

Index Page

**Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation**

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Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.
ENB001	0165				
ENB002	0119				
ENB003	0273				
ENB004	0065				
ENB005	0150				
FHB(FE)002	0386				
FHB(FE)003	0387				
FHB(FE)004	0122				
FHB(FE)005	0126				
FHB(FE)006	0127				
FHB(FE)007	0870				
FHB(FE)008	0799				
FHB(FE)009	0809				
S-ENB001	S020				

**Replies to written questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2022-23**

**Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Head : 22**

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Session No.	Programme
ENB001	0165	Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy	7	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
ENB002	0119	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	7	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
ENB003	0273	Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey	7	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
ENB004	0065	Hon QUAT Elizabeth	7	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
ENB005	0150	Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony	7	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
FHB(FE)002	0386	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	7	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
FHB(FE)003	0387	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	13	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
FHB(FE)004	0122	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	13	(-) Not specified
FHB(FE)005	0126	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	13	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
FHB(FE)006	0127	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	13	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
FHB(FE)007	0870	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	13	(-) Not specified
FHB(FE)008	0799	Hon LAU Chi-pang	13	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
FHB(FE)009	0809	Hon LEUNG Man-kwong	13	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
S-ENB001	S020	Hon KWOK Wai-keung	7	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ENB001

(Question Serial No. 0165)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment

Question:

In recent years, wild pigs have appeared frequently in urban areas and even forage near residential areas, causing nuisance and danger to the residents. Last year, a police officer was attacked by a wild pig in North Point and was severely injured. It is evident that wild pig problem is very serious. From 2019 onwards, the Department had progressively regularised the pilot Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) which was introduced in 2017. In late 2021, the Department announced new measures targeting wild pigs, including capturing wild pigs in the urban areas regularly for humane dispatch with a view to reducing their population, as well as exploring amendments to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170), which includes expanding the feeding ban areas for wild animals and stepping up control of feeding activities. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the manpower and expenditures involved in handling wild pigs over the past 3 years;
- (2) the number of wild pigs handled under CCRP over the past 3 years;
- (3) the number of wild pig capture operations conducted since the announcement of the measures and the details of each operation, including the date and location of operation;
- (4) the number of wild pigs captured for humane dispatch since the announcement of the measures; and
- (5) the progress of introducing legislative amendments to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170), and whether any specific timetable has been drawn up for introducing such legislative amendments; if so, the details?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (1) The manpower and expenditures involved in wild pig management by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Total expenditure on wild pig management (\$ million)
2019-20	26	14.5
2020-21	32	17.8
2021-22 (revised estimate)	32	19.1

(2) Figures related to the CCRP over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pigs		
	Captured	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised*	Relocated to countryside
2019-20	293	106	222
2020-21	344	165	270
2021-22 (as at February 2022)	370	109	219

* The number of wild pigs administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised overlaps with that of wild pigs relocated to countryside, as some wild pigs would be relocated after they had been administered with the vaccine or after the surgery.

(3) and (4) Since the announcement of new measures on 12 November 2021, as at February 2022, the AFCD has conducted a total of 34 operations and humanely dispatched a total of 66 wild pigs which caused nuisance near urban and residential areas or posed potential danger to the public. The date and location of operations and number of wild pigs involved are tabulated as follows:

Date of operation	District	Location of operation	Number of wild pigs humanely dispatched
17 Nov 2021	Southern	Shum Wan Road	7
21 Nov 2021	Yau Tsim Mong	Yau Ma Tei Public Cargo Working Area	1
21 Nov 2021	Southern	A gas station at Pokfulam Road	1
28 Nov 2021	Wan Chai	Tin Hau Temple Road	1
30 Nov 2021	Eastern	Pak Fuk Road	2
1 Dec 2021	Southern	A housing estate at Repulse Bay	2
6 Dec 2021	Southern	South Bay Beach	0
13 Dec 2021	Southern	South Bay Beach and Chung Hom Kok Beach	0
15 Dec 2021	Sai Kung	Near Po Lam MTR station	3
16 Dec 2021	Wan Chai	A housing estate on Wong Nai Chung Road	3
16 Dec 2021	Central and Western	Ching Lin Terrace, Kennedy Town	3

Date of operation	District	Location of operation	Number of wild pigs humanely dispatched
23 Dec 2021	Central and Western	Kotewall Road	5
5 Jan 2022	Eastern	Sai Wan Terrace, Tai Koo	2
5 Jan 2022	Southern	Cape D'Aguilar Road	3
6 Jan 2022	Southern	South Bay Beach and Middle Bay Beach	0
8 Jan 2022	Eastern	A housing estate at Sai Wan Ho	1
11 Jan 2022	Wan Chai	A housing estate on Tin Hau Temple Road	1
12 Jan 2022	Sai Kung	Lung Ha Wan Road, Sai Kung	3
13 Jan 2022	Southern	Shek Pai Wan Playground	5
17 Jan 2022	Tai Po	Tai Wo Service Road West, Tai Po	2
20 Jan 2022	Sai Kung	Po Lam Road North	3
20 Jan 2022	Eastern	Mount Parker Road	1
26 Jan 2022	Sai Kung	Kau Sai Chau	4
26 Jan 2022	Central and Western	Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens	1
27 Jan 2022	Central and Western	Brewin Path Temporary Playground	1
27 Jan 2022	Central and Western	Pollock's Path, The Peak	1
27 Jan 2022	Southern	A housing estate at Aberdeen	1
29 Jan 2022	Sham Shui Po	Cornwall Street Park	1
3 Feb 2022	Sha Tin	Ma Kam Street, Ma On Shan	1
10 Feb 2022	Southern	A school in Stanley	1
14 Feb 2022	Eastern	Mount Parker Road	3
15 Feb 2022	Eastern	Mount Parker Road	1
15 Feb 2022	Eastern	A housing estate at Sai Wan Ho	1
19 Feb 2022	Eastern	Cape Collinson Road	1

The above information has been uploaded to the AFCD's website and will be updated regularly.

- (5) As wild pig nuisance in recent years is largely caused by intentional feeding activities, the AFCD is exploring amendments to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) to expand the feeding ban areas for wild animals and increase the penalties, with a view to stepping up control of feeding activities and enhancing the deterrent effect, thus minimising the pull factor drawing wild pigs to urban areas. The AFCD plans to introduce the legislative amendment proposal and commence the relevant amendment procedure in 2022.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ENB002

(Question Serial No. 0119)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment

Question:

Regarding wild pigs, please advise of the following:

- (a) the projected current population of wild pigs in Hong Kong;
- (b) the number of help-seeking cases and complaints received and total value of property losses as reported by the public in relation to the appearance of wild pigs over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22);
- (c) the number of operations conducted; the number of wild pigs captured, in which the number of female wild pigs injected with contraceptive vaccines and surgically sterilised; the number of wild pigs relocated to the countryside away from residential areas, and the number of wild pigs euthanised over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22);
- (d) the expenditures and manpower dedicated to the aforesaid pilot programme and the work in relation to the wild pigs over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22);
- (e) the number of arrests made and prosecutions instituted in relation to the illegal feeding of wild pigs over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22) as well as the average, maximum and minimum penalties imposed respectively;
- (f) as the proliferation of wild pigs is still a problem, whether the Government will consider adopting other more aggressive approaches to tackle the problem of overbreeding of wild pigs and conducting a systematic assessment of such fertility trend;
- (g) the number of wild pig carcasses found in Hong Kong and the number of wild pigs captured in each of the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22), and whether the Government has conducted African Swine Fever testing on the said wild pigs;
- (f) whether the Government will implement any new measures to strengthen the work on prevention of the African Swine Fever.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched a scheme in 2019 to estimate the number of wild pigs in the countryside using infrared camera traps. In 2020, the scope of the study scheme was extended to cover more sites and different seasons. It was estimated that there were about

1 800 to 3 300 wild pigs in the countryside all over Hong Kong basing on the wild pig population density at the trial sites.

