

LIBERAL STUDIES (ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES) AS-LEVEL

8.30 am – 11.00 am (2½ hours)

This paper must be answered in English

1. This paper consists of **Section 1** and **Section 2**. Section 1 carries 75% of the module marks, and Section 2 carries 25%.
2. **Section 1** consists of three questions, *all* of which are to be answered. **Section 2** consists of four questions, of which candidates may attempt any *one*.
3. Each question is worth 25 marks: 20 marks are allocated for content and 5 marks for effective communication.
4. The maximum content marks are indicated in brackets at the end of each question and sub-question. They are a guide to the length of answer required, which may vary from one to several paragraphs.
5. Candidates are reminded that this subject emphasises the ability to present and support points of view in a clear, concise and logical manner, rather than the ability to recite facts.

SECTION 1

Answer *all* the questions in this section.

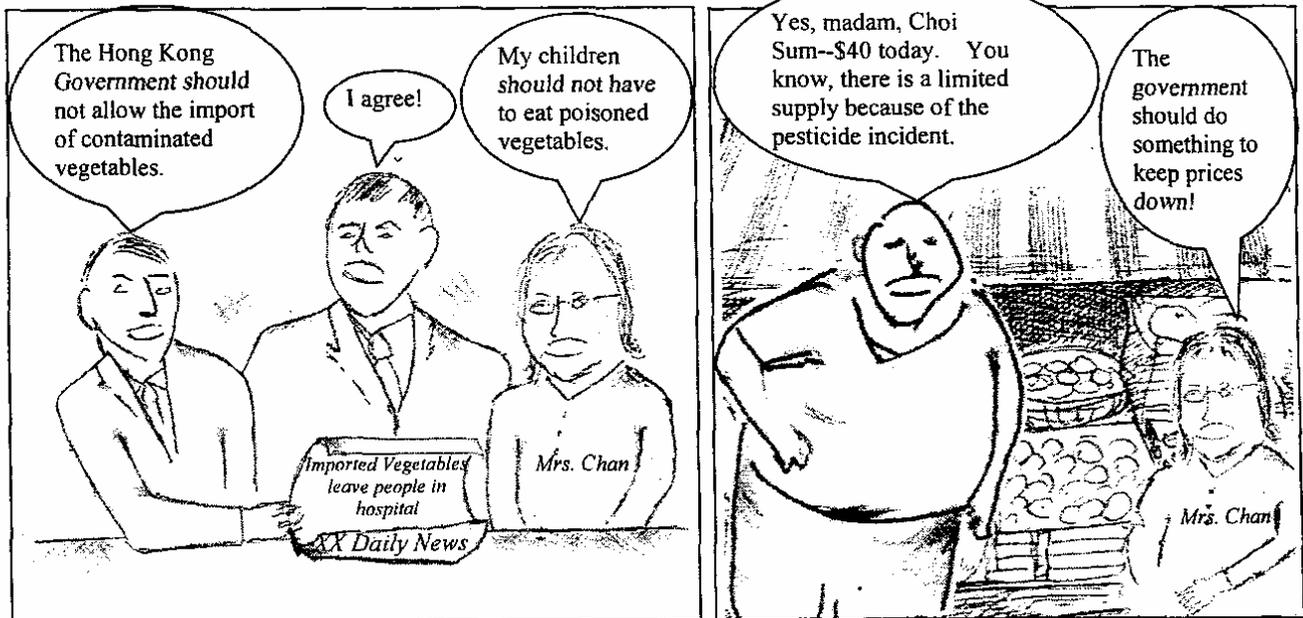
1. Consider the following sources:

Why Care About Pesticides?

There is growing concern in the scientific community regarding the subtle ways in which small doses of pesticides affect people, especially unborn children on whom they can have long-lasting adverse effects. Because the toxic effects of pesticides are not well understood or in some cases completely unknown, shoppers would be wise to avoid buying products containing pesticides whenever possible.

Source: Environmental Working Group, USA FoodNews, 2005. (<http://www.foodnews.org>)

The following are the conversations of some citizens:

