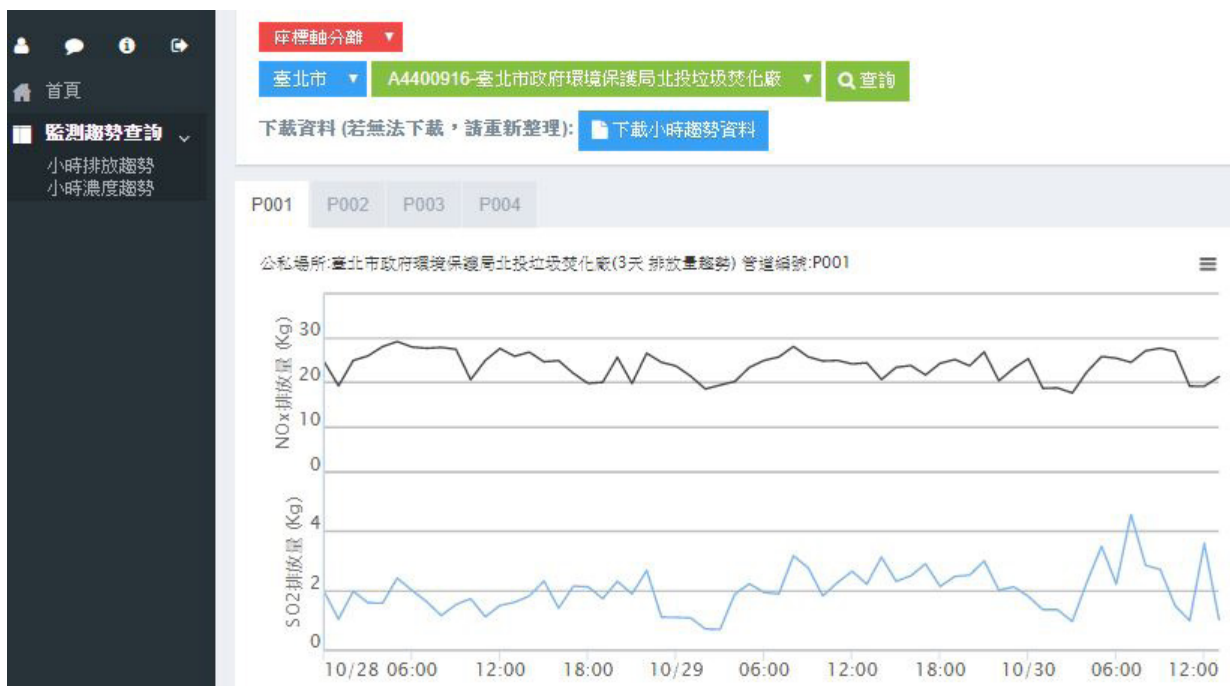
On the revising schedule, the EPA stressed its efforts on continuous evaluation and improvement on CEMS-related measures and expansion for targets subject to controls. Before the first-stage revision of the CEMS

Control Regulations was announced on 12 April 2019, the EPA carried out four revisions on relevant regulations, preannounced revisions twice, as well as frequently organized consultant meetings with experts and public hearings.

For the first stage, the CEMS Control Regulations newly added data retrieving and a mechanism for treatment system archiving, audit, and comparison. The second-stage revision of the regulations will be completed by the EPA before the end of October 2019. It includes enhancing monitoring data quality and analysis, adding a review and approval system on data retrieving and treatment system as well as measures to compare and audit parallel signals. The purpose is to thoroughly implement a round-the-clock monitoring and control system and intensify CEMS controls.

Since the regulations involve technical details concerning monitoring facilities and information systems, during the examination and revisions, it was necessary to inspect discharge channels, sampling locations, online interface statuses, understand monitoring facilities' operation theories, installation locations, and operation statuses, and evaluate monitoring feasibility based on different manufacturing

features. It helped get rid of possible disturbances and assure stable monitoring data connection and transmittance. Meanwhile, new technical control items continue to be drawn up with stability evaluation and testing. With complex interconnection among all technical control regulations, the EPA will carry out multiple confirmations, fully assess these regulations, and keep improving controls and management.



▲ CEMS real-time and daily monitoring data of controlled factories can be checked online.

Air

EPA Implements Control Measures for Continuous Air Quality Improvement

The nationwide concentrations of various air pollutants have been dropping since the beginning of 2019, making this the best year since 2015 when comparing similar periods (January to July). To accomplish the goal of reducing the national annual $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations to $15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ by 2023, the EPA will continue enhancing emission controls on stationary, mobile and fugitive sources.

The number of red alerts based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) set off over the years are as follows: 997 in 2015, 874 in 2016, 483 in 2017, 310 in 2018, and 160 in 2019 (until the end of July). There was not a single red alert reading from April to July of 2019. The historical statistics from manual monitoring stations also show continual improvement in air quality. The $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations from January to July in the past few years were: $23.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2015, $21.4 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in

2016, $19.4 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2017, $18.9 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2018, and $16.6 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2019.

