



## **Media Fact Sheet**

For Immediate Release

24 March 2015

### **“Full Implementation of the Plastic Shopping Bag Charging” on 1 April 2015**

#### **3 Major Green Groups - The Conservancy Association, Greeners Action and Green Power Collaborate and Build a Platform**

#### **Collecting Retailers Donation to Advance Waste Reduction**

Three established green groups, The Conservancy Association, Greeners Action and Green Power collaborate and build a platform to collect the Plastic Shopping Bag (PSB) Charge from retailers as donation, which will be used in waste reduction projects and promotion of bring-your-own-bag (BYOB). Mr. Wong Kam-sing, JP, Secretary for the Environment; Mr. Ken So, Chief Executive of The Conservancy Association; Mr. Angus Ho, Executive Director of Greeners Action; Dr. Man Chi Sum, Chief Executive Officer of Green Power and retailers supporting the Plastic Shopping Bag Charge Collaborative Platform (The Platform) attended the Kick-off Ceremony on 24 March in Times Square, Causeway Bay.

Mr. Wong Kam-sing, JP, Secretary for the Environment, showed immense support towards The Platform built by the three green groups. He said, “Under the ‘Full Implementation of the Plastic Shopping Bag Charging’ on 1 April 2015, over one hundred thousand retail shops are covered and will be collecting the PSB Charge instead. I am delighted to see enthusiastic retailers donating the collected PSB Charge to the Platform for further waste reduction projects and the promotion of BYOB. In the long term, I hope the general public could get used to the BYOB habit and further enhance waste reduction.”

#### **Employ user- pays principle to lower abuse of PSB**

The Full Implementation of the Plastic Shopping Bag Charging will come into effect on 1 April 2015. All retailers will have to collect \$0.5 for every shopping bag sold that is wholly or



partly made by plastic (exempted items excluded). Matthew Sin Kar-wah, Senior Environmental Affairs Manager of Green Power, expressed that the User- pays principle can prevent the abusive use of PSB. The first phase of Environmental Levy Scheme on Plastic Shopping Bags was implemented on 7 July, 2009, leading to a reduction of 90 percent in the distribution of PSB by registered retailers. However, about 600 tonnes of plastic bags are disposed of in Hong Kong every day, which is equivalent to over ten million plastic bags.

He also stated that The Platform accepts donation from retailers, which in turn provides the green groups with more resources to carry out and develop waste reduction projects, along with a new thematic advocacy project based on “Say No to Plastic Bag & BYOB!” Ideally, he hopes a lower number of PSB distributed can be reflected by a decline in donation to The Platform.

### **Switching to paper bags inappropriate**

Matthew further indicated that while contacting potential retailers to support The Platform, they found that some large retail chainstores have switched from distribution of plastic bags to paper bags to avoid the charge. This irresponsible approach is against the legislative intention of reducing distributing shopping bag, as well as the fundamentals of environmental protection. There is also likelihood for retailers to distribute low quality paper bags due to cost- effective reasons. Low quality paper bags are less likely to be reused and may increase the disposal rate.

Although some retailers have agreed to donate the PSB charges, others treat the charges as income. Meanwhile the cost of manufacturing most plastic bags is less than 50 cents, certain retailers might take advantage and gain profit through excessive plastic shopping bag distribution. Besides, retailers do not need to submit the charges collected to the government, which causes difficulty in monitoring the effectiveness of the new legislation. Hence, retailers are highly encouraged to disclose their PSB distribution quantity for effective monitoring.

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## First batch with seven retailers supporting The Platform

First batch of retailers supporting the Plastic Shopping Bag Charge Collaborative Platform include, Citistore, DCH Food Mart, GreenDotDot, JustGreen, Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, Marks & Spencer and YATA Department Store. Meanwhile, the Airport Authority Hong Kong fully supports this platform and will invite their tenants to join. For more details, please visit our website at [www.bringbag.org.hk](http://www.bringbag.org.hk)

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Advisory Organization  
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## **Media Contact**

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If you wish to download photos of today's ceremony, the press release (E- version) or any related logos of this platform, please visit the link below.

**<http://t.cn/RAZg8eF>**

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First batch of retailers supporting the Plastic Shopping Bag Charge Collaborative Platform:  
(According to alphabetical order)



Full Support by