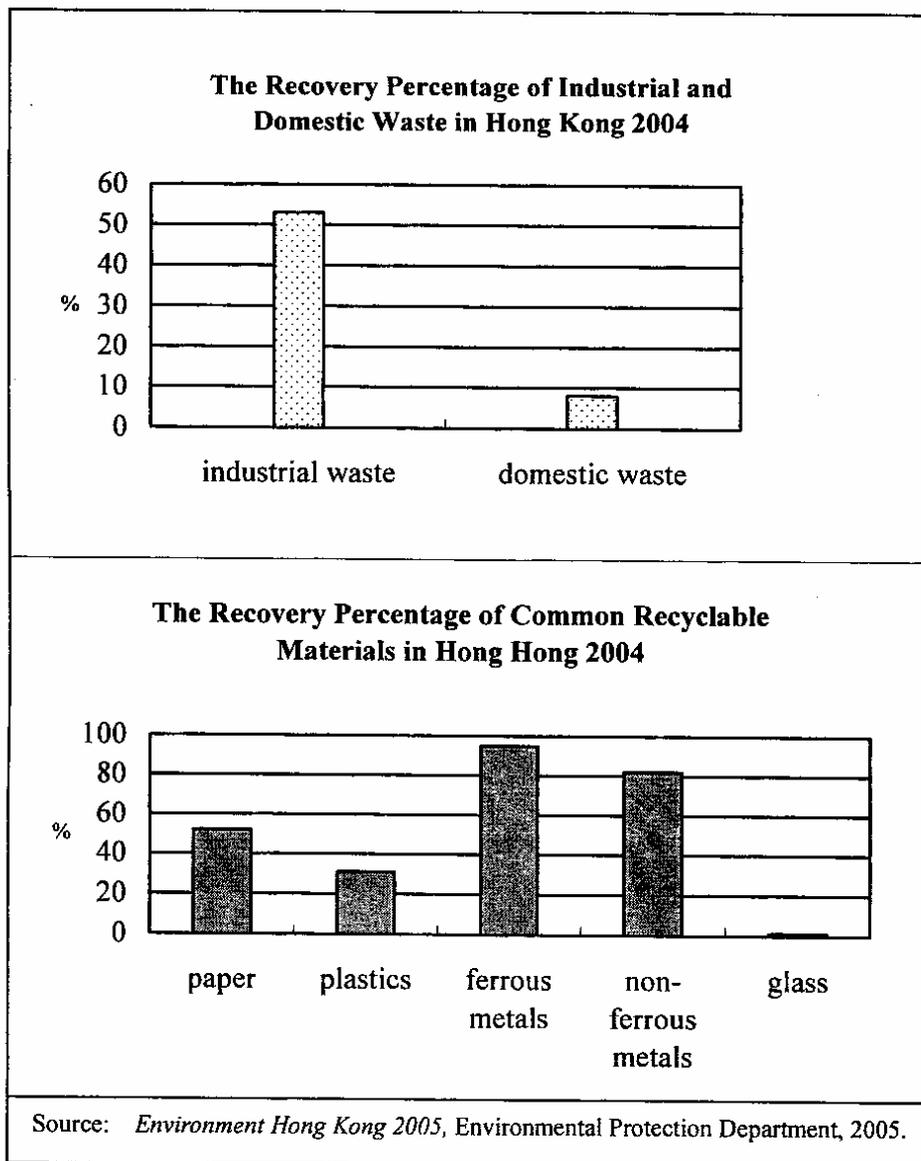


- (a) Do you think that Mrs. Chan has adopted different value positions in the above two conversations? Explain your answer. (10 marks)
- (b) To what extent do you think the government can ensure that people in Hong Kong eat vegetables and fruit that are free from harmful levels of pesticides? (10 marks)

2. Consider the following source:

A government scheme to sort waste is aiming to include 180 housing estates in Hong Kong and one million people. As yet 60 estates have participated.

Dr. Wong of the Environmental Protection Department said, "Waste sorting is not something which is difficult. In fact, it could be done easily if you are willing to do it. It doesn't need a large amount of space. However, it is essential to provide appropriate facilities for people to sort waste."



- (a) It is claimed that waste sorting is 'starting to take hold' in homes. To what extent does the source above support this, and can it reflect the attitudes of Hong Kong people towards recycling? Explain your answer. (12 marks)
- (b) Do you think that a culture of recycling metals and glass can be developed in Hong Kong? Explain your answer. (8 marks)

3. Consider the following sources:

Source A

In 2005, a green group conducted a survey on the use of plastic bags by supermarket customers.

510 supermarket customers were randomly sampled and interviewed at the entrance of 25 supermarkets in major districts in Hong Kong. The survey found the following:

- The 510 supermarket customers interviewed spent a combined total of about HK\$48 000. The supermarkets provided 1 184 plastic bags to these customers.
- Among the 1 184 plastic bags, 301 bags were considered by the interviewees to be unnecessary.
- 11% of the interviewees said that the cashier had asked whether the customer needed the plastic bags. The other interviewees said that the cashier had not done so.
- The figure below indicates the interviewees' comments on charging for plastic bags:



Source: URL: <http://www.gsc.org.hk>.

Source B: Some facts about plastic and paper bags

Plastic bags	Paper bags
2 000 plastic bags weigh 30 pounds	2 000 paper bags weigh 280 pounds
Made from crude oil	Made from trees
Energy to produce 2 000 bags: 594 BTU*	Energy to produce 2 000 bags: 2 511 BTU

* BTU: British thermal units

Source: URL: <http://www.eqa.gov/region1/communities/shopbags.html>.

- (a) Discuss how you think that the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau should respond to the survey in Source A. (10 marks)
- (b) In the light of Source B, how feasible and environmentally friendly is the replacement of plastic bags with those made of paper? (10 marks)

SECTION 2

Answer *one* question from this section.