- (b) The numbers of complaints or help-seeking cases in relation to wild pigs received by the AFCD over the past 3 years are as follows:

Year	Number of cases
2019-20	1 073
2020-21	1 114
2021-22 (as at February 2022)	1 208

The AFCD does not maintain information on the property losses due to nuisance caused by wild pigs as reported by members of the public.

- (c) The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to vaccinate or sterilise wild pigs caught and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. However, the progress of contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. The AFCD's investigation also reveals that once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will continually return to the urban or residential areas to seek food from people even if they have been relocated to the countryside. The numbers of wild pig complaints and injury cases have continued to rise over the past few years. To cope with the festering nuisance of wild pigs, under the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the AFCD announced new measures on 12 November 2021 to conduct regular wild pig capture operations, during which veterinary officers will use dart guns to capture target wild pigs for humane dispatch through medicine injection. Figures related to the CCRP and the number of wild pigs humanely dispatched over the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Number of wild pigs			
	Captured	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised*	Relocated to countryside	Humanely dispatched[^]
2019-20	293	106	222	14
2020-21	344	165	270	26
2021-22 (as at February 2022)	370	109	219	98

* The number of wild pigs administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised overlaps with that of wild pigs relocated to countryside, as some wild pigs would be relocated after they had been administered with the vaccine or after the surgery.

[^] Including wild pigs humanely dispatched due to injury.

- (d) The manpower and expenditures involved in the AFCD's wild pig management over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Total expenditure on wild pig management (\$ million)	Expenditure involved in CCRP (\$ million)
2019-20	26	14.5	7.2
2020-21	32	17.8	9.4
2021-22 (revised estimate)	32	19.1	8.6

- (e) Kam Shan, Lion Rock and Shing Mun Country Parks, part of Tai Mo Shan Country Park, Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve, a section of Tai Po Road along Caldecott Road and Piper's Hill section of Tai Po Road are specified places under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) at which the feeding of any wild animals is prohibited (feeding ban areas). Any person feeding wild animals in the feeding ban areas shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$10,000. The AFCD arranges regular patrols in the feeding ban areas and will take prosecution action against anyone who has contravened the prohibition of wild animal feeding, subject to sufficient evidence. The AFCD will, from time to time, review the patrol and enforcement arrangements in the feeding ban areas in accordance with the actual circumstances, including the deployment of additional manpower to conduct enforcement and blitz operations at night and on public holidays where necessary, as well as collaborating with relevant departments to strengthen the combat against illegal feeding of wild animals. The information on the prosecutions against illegal feeding of wild animals (including wild pigs) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 (as at February 2022)
Number of prosecutions instituted*	26	50	111
Number of successful prosecutions	28	31	89
Fine (\$)	1,500-2,000 (average: 1,536)	300-2,000 (average: 559)	200-1,500 (average: 833)

* Some of the prosecutions instituted in the latter part of the year might be processed in the following year.

- (f) Wild pigs are a native species of Hong Kong. They mainly live in the countryside. Being naturally wary of human beings, they will actively avert contact with humans. However, feeding activities by humans in recent years have changed the habits of some wild pigs and drawn them to the urban or residential areas to seek food from people and cause nuisance. To cope with the nuisance caused by wild pigs, under the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the AFCD announced new measures on 12 November 2021 to conduct regular wild pig capture operations with priority accorded to sites with multiple numbers of wild pigs, areas with past injury cases or areas where wild pigs may pose risks to members of the public. Furthermore, upon receiving

reports about wild pig sightings in urban or residential areas from members of the public or other government departments, the AFCD will also capture and humanely dispatch the wild pigs which pose potential danger or cause nuisance to the public. The AFCD will continue to monitor the situation of wild pig sightings and assess the effectiveness of the strategy in a timely manner. The AFCD aims at minimising nuisance caused by wild pigs near the urban and residential areas at the present stage.

- (g) and (h) Issues regarding African Swine Fever (ASF) and wild pig carcasses as mentioned in the question fall under the purview of the Food and Health Bureau (FHB). Our reply after consulting the FHB is as follows:

The number of wild pig carcasses found in Hong Kong by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pig carcasses found
2019-20	364
2020-21	337
2021-22 (as at January 2022)	474

Regarding the number of wild pigs captured in each year, please refer to the reply to item (c).

With a view to strengthening the surveillance of ASF on local wild pigs, the AFCD has been working with the FEHD on a surveillance programme for ASF on local wild pigs since late 2019, which includes testing for the ASF in wild pig carcasses reported by the FEHD. The programme covers the New Territories and Kowloon as well as other areas found with a large number of wild pig deaths. To enable early detection, the programme also collects samples from humanely dispatched wild pigs for testing for ASF.

The AFCD has been closely monitoring epidemic situation of the ASF and taking corresponding measures in a timely manner. Major measures implemented include:

- (i) devising a surveillance and contingency plan for detecting ASF, including stepping up inspection to all local pig farms and collecting pig samples for ASF virus testing when necessary;
- (ii) advising local pig farmers to implement proper biosecurity measures and providing assistance and loans to facilitate them to acquire appropriate facilities to enhance biosecurity of their pig farms;
- (iii) requesting all local pig farms to step up cleansing and disinfection of vehicles and personnel entering and leaving pig farms;
- (iv) suspending the import of breeders from regions infected by ASF;
- (v) banning the storage or use of kitchen waste, food waste or other food of pork origin as pig feed;
- (vi) commissioning contractors to thoroughly cleanse and disinfect all local pig-carrying trucks at designated positions every time before they leave the Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse and Tsuen Wan Slaughterhouse;

- (vii) strengthening the regulation of local pig-carrying trucks, including restricting each local pig-carrying truck to carry live pigs from a single licensed pig farm to the slaughterhouse per trip to reduce the risk of cross infection between pig farms and setting spill prevention standard for local pig-carrying trucks to minimise the spread of diseases arising from spillage or leakage of pig wastes;
- (viii) liaising with relevant government departments regarding improvement in the collection arrangements for pig waste and carcasses;
- (ix) maintaining close contact with the pig farming sector, organising meetings and seminars with the trade in a timely manner, and raising local pig farmers' knowledge of preventing ASF through producing publicity materials on information about ASF, including posters, videos and guidelines on cleansing and disinfection procedures of pig-carrying trucks, etc. so as to provide local pig farmers with information about the disease, its infection as well as the preventive and control measures that pig farms should heed;
- (x) co-operating with the FEHD in conducting a regular surveillance programme for ASF in local wild pig carcasses and testing samples collected from humanely dispatched wild pigs for ASF to enable early detection; and
- (xi) devising an action plan and providing the necessary equipment for culling of pigs.

