

Environment linked to economy, activist says

Evelina Leung

Pollution and the environment are hot topics in Hong Kong. It's hard not to notice that winters are becoming shorter and summers are scorching hot. Still, what appears to concern most Hongkongers now is the continuing financial crisis.

However, Catherine Touzard, author of *Going Green in Hong Kong*, believes that people should start paying more attention to the environment if they are concerned about the economy because both are intertwined.

"If our consumption is not sustainable, our economy won't be either," she said.

For example, batteries are non-recyclable and emit toxic substances in the soil after they are thrown away. If this practice continues, money will be wasted in trying to deal with the problem.

Since she was young, Ms Touzard has been concerned about the environment.

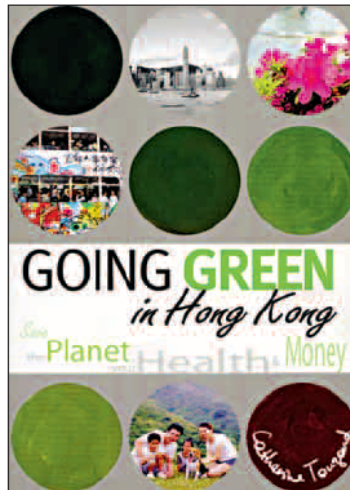
The French journalist-turned-activist, who came to Hong Kong 12 years ago, has regularly visited farms and undertaken voluntary environmental projects.

She was involved in a biogas project in Sichuan that lasted for three years. The project aimed to help people save money by turning human and pig waste into gas, which was used as a cheap fuel for cooking. She helped three villages this way.

To promote the cause of saving our environment, Ms Touzard put to use what she knew and what she had been taught by writing *Going Green in Hong Kong*.

Before coming to Hong Kong, she had already done a great deal of research on Asian countries as a risk analyst. Apart from studying economic and political risks, she also looked at environmental risks. She also worked as an environmental journalist for magazines and television.

Ms Touzard chose to publish a book because, as an ex-journalist and chief editor, she believes that written communication is the best way to get



Schools use the book as a guide.

a message across. Placing great emphasis on the fact that *Going Green in Hong Kong* was a guidebook, and not a regular book, she explained that she had not gone through the normal channel of finding a publisher because she wanted the book to be an everyday "tool" and not just another textbook.

As a result, she paid most of the publishing cost herself. Another interesting point about the book is that it can be found and bought anywhere, such as supermarkets.

The first edition was written by Ms Touzard and a friend in 2007. They spent about five months researching and putting the book together. Their hard work paid off when they received a lot of encouraging feedback.

However, only English speakers, who took notice of health and environmental issues, read the book. To spread the word to the general public in Hong Kong, Ms Touzard came out with a second edition this year that is also available in Chinese.

Going Green in Hong Kong is an educational publishing project with no funding from any private or public organisation.

It has tips about food, health, shopping, waste, water, energy, transport, work, holidays, renovation, homes and toxins.