With reducing the national annual $PM_{2.5}$ concentration to $15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ by 2023 as the goal, the main points of the Air Pollution Control Action Plan includes: air pollution reduction for state-run and large-scale enterprises, boiler controls, controls of oily smoke produced by the food industry, amelioration of

problems caused by cultural and religious activities, controls on fugitive dusts from river and construction and dumping sites, reuse and treatment of agricultural residue and orchard branches, promotions for replacing large diesel vehicles of phase 1 to 3, phase-

out of two-stroke motorcycles, port transportation controls, new traffic control measures, transport vehicle electrification, subsidization or promotion for installation of green walls, and more.



▲ Evaluating standards, formulating plans, and adding new control items

Water

Control and Penalty Regulations Added for Enterprises Generating No Wastewater

On 27 September 2019, the EPA issued an official letter concerning enterprises generating no wastewater, which is specifically mentioned in the *Water Pollution Control Act* (水污染防治法). Said enterprises, once taken off the regulatory list, are subject to additional regulations for control and penalization if there are risks of stored raw materials or drugs leaking and contaminating water bodies. The goal is to keep proper track of the enterprises' situation for intensified controls.

The EPA's letter focuses on enterprises that are categorized and defined by the Water Pollution Control Act. If an enterprise does not generate wastewater in its manufacturing procedures or discharge or store wastewater, it can be taken off the regulatory list once the competent authorities in the municipality, county, or city have completed the audit and approval. Yet it has to have its conditions registered on the information management system for water pollution sources so that its future status can be tracked for future control.

However, an enterprise audited and approved by the competent authorities for generating no wastewater should still be put on watch if it stores raw materials and drugs, which will pose risks of water body contamination if leaked. It is also required to follow prevention and emergency response measures specified in Article 28 of the *Water Pollution Control Act* and will be penalized if regulations are violated.

International Cooperation

Second Taiwan-Germany Environmental Forum Welcomes Delegation Led by German Parliamentarian

The Second Taiwan-Germany Environmental Forum was held by the EPA in Taipei on 2 October. German parliamentarian, Mr. Klaus Mindrup, fellow delegates and other attendees were invited to discuss issues covering climate change and energy transformation, circular economy and source reduction of plastic wastes, and air pollution. The event attracted over 120 people, from the general public as well as representatives from industries, government agencies, academia, and the research community in Taiwan.

During his speech, EPA Deputy Minister Hung-Teh Tsai thanked each guest for coming from afar and also the German Institute Taipei (GIT) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) for supporting the event. He pointed out that Taiwan is currently in the middle of energy transformation to reduce carbon emissions and respond to climate change. Other than setting long-term reduction goals for 2050, the EPA has also gradually drawn up multiple practical reduction measures over time. Besides resource reuse and recycling measures in place toward a circular economy, cutting down the use of plastic is another main effort in hopes of reaching a total ban on plastic bags and straws by 2030.

Deputy Minister Wu-Chiao Hsieh of MOFA remarked that all the issues featured in the forum confront everyone, even future generations. He hoped cooperation between Taiwan and Germany on environmental issues would be promoted through the exchange of ideas among the attending experts from both countries.

Dr. Thomas Prinz, the GIT Director General, mentioned that both Germany and Taiwan take the discussed issues seriously and hoped to find mutually benefitting niches and methods in future cooperation via sharing of ideas in the forum.