4. Consider the following sources:

Source A

<p>The Centre of Health Education and Health Promotion of the Chinese University of Hong Kong conducted a study on children's experience of passive smoking.</p> <p>The Director pointed out that the damage from passive smoking is at least as great as smoking itself. He warned, "As the living environment in homes is small, children are likely to breathe in smoke. Frequent passive smoking will increase the risk of contracting respiratory diseases."</p> <p>Some of the results of the study are shown below:</p>		
Children's Exposure to Passive Smoking Per Day		
Time Per Day	Places of Exposure	
	At Home	Other Indoor Environment
<i>Less than 1 hour</i>	75.9%	65.5%
<i>1-5 hours</i>	19.6%	30.7%
<i>6-10 hours</i>	2.3%	3.1%
<i>More than 10 hours</i>	2.2%	0.6%
<p>Figures refer to the average for 30 days. Number of respondents: 1 639 parents</p>		

Source: Centre of Health Education and Health Promotion, CUHK (2005).

Source B

<p>The following is an extract from the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● In cinemas, theatres, concert halls, public lifts, amusement game centres, smoking is prohibited;● In any indoor areas open to the public in supermarkets, banks, shopping malls, smoking is prohibited;● A restaurant with more than 200 seats should designate at least one-third of its area as a no smoking area.
--

- (a) With reference to Sources A and B, discuss whether laws can effectively maintain good air quality in the indoor environment and protect children from passive smoking. (12 marks)
- (b) 'Besides smoking, keeping cats or dogs at home may also cause environmental problems inside the building.' Discuss whether or not you agree with this view. (8 marks)

5. Consider the following sources:

Source 1

Green Cities Save Money

A university professor in Hong Kong has reported that, in Guangzhou, every \$1 spent on greening the environment produced benefits equivalent to \$10 each year. This was achieved by planting trees. This reduced pollution and improved citizens' health. It led to cooling of the temperature and to less need for electricity to power air-conditioners. The professor believes that if such a greening programme was introduced in Hong Kong, savings would be much higher.

Source: *South China Morning Post*, 9 September, 2005.

Source 2

Commercial Development for Tamar?

While a harbour protection group has proposed that the Tamar site in the Central district of Hong Kong should be a park, some property companies are strongly campaigning for the site to be used for commercial development. They argue that the site is too valuable not to be used for offices, etc.

- (a) Discuss the possible conflict in the views of the professor in Source 1 and the property companies in Source 2. (10 marks)
- (b) With reference to the conflict you mentioned in (a), explain how you think individuals should act to create a more sustainable environment. (10 marks)

6. Consider the following source:

- An Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department officer mentioned that local ecologically sensitive spots could not cater for large numbers of visitors. He suggested the development of geological cruises as an alternative.
- One of the green groups is worried that eco-tours in the New Territories may cause damage to ecologically valuable sites.
- The Green Turtle is the only turtle species that breeds locally. Sham Wan, Lamma Island is one of the few remaining nesting sites of the turtles in Southern China.
- In recent years, the sight of a group of five or six vessels waiting to watch the same school of dolphins could be seen in Hong Kong waters. Some of the sightseeing tours on these vessels were not led by professional guides. Some sightseers even fed the dolphins!
- In recent years, Buddhist pines and incense trees, both endangered species, have been illegally felled in Sai Kung.

- (a) Besides tourism, what other factors may threaten the survival of endangered/ rare species in Hong Kong? Evaluate the importance of these factors. (10 marks)
- (b) 'Educating the public in the natural habitats of the endangered/ rare species helps in the protection of these species.' How far do you agree with this point of view? Justify your arguments. (10 marks)

7. Consider the following source:

The Burning Issue

The newly formed partnership between the United States and five Asian and Pacific nations, China, India, Japan, South Korea and Australia to promote clean development has been widely criticised by environmentalists. It allegedly undermines the Kyoto Protocol, which makes cuts in carbon dioxide emissions and other global warming gases compulsory for many developed countries.

Of the six participating nations, only Japan is committed to the Kyoto Protocol target of reducing greenhouse emissions by 5.2 per cent from 1990 levels by 2012. The US and Australia refused to ratify it. This was partly because large carbon dioxide emitters like China, India and South Korea were not classed as developed countries and did not have to implement cuts.

These six countries said they expected to make progress on energy efficiency in many aspects. These include the use of advanced transportation, methane, clean coal, nuclear power, liquefied natural gas, bioenergy and renewable energy resources; and improving the construction and daily operation of buildings and homes, etc.

Source: *South China Morning Post*, 5 August, 2005.

- (a) To what extent do you think that the ideas of the newly formed partnership mentioned in the source are likely to help sustainable development in the world? (10 marks)
- (b) 'Some values with respect to the environment create hurdles to international cooperation in combating global warming.' Discuss this statement with reference to the source. (10 marks)

END OF PAPER