The AFCD will remain vigilant and closely monitor the epidemic situation, and will take further measures as appropriate and necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ENB003

(Question Serial No. 0273)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (the Department) announced in last November that wild pigs appearing in urban areas would be captured and humanely dispatched on a regular basis in order to reduce their population and the nuisance they cause. Please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) the total numbers of operations conducted and wild pigs humanely dispatched by the Department as well as the expenditure involved;
- (b) the details of the locations where the Department conducted capture operations and humane dispatch of wild pigs as well as the manpower and equipment involved during the aforementioned period;
- (c) the number of reports received by the Department regarding injuries caused by wild pigs since last November; and
- (d) the number of reports received by the Department regarding injuries caused by wild pigs in each of the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (a) and (b) To cope with the festering nuisance of wild pigs, under the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) announced new measures on 12 November 2021 to conduct regular wild pig capture operations, during which veterinary officers will use dart guns to capture target wild pigs for humane dispatch through medicine injection. In general, 12-15 staff members are required in each operation, and the Police will also help maintain order and control traffic on the scenes when necessary. The AFCD's manpower and expenditure on wild pig management in 2021-22 were 32 staff members and about \$19 million (revised estimate) respectively. As the capture operations and humane dispatch of wild pigs are part of the regular work in wild pig management, there is no separate breakdown of the relevant expenditure.

Under the new measures, the AFCD will accord priority to sites with multiple numbers of wild pigs, areas with past injury cases or areas where wild pigs may pose risks to members of the public. Furthermore, upon receiving reports about wild pig sightings in urban or residential areas from members of the public or other government departments, the AFCD will also capture and humanely dispatch the wild pigs which pose potential danger or cause nuisance to the public. Since the announcement of the new measures in November 2021, as at February 2022, the AFCD has conducted a total of 34 operations and humanely dispatched a total of 66 wild pigs which caused nuisance near urban and residential areas or posed potential danger to the public. The date and location of operations and number of wild pigs involved are tabulated as follows:

Date of operation	District	Location of operation	Number of wild pigs
17 Nov 2021	Southern	Shum Wan Road	7
21 Nov 2021	Yau Tsim Mong	Yau Ma Tei Public Cargo Working Area	1
21 Nov 2021	Southern	A gas station at Pokfulam Road	1
28 Nov 2021	Wan Chai	Tin Hau Temple Road	1
30 Nov 2021	Eastern	Pak Fuk Road	2
1 Dec 2021	Southern	A housing estate at Repulse Bay	2
6 Dec 2021	Southern	South Bay Beach	0
13 Dec 2021	Southern	South Bay Beach and Chung Hom Kok Beach	0
15 Dec 2021	Sai Kung	Near Po Lam MTR station	3
16 Dec 2021	Wan Chai	A housing estate on Wong Nai Chung Road	3
16 Dec 2021	Central and Western	Ching Lin Terrace, Kennedy Town	3
23 Dec 2021	Central and Western	Kotewall Road	5
5 Jan 2022	Eastern	Sai Wan Terrace, Tai Koo	2
5 Jan 2022	Southern	Cape D'Aguilar Road	3
6 Jan 2022	Southern	South Bay Beach and Middle Bay Beach	0
8 Jan 2022	Eastern	A housing estate at Sai Wan Ho	1
11 Jan 2022	Wan Chai	A housing estate on Tin Hau Temple Road	1
12 Jan 2022	Sai Kung	Lung Ha Wan Road, Sai Kung	3
13 Jan 2022	Southern	Shek Pai Wan Playground	5
17 Jan 2022	Tai Po	Tai Wo Service Road West, Tai Po	2
20 Jan 2022	Sai Kung	Po Lam Road North	3
20 Jan 2022	Eastern	Mount Parker Road	1
26 Jan 2022	Sai Kung	Kau Sai Chau	4

Date of operation	District	Location of operation	Number of wild pigs
26 Jan 2022	Central and Western	Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens	1
27 Jan 2022	Central and Western	Brewin Path Temporary Playground	1
27 Jan 2022	Central and Western	Pollock's Path, The Peak	1
27 Jan 2022	Southern	A housing estate at Aberdeen	1
29 Jan 2022	Sham Shui Po	Cornwall Street Park	1
3 Feb 2022	Sha Tin	Ma Kam Street, Ma On Shan	1
10 Feb 2022	Southern	A school in Stanley	1
14 Feb 2022	Eastern	Mount Parker Road	3
15 Feb 2022	Eastern	Mount Parker Road	1
15 Feb 2022	Eastern	A housing estate at Sai Wan Ho	1
19 Feb 2022	Eastern	Cape Collinson Road	1

The above information has been uploaded to the AFCD's website and will be updated regularly.

- (c) The AFCD received a total of 20 reports regarding injuries caused by wild pigs between November 2021 and February 2022.
- (d) The number of reports received by the AFCD regarding injuries caused by wild pigs over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports of injuries caused by wild pigs
2019-20	7
2020-21	4
2021-22 (as at February 2022)	29

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ENB004

(Question Serial No. 0065)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment

Question:

Over the past 3 years, regarding the efforts in combating illegal trade and smuggling of endangered species, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the number of operations conducted by the Government to combat illegal trade and smuggling of endangered species as well as the time frame, manpower and expenditure involved in each operation;
2. the quantity of the endangered species seized by the Government in combating illegal trade and smuggling of endangered species every year, the species of plants and animals involved as well as their whereabouts;
3. the number of cases processed by the Government in combating illegal trade and smuggling of endangered species, the respective numbers of persons prosecuted, arrested, convicted and the penalties imposed in each case (please set out cases of ivory smuggling separately);
4. the respective numbers of applications received and licences/certificates issued by the Government every year in connection with the licensing control of international trade in endangered species; and
5. the quantity of ivory forfeited every year; the total quantity of forfeited ivory in stockpile, of which the quantity disposed and its estimated value as well as the manpower and expenditure involved; and how to prevent sellers from falsely purporting/camouflaging new ivory as antique ivory?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been working closely with the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) and strictly regulating the trade in endangered species through enforcing the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) (the Ordinance) which gives effect to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Hong Kong. The AFCD conducts joint operations with the C&ED at various import and export control points from time to time to combat illegal import and export of endangered species, and they also collaborate with overseas

and Mainland law enforcement agencies through joint operations and intelligence exchange to combat smuggling of endangered species. In addition, all CITES-listed products must be inspected by authorised officers prior to their arrival in or departure from Hong Kong to confirm that the relevant consignment details tally with those in the licences. The AFCD also conducts inspections at markets and shops that might sell endangered species from time to time to detect and deter irregularities. The total number of consignment and market inspections conducted in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were 31 163, 19 476 and 22 309 respectively. Due to the global pandemic, the quantities of endangered species consignments have dropped significantly in 2020 and 2021, resulting in a corresponding decrease in the numbers of consignment inspections.

