

SEED PROGRAM OF MISSION MOONSHOT

CASE PRESENTATION

Consumer Council's work on
advocating Sustainable Consumption

August 2021



The Situation

- **Sustainable consumption (SC) is a pressing issue worldwide**
 - World population growth and over-consumption patterns
 - Exacerbated depletion of planet's resources, environment pollution, climate change
- Hong Kong should quicken its pace to **catch up with global development of achieving sustainability**
 - Hong Kong is a big user of various kinds of resources (e.g. water resources, seafood consumption)
 - Culture of disposability instead of approaching product purchases as sustainable options
 - Need to drive changes with joint efforts of all stakeholders, including consumers, businesses and the Government, to build a sustainable city



The Situation

- Consumer Council (the Council) has set up the **Working Group on Sustainable Consumption Programme** to steer and provide advice about the strategic direction on advocating SC, 3 main areas:
 - Product tests/ Market surveys
 - Education programmes
 - ➔ • Tracking studies on SC attitude and behaviour in Hong Kong
- **Tracking studies** on SC attitude and behaviour:
 - SC Study (Baseline study published in 2016; Tracking study in 2021)
 - Press conference on publication to draw public attention
 - Sustainability Conference following report publication
 - Stakeholder engagements (pre- and post-report publication)



Opportunities That Will Bring

Through SC Tracking Study and Conference

- **Consumers** are expected to be **more aware of SC**, and to be more interested to learn about sustainable products/services
- **Businesses** are expected to **understand more about consumer attitudes and willingness to support SC** (e.g. purchase of SC products, purchase from business with SC commitment)
- **Government** will bring up necessary infrastructure/policies/laws to drive changes and facilitate adoption of SC lifestyle
- Stakeholders' attention are aroused, the Council may gain **collaboration opportunities with various stakeholders from the public and business sectors** to advocate SC in the city



Difficulties

Conduct of the SC Study and Conference

- **Track behaviour change and reflect latest development**
 - Telephone survey which was employed in the baseline study, might not be suitable to be employed again as quite a number of households do not have fixed telephone lines nowadays
- **Delay in work schedule**
 - The on-street face-to-face survey fieldwork was affected by the pandemic situation in the city
- **Insufficient funding**
 - Lack of funding to organise a conference which was obliged to be delivered to facilitate stakeholder exchange



Actions Taken

Alternative Methods and Contingency Plans were Adopted

- **Additional survey** was conducted by way of face-to-face street intercept to pave the way for transition of methodologies (apart from telephone survey) to facilitate future tracking studies
- **Survey fieldwork hours each day were lengthened** when the COVID-19 situation was more stable to meet the required number of respondents
- **Contingency plans** were prepared for the survey such as replacing on-street survey with online survey for social distancing reason
- **Partnership with an external organisation** to co-host the conference for sharing the cost



Results

- **The Study was Completed amidst COVID-19**
 - Consumers' **awareness, attitude and behaviour towards SC were evaluated** and the changes as compared with the baseline study were reviewed
 - **Recommendations** about how to promote behavioural changes were proposed for stakeholders' consideration
 - The Study received **well attention**: it drew a total of 39 news reports in various media channels (including newspapers, televisions, radio stations and online platforms); 7 media interviews were attended for radio and TV programmes.
- **The SC Conference was Held within the Budget**
 - Over 120 participants (including govt bureaus/depts, business sectors, trade associations, green groups, NGOs, academics) were involved and positive responses were received

*The release of the SC Study and Conference, along with the **recent initiatives launched by the Government** (e.g. Waste Blueprint for Hong Kong 2035 and the proposed Scheme on Regulation of Disposable Plastic Tableware), could bring a **synergy effect in advocating SC** in the city.*

