



HK can halve emission intensity, study finds

Cheung Chi-fai
Mar 29, 2010

RSS ✉️ 📄 + SHARE 📱 📺 📺

Hong Kong is capable of cutting its carbon emission intensity - the amount of carbon emitted per unit of GDP - by more than half, says a study that is expected to renew debate on how much the city can do to fight global warming.

The study, commissioned by the British-based Climate Group, calls on the city to step up reduction of emissions through energy efficiency and renewable development and help mainland cities move towards low carbon use.



Conducted by scientists from the Energy Research Institute under the National Development and Reform Commission, the study gauged the city's projected emissions under different low-carbon scenarios. The projections were made by a computer model developed by the institute, which was also used by the mainland to calculate its voluntary carbon emission intensity target unveiled in December before the climate change summit in Copenhagen.

The study finds Hong Kong can achieve a 19 per cent cut in carbon intensity by 2020, from the 2005 level, or even up to 53 per cent by 2030. The extent is comparable to the mainland's reduction target of 40 to 45 per cent by 2020.

"Hong Kong, as a developed economy, has the capacity to take on a more ambitious emissions target," the soon-to-be-released study says.

It warns that if nothing is done, the city's energy demand might increase by 20 per cent above 2007 levels by 2020, leading to at least double-digit growth in carbon emissions. The extra emissions will be equivalent to adding millions of cars on Hong Kong's roads.

To mitigate the growth in carbon emissions, the study said the city should focus on energy efficiency and adjusting its fuel mix such as expanding the use of natural gas in power generation and making use of renewable energy across the border.

It calls on Hong Kong to adopt tighter standards in the mandatory building energy code and take the lead in research and development as well as deployment of low carbon technology in the Pearl River Delta region.

Hong Kong does not have any binding reduction target under the international climate pact, the Kyoto Protocol, since China remains a developing country and is not obliged to take on a binding target.

While the city pledged along with other Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation members in 2007 to cut energy intensity by 25 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, such a target was seen as not commensurate with its economic status and not directly related to carbon emissions.

And a carbon intensity target would give Hong Kong an alternative to an absolute target or energy intensity for consideration. But the city's carbon intensity has dropped from 32.3kg per HK\$1,000 of gross domestic product in 2005 to 29.8kg in 2007. It represents an 8 per cent drop though the actual emissions rose from 44.5 million tonnes to 46.7 million tonnes during the period.

The Environmental Protection Department is expected to release its climate change mitigation and adaptation consultancy study later this year.

RELATED STORIES

(Last 7 Days)

1. Carbon debate creates climate for China's civil society to grow
2. Home-grown remedies
3. HK's role limited, Yau says
4. Envoy denies US owes debt to poor countries
5. China's emissions 'poised to double'

RELATED ARCHIVES

1. When the heat is on
2. Gas emissions will be 35pc above 1990 level, study finds
3. That sinking feeling
4. Cold water poured on emissions trading
5. Nation's image at stake in fight to cut emissions



[RATE THIS STORY](#)

AVERAGE (3 VOTES)

... [TOP](#)