The manpower and expenditures involved in combating illegal trading and smuggling of endangered species over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 (revised estimate)
Expenditure (\$ million)	39.2	42.1	40.0
Manpower (number of staff)	48	48	45

- (2) The endangered species seized in each of the past 3 years involved mainly dried seahorse, timber, American ginseng, orchid, live tortoise/turtle, leather products of reptiles, etc. The quantity of seizure is tabulated as follows:

Year	2019	2020	2021
Quantity	376 000 kg	279 000 kg	408 000 kg

Endangered species seized during law enforcement actions have been disposed of by the AFCD according to the CITES guidelines. For live animals, the AFCD will seek the advice of the CITES Management Authority of the country of export and return them to the country of export or country of origin if deemed appropriate. For animals of a native species, they will be released to a suitable habitat locally if they are diagnosed to be healthy and fit for release. For animals that are not suitable to be returned to the country of export/country of origin or released to a suitable habitat locally, the AFCD will consider donating them to suitable local or overseas institutes for purposes of education or scientific research. If the physical condition of an animal is not satisfactory, or it is likely to die or be subjected to unnecessary suffering if kept in captivity, it will be disposed of by euthanasia. Regarding specimens of endangered species, the AFCD will consider donating to other CITES Management Authorities, government bodies, schools or non-governmental organisations for training or education purposes or disposing of them by other means that are in line with CITES.

- (3) The statistics on cases involving illegal imports and exports in contravention of the Ordinance over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	2019	2020*	2021*
Number of cases	659	276	306
Number of persons arrested	497	128	151
Number of persons prosecuted [#]	226	25	34
Number of persons convicted	199	45	29
Maximum penalty (imprisonment/months)	24	27	6
Maximum penalty (fine/\$)	50,000	300,000	60,000

- * We estimate that the significant drop in the numbers of cases and persons arrested in 2020 and 2021 was mainly due to the remarkable decrease in the numbers of consignments and visitors amid the global pandemic. Regarding the drop in the numbers of persons prosecuted and convicted, it was mainly due to the remarkable decrease in the number of cases of illegal import/export of endangered species carried by visitors, which have all along had relatively high prosecution and conviction rates.
- # As prosecution takes time, persons prosecuted might not be convicted within the same year.

Among which the number of cases involving ivory is tabulated as follows:

Year	2019	2020*	2021*
Number of cases	23	2	1
Number of persons arrested	21	1	0
Number of persons prosecuted [#]	18	0	0
Number of persons convicted	18	1	0
Maximum penalty (imprisonment)	6 weeks	24 months	N/A
Maximum penalty (fine/\$)	N/A	N/A	N/A

- * We estimate that the significant drop in the number of cases and the numbers of persons arrested, prosecuted and convicted in 2020 and 2021 was partly due to the remarkable decrease in the numbers of consignments and visitors, especially visitors carrying ivory or ivory products illegally, amid the global pandemic. Moreover, it is estimated that the decrease in the number of relevant cases was also due to the fact that the Government has strengthened the relevant trade control measures in recent years and has proactively publicised to the trade and the public the full banning of local ivory trade by the end of 2021.
- # As prosecution takes time, persons prosecuted might not be convicted within the same year.

- (4) The numbers of applications for licences/certificates received and licences/certificates issued by the AFCD with respect to imports, exports, re-exports and possession of scheduled species under the Ordinance over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications received	Number of licences/certificates issued*
2019	19 749	19 995
2020	10 897	11 272
2021	13 348	13 429

- * The number of licences/certificates issued may differ from the number of applications received within the same year as some licences and certificates were issued in respect of the applications submitted at the end of the previous year.
- (5) The quantities of ivory seized in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were 2 058, 0.07 and 1.13 kg respectively. Since 2014, a total of 29.5 tonnes of confiscated ivory have been disposed of by incineration. The existing ivory stockpile under government custody is about 10.5 tonnes. Apart from saving some for scientific, education, enforcement or identification purposes, the incineration of the confiscated ivory will be arranged in batches after completion of the necessary legal procedures. The estimated expenditure

for the disposal of the remaining ivory by incineration is \$70,000 and the manpower required will be absorbed by the existing staff of the AFCD.

The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 (the Amendment Ordinance) was fully implemented starting from 31 December 2021. Except for antique ivory, the import, re-export, and commercial possession of elephant ivory have been fully banned. Traders possessing antique ivory for commercial purposes must prove that the concerned ivory meets the definition of antique ivory. Examples of acceptable proof of antique ivory include a qualified appraisal or scientifically approved aging methods for determining the origin and year of the article. Since the implementation of the Amendment Ordinance, the AFCD has strengthened its efforts in market inspections, monitoring of online trading platforms and intelligence collection so as to monitor any use of antique ivory for commercial purposes on the market. In case of doubt on whether an ivory article is antique ivory, the AFCD will carry out further appraisals, including the use of radiocarbon dating analysis to determine the age of ivory. If irregularities are detected, the AFCD will take enforcement actions and institute prosecutions.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**ENB005****(Question Serial No. 0150)**

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment

Question:

It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2022-23 that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will implement “measures for enhanced management of wild pigs”. According to the information, part of the increased provision for a full-year effect of vacancies filled in the revised estimate for 2019-20 was used for tackling the increasing nuisance of wild pigs, monkeys and other wildlife. In this connection, would the Government advise on the following:

- (a) the estimated number of wild pigs in each year since the AFCD implemented the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme in late 2017, among which the number of wild pigs captured and given contraception/sterilisation treatment and the number of wild pigs relocated, and whether the relocated wild pigs dwell in the designated areas; if not, the reasons for that;
- (b) the amount of resources involved in implementing the aforesaid measures each year;
- (c) the measures to be taken by the Government in 2022-23 to tackle the problems of proliferation and nuisance of wild pigs and the estimated expenditure involved;
- (d) whether any target has been set by the AFCD for controlling the number of wild pigs and the timetable for meeting the target; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched a scheme in 2019 to estimate the number of wild pigs in the countryside using infrared camera traps. In 2020, the scope of the study scheme was extended to cover more sites and different seasons. It was estimated that there were about 1 800 to 3 300 wild pigs in the countryside all over Hong Kong basing on the wild pig population density at the trial sites.

The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to vaccinate or sterilise wild pigs caught and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. Figures related to the CCRP over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pigs	
	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised*	Relocated to countryside
2017-18	14	40
2018-19	64	81
2019-20	106	222
2020-21	165	270
2021-22 (as at February 2022)	109	219

* The number of wild pigs administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised overlaps with that of wild pigs relocated to countryside, as some wild pigs would be relocated after they had been administered with the vaccine or after the surgery.

However, the progress of contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. The AFCD's investigation reveals that once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will continually return to the urban or residential areas to seek food from people even if they have been relocated to the countryside. The numbers of wild pig complaints and injury cases have continued to rise over the past few years. To cope with the festering nuisance of wild pigs, under the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the AFCD announced new measures on 12 November 2021. For details, please refer to items (c) and (d) below.

