

Press release

For immediate release



APCO Amendment Goes against Public Opinion to Cap Power Plants CO₂, says Greenpeace Survey

6th April, 2008 While the Hong Kong Observatory warns that winter will disappear in two decades, the government shows no sign to cap carbon dioxide emissions from power plants in its latest amendment to the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO). Yet a Greenpeace survey shows that 70% of interviewees believe it is urgent for the authority to tackle climate change, while more than 80% support regulation to carbon dioxide emissions from power plants.

On the eve of the World Health Organization's World Health Day, which falls under the theme of climate change this year, Greenpeace activists covered their eyes with black cloths and unleash black balloons representing CO₂, in front of a banner which says "Edward Yau Letting Go of CO₂, Hong Kong Climate in Danger". The act is to condemn the government of turning a blind eye to uncontrolled CO₂ emissions from power plants, which directly impose adverse impacts to the environment and citizens' health¹.

Frances Yeung, Greenpeace Climate and Energy Campaigner criticizes the government of appeasing powerful syndicates by making multiple concessions to the two power companies when formulating the new Scheme of Control Agreement (SOC) and failed to limit CO₂ emissions from power plants. The government is now recommitting the same error and shirked to regulate carbon emissions from power plants, thus letting go the golden opportunity to combat climate change.

Greenpeace commissioned the Public Opinion Programme of the University of Hong Kong to conduct a climate change survey. Among 514 interviewees who aged 18 or above, around 65% expressed concern to impacts of climate change to the Earth, and 70% worried its impacts to Hong Kong. In addition, 70% believed the government has an urgent need to manage the crisis; more than 80% agreed that the government should follow the footsteps of countries in the European Union and the UK to limit carbon emissions from power plants; nearly 85% agreed to impose a cap on carbon emissions from power plants in the Air Pollution Control Ordinance.

Carbon dioxide from power plants accounts for 70% of the city's total emissions and the figure has been increasing by 20% in the past 10 years².

¹ A survey by the Environmental Protection Department through the Hong Kong Polytechnic University shows that a 1°C increase in HK's temperature will push up the risk of malaria infection and dengue fever by 6.7% and 1% respectively. Another Hong Kong Observatory research also shows that under extreme hot weather, the chance of death as a result of heat stroke, circulatory and respiratory diseases will double with every 1°C increase in temperature. Elderly over the age of 65 is the most vulnerable group.

Ref:

EPD (2004), *Characterizing the Climate Change Impact in Hong Kong*
HKO (2007) *Possible Meteorological Influence on the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Community Outbreak at Amoy Gardens, Hong Kong*

² Power plants emitted 2,803 tons of CO₂ in 2005 which was a 17% rise compared to 1995.

Greenpeace also suggests that power plants may cut their total carbon dioxide emissions by 15% of the 2006 level by 2020, so as to alleviate climate change. The Legislative Council will commence amendment to the APCO this Thursday to regulate air pollutants from power plants from 2010 onwards. However, carbon dioxide leading to climate change is not included in the discussion.

Appendix :

Survey on Climate Change and Regulating Greenhouse Gases Emissions from Electricity Companies

Media Inquiries

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Appendix : Opinion Survey on Climate Change and Regulating Electricity Companies on Greenhouse Gases Emissions

1. Background of studies and methodology

Greenpeace commissioned the HKU Public Opinion Programme to conduct a “Survey on Climate Change and Regulating Electricity Companies on Greenhouse Gases Emissions” on 30th and 31st January. This survey aimed at understanding public opinion on global warming and regulating electricity companies’ greenhouse gas emissions.

Random telephone survey by real interviewers was conducted. Hong Kong citizens speaking Cantonese and aged 18 or above were the target population. There were totally 514 successful cases. Overall response rate was 73.7 %. Standard sampling error was less than 2.2%. In other words, the sampling error for all percentages was less than ± 4.4 percentage points at 95% confidence level.

2. Results

[Q1] How concerned are you to the effects of global climate change, or global warming to the Earth?

	Frequency	Percentage
Very concerned	117	22.9
Quite concerned	219	42.8
Half-half	132	25.9
Not quite concerned	13	2.5
Not concerned at all	13	2.6
Have never heard of climate change / global warming (skip to Q4)	8	1.5
Don't know / Hard to say	9	1.8
Total	512	100

[Q2] How concerned are you to the effects of climate change /global warming to Hong Kong?

	Frequency	Percent
Very concerned	141	28.0
Quite concerned	214	42.5
Not quite concerned	115	22.7
Not concerned at all	17	3.4
Have never heard of climate change / global warming (skip to Q4)	11	2.2
Don't know / Hard to say	6	1.2
Total	504	100

[Q3] How urgent do you think is it for the HKSAR government to deal with climate change?

	Frequency	Percent
Very urgent	161	31.9
Quite urgent	194	38.4
Half-half	100	19.9
Not quite urgent	20	3.9
Not urgent at all	8	1.5
Don't know / Hard to say	22	4.4
Total	504	100

[Q4] Which of the following do you think are the major sources of carbon dioxide emissions? (multiple response allowed)

	Frequency	Percent of cases
Vehicles	397	77.5
Power plants	228	44.5
Landfill	191	37.2
Industrial activities	123	24.0
Logging	112	21.9
Agricultural activities	25	4.8
None of the above	4	0.7
Don't know / Hard to say	18	3.6
Total	1,097	214.4

[Q5] 5. The government is about to amend the Air Pollution Control Ordinance and propose to cap emissions of three types of air pollutants, namely sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and respirable suspended particulates, from the two electricity companies. It is also proposed that emissions of carbon dioxide from power plants should also be regulated. Do you support or object this suggestion?

	Frequency	Percent
Very much support	227	44.4
Quite support	202	39.6
Half-half	39	7.6
Quite object	2	0.4
Very much object	5	0.9
Don't know / Hard to say	36	7.1
Total	514	100

[Q6] Do you agree or disagree that Hong Kong should follow other countries (e.g. EU, UK and Japan) to limit emissions of carbon dioxide by electricity companies?

	Frequency	Percent
Very much agree	232	45.2
Quite agree	191	37.3
Half-half	39	7.7
Quite disagree	12	2.4
Very much disagree	5	1.0
Unheard of this policy	14	2.8
Don't know / Hard to say	18	3.6
Total	513	100