▲ The Second Taiwan-Germany Environmental Forum held in Taipei

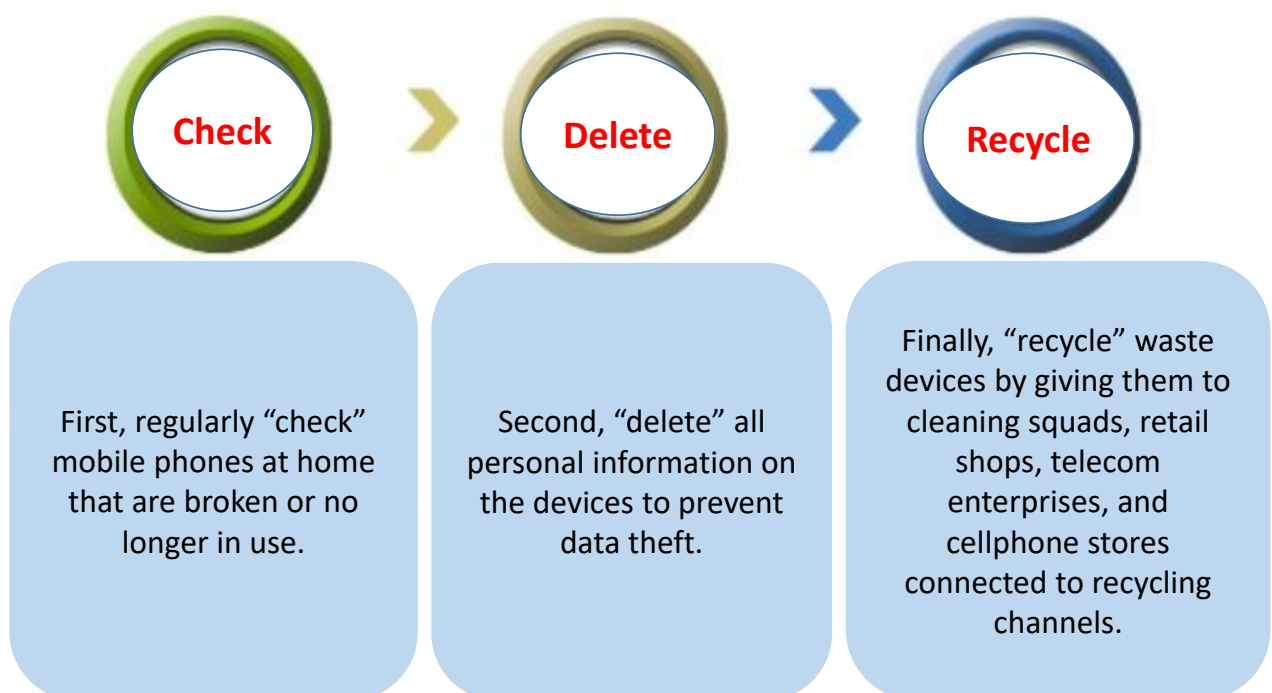
Recycling

October Set to Be Mobile Phone Recycling Month

Approximately six million mobile phones are purchased annually in Taiwan, and over half are kept either as backups or for fear of personal data theft. As a result, the EPA has designated October as Mobile Phone Recycling Month to promote resource recycling.

The public are reminded to follow three steps when disposing of their mobile phones: check, delete, and recycle. First, regularly “check” mobile phones at home that are broken or no longer in use. Second, “delete” all personal information on the devices to prevent data theft. And, finally, “recycle” waste devices by giving them to the cleaning squads, retail shops, telecom enterprises, and cellphone stores with recycling channels. The EPA’s database shows that around 350,000 mobile phones have been recycled by cleaning squads in 2019.

According to reports by Japan’s Ministry of the Environment, rare metals worth NT\$80,000 can be extracted from every 1,000 recycled mobile phones after treatment. These precious metals include 46 grams of gold, 275 grams of silver, 24 grams of dysprosium, 4 grams of indium, 267 grams of neodymium, and 84 grams of tantalum. I also stated that medals for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics will be made with cellphone-extracted metals. This demonstrates that waste mobile phones contain rare metals and have a high reuse value, so cellphone recycling can promote a circular economy.



▲ Three steps when disposing of their mobile phones

News Briefs

Draft Revisions Preannounced for Regulations Concerning Toxic Chemical Substances Emergency Equipment and Alarm Facilities

As On 5 September 2019, the EPA preannounced draft revisions to the *Regulations Concerning Toxic Chemical Substances Emergency Equipment and Alarm Facilities* (毒性化學物質應變器材及偵測與警報設備管理辦法). Under the revisions, "harmful concerned chemical substances" are included in the original Class 1 and 3 toxic chemical substances under control, and how detection facilities are to transmit and be connected online are added under the existing structure in order to provide handlers a basis to operate upon. As administrative work is all conducted online, when detection facility connections fail, reports and operation plan reviews are all to be done online.

The EPA stressed that the regulations were amended once on 8 March 2019. In the draft revisions, handlers for substances on the regulatory list are to consider the characteristics of both chemical substances handled and packaging and containers and prepare an adequate quantity and correct types of emergency equipment. As detection and alarm facilities are mainly to provide warnings, a clause is added to specifically avoid redundant facilities so that management responsibilities

would not be confused and that management efficiency is enhanced.

Draft Preannounced for Regulations on Reporting Toxic and Concerned Chemical Substances Accidents

Article 41 of the *Toxic and Concerned Chemical Substances Control Act* (毒性及關注化學物質管理法) was revised and announced on 16 January 2019. Recently, the EPA formulated the draft *Toxic and Concerned Chemical Substance Accidents Reporting Regulations* (毒性及關注化學物質事故報知方式) accordingly.

The EPA noted that when emergency chemical accidents occur in the future, environmental and fire agencies in municipalities, counties, and cities where accidents occur should be notified within 30 minutes. Notice is also to be given to handlers of toxic chemicals and harmful concerned chemical substances designated and announced by central competent authorities. Hotlines include 0800066666 for environmental nuisances, 1999 for local city and county services, 119 and 110. This will help ensure effective containment and control of accidents and prevent future occurrences.



▲ Alarm equipment should undergo functional testing once a month.

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Editor-in-Chief

Shyh-Wei Chen

Executive Editors

Shiuan-Wu Chang; Chien-Jen He; Chun-Wei Yang;
Shaowen Chang; Jason Hoy; Ken Lee

For inquiries or subscriptions, please contact:

Electronic Environmental Policy Monthly

Office of Sustainable Development
Environmental Protection Administration
83, Sec. 1, Jhonghua Rd., Taipei 100, R.O.C. (Taiwan)
tel: 886-2-2311-7722 ext. 2217
fax: 886-2-2311-5486

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