- (b) The manpower and expenditures involved in the AFCD's wild pig management over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Total expenditure on wild pig management (\$ million)	Expenditure involved in CCRP (\$ million)
2017-18	6	6.8	3.8
2018-19	14	9.9	6.2
2019-20	26	14.5	7.2
2020-21	32	17.8	9.4
2021-22 (revised estimate)	32	19.1	8.6

- (c) and (d)

Wild pigs are a native species of Hong Kong. They mainly live in the countryside. Being naturally wary of human beings, they will actively avert contact with humans. However, feeding activities by humans in recent years have changed the habits of some wild pigs and drawn them to the urban or residential areas to seek food from people and cause nuisance. To cope with the nuisance caused by wild pigs, under the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the AFCD announced new measures on 12 November 2021 to conduct regular wild pig capture operations, during which veterinary officers will use dart guns to capture target wild pigs for humane dispatch through medicine injection. The AFCD will accord priority to sites with multiple numbers of wild pigs, areas with past injury cases or areas where wild pigs may pose risks to members of the public. Furthermore, upon receiving reports about wild pig sightings in urban or residential areas from members of the public or other

government departments, the AFCD will also capture and humanely dispatch the wild pigs which pose potential danger or cause nuisance to the public. Since the announcement of the new measures in November 2021, as at February 2022, the AFCD has conducted a total of 34 operations and humanely dispatched a total of 66 wild pigs which caused nuisance near urban and residential areas or posed potential danger to the public. The AFCD will continue to monitor the situation of wild pig sightings and assess the effectiveness of the strategy in a timely manner. The AFCD aims at minimising nuisance caused by wild pigs near the urban and residential areas at this stage.

Since the announcement and implementation of new measures on 12 November 2021, the AFCD has ceased the CCRP and redeployed the resources to work such as capture and humane dispatch of wild pigs, monitoring of the wild pig populations, education and publicity, etc. It is estimated that the total expenditure on wild pig management as a whole will be kept at around \$19 million in 2022-23.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)002

(Question Serial No. 0386)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Over the past 3 years, regarding animal welfare, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the number and type of animals received through various channels by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and how they were handled;
- (b) the specific expenditure allocated for public education and the specific details of the work;
- (c) the number of suspected cases of animal cruelty handled each year, among which the number of successful prosecutions and the penalties imposed as well as the maximum and minimum penalties imposed;
- (d) the specific works and effectiveness of the Animal Watch Scheme;
- (e) whether the Department of Justice has lodged applications for review of cases on the grounds that the penalties imposed were too lenient and the number of applications; if so, the results;
- (f) since the passage of the Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill, the number of cases in relation to hitting of cats or dogs received and the number of prosecutions instituted;
- (g) the relevant legislative timetable regarding the proposal to submit a bill to review the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance within this legislative session?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

- (a) The numbers of animals received and handled by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years are tabulated at **Annex**.
- (b) AFCD has been promoting animal welfare through public education and publicity programmes, which include promoting responsible pet ownership and proper care of animals, advising the public against the abandonment of pets, reminding the public that they should give careful consideration to various factors before keeping pets, as well as encouraging animal rehoming. Over the past 3 years, the activities conducted by AFCD include production and broadcasting of educational videos and Announcements in the Public Interest on animal welfare through various platforms, publication and

distribution of leaflets, posters and pamphlets on animal welfare through various channels and provision of the latest information on animal welfare through the website of AFCD, placing of advertisements on various platforms (e.g. public transport), organisation of events to promote pet adoption and holding of talks at school and housing estates on a regular basis. The expenditure involved in the aforementioned work is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on education and promotion of animal welfare (\$ million)
2019-20	18.2
2020-21	25.9
2021-22 (revised estimate)	17.9

- (c) The number of suspected animal cruelty reports received and details of successful prosecutions instituted by the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) and AFCD under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of suspected animal cruelty cases received	Number of persons convicted	Penalties imposed	
			Fine (\$)	Range of imprisonment
2019	288	25	2,000 to 8,000	14 days to 10 months
2020	285	14	N/A	14 days to 8 months
2021 (up to September)	211	11*	2,000	1 months and 12 days to 5 months

* Upon investigation, most of the cases were found to be nuisance related, not involving animal cruelty.

- (d) In 2011, the Police introduced the Animal Watch Scheme (AWS) with the support from AFCD, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, veterinary associations and animal concern groups to consolidate co-operation among various stakeholders in combating acts of animal cruelty through a four-pronged approach of education, publicity, intelligence gathering and investigation so as to help the Police investigate animal cruelty cases and enhance the effectiveness of investigation. So far, all stakeholders engaged consider that AWS has been operating well and has yielded positive results. For example, participating veterinary associations help encourage their members to report suspected acts of animal cruelty or suspected culprits.

Besides, to enlist wider public support and participation in fighting against cruelty to animals, the Police has also actively implemented the Animal Watchers Programme (AWP) in collaboration with AFCD and other stakeholders to pool together the efforts of animal lovers at the community level through the four-pronged approach, raise public awareness on prevention of cruelty to animals, encourage the public to report in a timely manner and provide information that could assist investigation. In 2021, large-scale territory-wide events were organised under AWP for different communities and age groups to strengthen the awareness and care of the general public on the issue of animal cruelty and animal welfare, so that the message of prevention of cruelty to animals can effectively reach out to the public. Such events included a crime prevention campaign

of AWP Fight Poisoning Campaign, a video competition of AWP Plank Challenge and a public education event of AWP Community Mobile Classroom. The Police will continue raising public awareness on prevention of cruelty to animals through AWP.

- (e) The Department of Justice (DoJ) has not compiled the relevant statistics. Similar to other criminal cases, after the court has imposed a sentence for a local animal cruelty case, DoJ will carefully consider the relevant information, including the reports of the prosecutors, the relevant sentencing principles and the reasons for sentence of the courts. If the sentence is not authorised by law, wrong in principle or manifestly excessive or manifestly inadequate, DoJ may take the case further.
- (f) Since the Road Traffic (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 came into effect in November 2021, as at February 2022, the Police received 61 cases in relation to hitting of cats or dogs, among which 15 cases involved drivers failing to stop after traffic accidents. As investigations are ongoing, the number of prosecutions instituted is not yet available.
- (g) The Government has proposed to amend the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance to further safeguard animal welfare. Proposed amendments include introducing a positive duty of care on persons responsible for animals to provide for their welfare needs; enhancing the provisions for prevention of animal cruelty, including the increase in the penalties and the introduction of an indictable offence; enhancing enforcement powers to prevent cruelty to animals and protect animals from suffering. We aim to introduce the legislative amendments to the Legislative Council within the current legislative session.

Annex

Year	Stray animals caught			Animals surrendered by owners			Animals received through other channels			Animals reclaimed by owners			Animals rehomed			Animals humanely dispatched		
	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*
2019	965	304	1 031	674	75	69	226	63	2 101 ^{#^}	404	127	9	547	78	44	837	219	2 363 [#]
2020	603	209	997	531	60	65	271	47	432	284	98	6	427	80	412	602	99	470
2021	430	165	895	415	45	70	198	99	1 477 [^]	291	108	9	348	72	210	338	59	1 439 [^]

* Including small mammals (rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rats), reptiles and birds.

Mainly including animals confiscated under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586).

^ Mainly including animals confiscated which were suspected to be illegally imported or failed to meet the import requirements.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)003

(Question Serial No. 0387)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Over the past 3 years, regarding local animal welfare organisations (AWOs) and animal shelters, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the number and projects of successful applications for subventions, the amounts of subvention sought by AWOs and the amount of subvention that they have been granted each year in tabular form;
- (b) the number of partner AWOs of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the current number of local non-profit-making AWOs established for the purpose of animal welfare;
- (c) the number of animals handed to AWOs by AFCD each year as well as the successful rate and number of rehoming;
- (d) whether AFCD has regularly visited the above AWOs and how the Government monitors their operation and use of subvention;
- (e) whether the Government will roll out any special initiatives to support the non-profit-making AWOs in view of the low incentive for the public to donate money as the epidemic has dealt a heavy blow to the economy; if so, the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (f) the number of non-profit-making AWOs currently operating rehoming centres on government sites (please set out the specific locations and size of the sites) and the support measures taken by the Government apart from revitalisation of school premises in view of the difficulties encountered by AWOs in identifying sites for setting up animal shelters;
- (g) the number of "boarding establishments" granted with planning permission in Hong Kong at present and their locations as well as whether the Government has conducted inspections at these establishments?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (a) The requested information is tabulated at **Annex**.

(b) and (e) The numbers of partner animal welfare organisations (AWOs) of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years (2019, 2020 and 2021) were 18, 18 and 17 respectively. AFCD does not keep statistics on local non-profit-making organisations established for the purpose of animal welfare. AFCD welcomes applications from AWOs to become its rehoming partners and to apply for subvention for promoting animal welfare and rehoming. Details on the applications have been uploaded to the thematic website (<https://www.pets.gov.hk>). When assessing applications for subvention, AFCD will take into consideration the impacts of the COVID-19 epidemic (the epidemic) on AWOs with a view to helping these organisations carry out their animal welfare work as much as possible.

(c) The number of animals handed to AWOs for rehoming in each of the past 3 years is tabulated below:

Year	Number of animals received			Number of animals rehomed (rehoming rate ⁺)		
	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*
2019	1 865	442	3 201 [^]	547 (37.4%)	78 (24.8%)	44 (1.4%)
2020	1 405	316	1 494	427 (38.1%)	80 (36.7%)	412 (27.7%)
2021	1 043	309	2 442 [#]	348 (46.3%)	72 (35.8%)	210 (8.6%)

⁺ Animals received by AFCD but subsequently reclaimed by owners were not counted towards the rehoming rate.

^{*} Including small mammals (rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rats), reptiles, birds.

[^] Mainly including animals confiscated under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap 586).

[#] Mainly including animals confiscated which were suspected to be illegally imported and failed to meet the import requirements.

(d) In general, AFCD will verify the receipts submitted by AWOs to confirm that the expenditures are spent in compliance with the purposes of subvention applications. Besides, AFCD will visit the relevant facilities of partner AWOs in the course of assessing their applications and visit them regularly afterwards. The frequency of visits will be adjusted according to the situation of the epidemic.

(f) AWOs in need of premises running rehoming centres may consider vacant government sites under the management of the Lands Department that are available for leasing by non-governmental organisations for community purposes on a short-term basis. Non-profit making AWOs may also apply for subsidies from a funding scheme run by the Development Bureau (DEVB) so as to set up rehoming centres on suitable government sites. Currently, subsidies have been provided to 2 AWOs by DEVB for constructing rehoming centres on 2 government sites in Ko Po San Tsuen, Kam Tin. One of the rehoming centres with a capacity of about 50 animals has commenced service in late 2021. As for the other one with a capacity of about 150 animals, it is expected that the detailed design of the project will be completed and the construction works will commence within 2022. The areas of these 2 sites are 1 050 m² and 1 370 m², respectively.

(g) As at February 2022, a total of 68 premises were holding valid boarding establishment licences issued by AFCD under the Public Health (Animals)

(Boarding Establishment) Regulations (Cap. 139I), of which 9, 20 and 39 were located on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and the New Territories respectively. AFCD deploys staff to conduct regular and surprise inspections to licensed boarding establishments to ensure that such premises are in compliance with the licensing requirements.

(i) **Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2018-19 and released in 2019-20)**

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount granted (\$)
1	Hong Kong Society of Herpetology Foundation	To run the animal adoption centre, provide food and veterinary care for animals pending adoption and conduct education and publicity programmes	130,000	117,552
2	Hong Kong Dog Rescue	To provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	345,600	250,000
3	Lifelong Animal Protection Charity	To educate children on responsible pet ownership and adoption	926,000	120,000
4	Hong Kong Rabbit Society	To produce educational materials and provide medical treatment for sick rabbits	125,000	118,450
5	Sai Kung Stray Friends	To provide medical treatment and food for dogs pending adoption	401,537	150,000
6	Cheung Chau Animal Care	To operate a rehome scheme and conduct education and publicity programmes	80,000	53,500
7	Hong Kong Cats	To conduct publicity for animal adoption	16,000	4,408
8	Society for Abandoned Animals	To refurbish the electric power system of the animal centre	189,450	120,000
9	Kirsten's Zoo	To provide preventive care and food for animals rescued and pending adoption	285,000	120,000
10	Animal Friends	To provide medical treatment for animals pending adoption	300,000	150,000
11	Hong Kong Saving Cat and Dog Association	To enhance public awareness on animal welfare and adoption	63,079	50,000
Total			2,861,666	1,253,910

(ii) **Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2019-20 and released in 2020-21)**

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount granted (\$)
1	Hong Kong Society of Herpetology Foundation	To run the animal adoption centre, provide food and veterinary care for animals pending adoption and conduct education and publicity programmes	160,000	150,000
2	Hong Kong Dog Rescue	To provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	393,600	211,809
3	Lifelong Animal Protection Charity	To enhance the facilities of the rehoming centre	800,000	98,500
4	Hong Kong Rabbit Society	To produce educational materials and provide medical treatment for sick rabbits	163,000	150,000
5	Sai Kung Stray Friends	To provide medical treatment and food for dogs pending adoption	150,000	150,000
6	Cheung Chau Animal Care	To operate a rehome scheme and conduct education and publicity programmes	80,000	60,000
7	Hong Kong Cats	To conduct publicity for animal adoption	15,000	5,669
8	Society for Abandoned Animals	To conduct education programmes for animal welfare enhancement	146,951	146,951
9	Kirsten's Zoo	To provide preventive care and food for animals rescued and pending adoption	305,600	150,000
10	Paws United Charity	To provide medical treatment for dogs pending adoption and promote the implementation of a rehome scheme	300,000	150,000
11	Hong Kong Animal Adoption Centre	Animal Rehome Scheme 2020	465,000	100,000
12	Second Life Charity Foundation Limited	Mutual Love Programme (matching suitable cats with the elderly for their adoption)	300,000	0*
Total			3,279,151	1,372,929

* The reimbursement could not be made due to insufficient information provided.

(iii) **Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2020-21 and released in 2021-22)**

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount granted (\$)
1	Cheung Chau Animal Care	To operate a rehome scheme and conduct education and publicity programmes	80,000	40,000
2	Hong Kong Animal Adoption Centre	To provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	516,000	100,000
3	Hong Kong Dog Rescue	Adult dog rehome scheme – to provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	614,880	200,000
4	Hong Kong Society of Herpetology Foundation	Animal rehome, rescue and education programmes	170,000	140,457
5	Hong Kong Rabbit Society	To produce educational materials and provide medical treatment for sick rabbits	135,000	129,930
6	Hong Kong Saving Cat and Dog Association	To provide preventive care and food for animals rescued and pending adoption	8,721,300	170,000
7	Kirsten's Zoo	To carry out ongoing rescue of animals and enhance catteries for cats pending adoption	305,000	150,000
8	Paws United Charity	Medical cost for an animal rehome scheme and promotion of the rehome scheme through social media	332,000	173,954
9	Sai Kung Stray Friends	To provide preventive care and food for animals rescued and pending adoption	563,428	150,000
10	Society for Abandoned Animals	To enhance animal welfare by improving catteries	363,850	150,000
11	Team for Animals in Lantau South (TAILS)	Animal Rehome Scheme 2021	400,000	71,125
Total			12,201,458	1,475,466

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)004

(Question Serial No. 0122)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (-) Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to the planning of the Northern Metropolis, please advise of the following:

- (a) whether the Government has any initial plan, such as encouraging aquaculturists to switch to environmentally-friendly fisheries and assisting in the management of fish pond conservation, to facilitate sustainable development as well as upgrading and transformation of the industry in its gradual resumption of several hundred hectares of private wetlands and fish ponds;
- (b) whether there is any assessment at present of the number of livestock farms which will be affected by the planning of the Northern Metropolis; whether there is any initial plan to support the potentially affected farm owners to upgrade and transform their operations; whether the Government will consider maximising the opportunities brought about by the development of the Greater Bay Area to construct multi-layer farms or launch other programmes so as to facilitate sustainable development of the industry and ensure the local supply of fresh food; and
- (c) whether there is any assessment of the area of agricultural and active agricultural land which might be affected by the planning of the Northern Metropolis; whether the Government has any plan to assist the affected farmers to resume farming or upgrade or transform their operations; whether the Government has considered amending the restrictions or legislation on agriculture, such as allowing farms to operate home-stay lodgings, agricultural processing or marketing as appropriate, so as to enable the agricultural industry to tap into the development in a new era or the planning of the Northern Metropolis.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (a) The Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (Development Strategy) proposed resuming some of the private wetlands and fish ponds with conservation value in Deep Bay, together with the adjoining government land, to develop a system of Wetland Conservation Parks (WCPs) to create environmental capacity and achieve the co-existence of development and conservation. The Development Strategy also pointed out that the functions of the WCPs system include the development of a modernised

aquaculture industry and promotion of scientific research on aquaculture to facilitate the upgrading and transformation of the agriculture and fisheries industries. The Government is preparing for commissioning a strategic feasibility study to finalise the areas for the development of WCPs, their management model as well as the schedule for implementation and construction in phases. The initial plan of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is to introduce modern and advanced culture techniques, such as recirculating aquaculture system, monitoring equipment and smart devices, to some of the fish ponds in WCPs as appropriate for higher production value and better quality control. Apart from promoting scientific research on aquaculture, AFCD will also strengthen its provision of technology support as well as promotion of knowledge and technology transfer to the industry in order to facilitate its upgrading and transformation. AFCD will also continue to maintain close liaison with various shareholders and proactively explore the management model of fish ponds in the future WCPs as well as the participation of the industry.

- (b) There are a total of 72 livestock farms (43 pig farms and 29 chicken farms) in Hong Kong at present, primarily located in the North District and Yuen Long. Under the Development Strategy, the Northern Metropolis mainly covers the two districts of Yuen Long and the North District. The extent to which the livestock farms concerned are affected will be subject to the specific planning and scope of the relevant development projects in the Northern Metropolis. The departments concerned will finalise the details based on the results of the relevant planning studies. The Government will provide adequate assistance to livestock farms affected by the development projects.

As the development in Hong Kong is highly urbanised, land resources suitable for livestock farming have become increasingly scarce. Establishing modernised multi-storey and enclosed livestock farms, which enables the rational use of valuable land resources, is a proposal worth exploring. AFCD is exploring the feasibility of the proposal in collaboration with the relevant departments and the industry. Meanwhile, we will continue to encourage the livestock farming industry to adopt modern technology to enhance their overall competitiveness, along with the support for the development of the industry in terms of application of advanced technology and intensification of production as well as further seizing the opportunities arising from the Greater Bay Area development through the Sustainable Agriculture Development Fund (SADF) and technology support.

- (c) According to the study conducted by AFCD, there are about 760 hectares of active agricultural land in Hong Kong, primarily located in the North District, Yuen Long and Tai Po. It is preliminarily estimated that there are currently some 200 hectares of agricultural land for crop farming within the Northern Metropolis. The actual area of the affected farmlands will be subject to the results of the planning study of the relevant development projects.

AFCD has put in place various measures to support the sustainable development of local agriculture, which include establishing the Agriculture Park (the Agri-Park) in Kwu Tung South of the New Territories, assisting the industry in nurturing agro-technology and knowledge of modernised farm management, facilitating relevant knowledge transfer to enhance productivity, in addition to providing farmlands for rent by farmers affected by the government development projects conducted concurrently with the Agri-Park who wish to resume farming. The Government is also commissioning a consultancy study to explore the feasibility of identifying relatively large areas of quality agricultural land for delineating as Agricultural Priority Areas, as well as suitable

policies and measures to facilitate putting fallow agricultural land back into long-term agricultural use so as to support the development of local agriculture. Moreover, AFCD is actively promoting smart greenhouse and multi-storey hydroponic production technologies and will continue to assist the industry to switch to a sustainable or high value-added operation mode through SADF in order to enhance the overall production efficiency and competitiveness of the industry.

Under the Development Strategy, the Government will explore encouraging the industry to adopt modern technology in the development of urban farming through appropriate planning measures, such as setting up greenhouses at suitable locations, making use of suitable podium gardens/rooftops of buildings to develop urban farms and developing modern multi-storey crop farms, which, complemented by support measures, will enable the sustainable development of the agriculture industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)005

(Question Serial No. 0126)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding sustainable development of agriculture, please advise of the following:

- (a) the locations of agricultural, active agricultural and arable land in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22) (please show with a map) and their respective areas;
- (b) regarding the Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme and the Special Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme of the Vegetable Marketing Organization, please provide the following information over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22):
 1. the respective numbers of applications and the land area involved (hectares);
 2. the respective numbers of successful and unsuccessful cases and the farmland area (hectares) successfully rented;
 3. the average processing time (from receipt of an application to notification of the result) for each application;
 4. the accumulative number of applicants and the land area involved (hectares) on the waiting list;
- (c) the total expenditures and manpower involved in the establishment of the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF), the Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) and the Agricultural Priority Areas (APAs) respectively over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22);
- (d) the current estimated total expenditures involved in SADF, Agri-Park and APAs respectively;
- (e) the progress of the work on Agri-Park and APAs and the estimated work schedules for the two projects;
- (f) the details, expenditures and manpower involved in promoting the sustainable development of agriculture (e.g. the development of eco-tourism, leisure agricultural industries, agricultural industries employing innovative technology, other sustainable agriculture) over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22);
- (g) whether the Government will enhance the freezing survey mechanism in its future development plans to expedite the conduction of freezing surveys for the agricultural industry in order to safeguard farmers' interests and minimise dispossession in a malicious manner during the surveys.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (a) According to the survey on agricultural land use conducted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), the total area of agricultural land in Hong Kong is around 4 100 hectares. The estimated area of active agricultural land over the past 3 years are tabulated by district below. The survey did not provide information on the boundaries of the relevant land for compiling a location map.

District	Estimated area of active agricultural land (hectare)		
	2019	2020	2021
North	285	283	272
Yuen Long	251	251	263
Tai Po	87	87	91
Tuen Mun	42	43	44
Islands	33	34	33
Sai Kung	22	24	24
Tsuen Wan	13	18	19
Others	16	15	17
Total	749	755	763

- (b) AFCD operates the Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme (ALRS) through bringing owners of agricultural land and interested farmers together to work out leasing agreements for the agricultural land. The information on ALRS and the relevant statistics on the cases handled over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	2019	2020	2021
Number of new applications/ land area involved (hectare)	49 / 7.8	79 / 13.1	73 / 7.8
Number of successful cases	43	48	25
- Total land area involved (hectare)	7.9	4.0	2.1
- Average waiting time (year)	3.8	4.2	2.8
Number of applications on the waiting list as at year-end/ land area involved (hectare)	445 / 81.8	517 / 92.7	525 / 89.3

The Special Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme (SALRS) is a separate scheme introduced by the Government in relation to New Development Area (NDA) projects to provide additional option to affected eligible farmers to resume farming elsewhere. In connection with SALRS, the Government will identify suitable government land for rent by affected eligible farmers on a short-term tenancy basis to resume farming. The Government has received a total of 15 applications from farmers affected by the first phase of the works of the Kwu Tung North and Fanling North NDA project and has made preliminary allocation proposals to 14 applicants so far, involving agricultural land in Wa Shan and Ma Tso Lung with a total area of about 6 800 m². The departments concerned are going to make preliminary allocation proposal to the remaining applicant. Among the applicants who have received preliminary allocation proposals, 4 of them have accepted the proposals and resumed farming while the rest of them do not intend to accept or are considering the proposals.

- (c) and (d) Over the past 3 years, the expenditures and manpower of AFCD involved in administering the \$500 million Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund, preparing for the establishment of the Agricultural Park (the Agri-Park) and commissioning a consultancy study on Agricultural Priority Areas (APAs) are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2019-20	12.9	22
2020-21	13.6	22
2021-22 (revised estimate)	17.9	22

- (e) AFCD is establishing an Agri-Park in Kwu Tung South to help nurture agro-technology and knowledge of modern farm management. The Agri-Park will be developed in 2 phases. The infrastructure works of Phase 1 (about 11 hectares) has commenced and is expected to be completed for commissioning in stages from the second quarter of 2022 to 2023. AFCD is in parallel planning and preparing for the Agri-Park Phase 2.

To support the development of local agriculture, the Government is conducting a consultancy study to explore the feasibility of identifying relatively large areas of quality agricultural land for development of APAs and explore suitable policies and measures to encourage landowners to put existing fallow agricultural land back into long-term agricultural use. The consultant has examined the current situation of local agricultural land and is making reference to relevant overseas experience with a view to establishing various criteria for APA sites and drawing up proposals with regard to the locations and area suitable for the designation of APAs. As a considerable size of agricultural land is involved, it is estimated that the study will take another 1 to 2 years to complete.

- (f) AFCD promotes the sustainable development of local agriculture through measures such as (i) developing new farming techniques to raise productivity; (ii) introducing new and improved crop varieties for local cultivation; (iii) promoting organic farming and leisure farming; (iv) assisting in setting up farmers' markets to help farmers reach out to customers and organising the annual FarmFest* to showcase local agricultural and fishery produce; (v) administering 3 funds to provide loans to farmers for development and operation purposes; and (vi) implementing various measures under the New Agriculture Policy. The expenditures and manpower involved in the above area of work over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2019-20	70.1	123
2020-21	80.4	130
2021-22 (revised estimate)	78.9	126

* Due to the COVID-19 epidemic and the need to avoid crowd gathering, the FarmFest 2021 and 2022 were held online to showcase local agricultural and fishery produce.

- (g) Regarding the compensation for development clearance, taking into account the nature of agricultural activities and the relevant compensation, the Government will post notices to invite the affected farmers to lodge claims nearer the time of land reversion to the Government. Upon completion of assessment and verification of their eligibility by government personnel, the farmers concerned will be offered applicable ex-gratia allowances (EGAs), which include EGA for crops, disturbance allowance for cultivators, allowance for pig and poultry farmers, EGA for pond fish farmers rearing edible fish and fish fry, allowance for qualified farm structures on private land, and allowance for miscellaneous permanent improvements to farms. The Government will continue to provide adequate assistance as far as possible to farmers affected by the development projects who wish to continue farming.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)006

(Question Serial No. 0127)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry, please advise of the following:

- (a) the details, expenditures and manpower involved in promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22);
- (b) the expenditures and manpower involved in the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) over the past 3 years (2019-20 to 2021-22);
- (c) since the introduction of SFDF and its Equipment Improvement Project (EIP), the number of project applications received, approved, rejected and being examined in total by type (e.g. capture, culture, recreational fishing or others);
- (d) further to the above question, the number of beneficiaries, and among them, the number of in-service fishermen benefited since the introduction of SFDF and its EIP.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

- (a) The Government has been promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry through (i) implementing a series of fisheries management measures to help conserve and restore depleted marine resources such as the ban on trawling and the introduction of a registration system for local fishing vessels; (ii) assisting fishermen in switching to sustainable fisheries operations and helping fish farmers develop sustainable aquaculture through technical support services, credit facilities and training courses; (iii) promoting good aquaculture practices and enhancing the monitoring of aquaculture environment; and (iv) administering the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) to help fishermen adopt a sustainable and high value-added operation mode and fund projects and research that help enhance the overall competitiveness of the industry, including developing deep water mariculture, offshore fishing, recreational fishing and ecotourism, as well as leveraging the opportunities arising from the development of the Greater Bay Area. In 2021, SFDF approved funding of around \$15 million to support local fishermen to develop deep sea mariculture in Huizhou waters on a trial basis. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has also launched a pilot scheme under SFDF in mid-February 2022 to focus on subsidising

the local fisheries industry to apply new technologies with a view to promoting modernisation and enhancing the competitiveness of the industry, and to facilitate knowledge transfer.

The expenditures and manpower involved in promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2019-20	168.3	107
2020-21	158.9	105
2021-22 (revised estimate)	148.2	103

- (b) The expenditures and manpower involved in the administration of SFDF over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2019-20	3.1	7
2020-21	3.6	8
2021-22 (revised estimate)	4.4	9

- (c) Since its inception, 60 applications have been received under SFDF and its Equipment Improvement Project (EIP). Details of these applications are tabulated as follows:

Number of applications (as at February 2022)	Type					
	Aquaculture	Capture fisheries	Recreational fisheries	Others	EIP	Total
Received	33	2	7	6	12	60
Approved	15	2	2	1	10	30
Rejected	11	0	2	4	0	17
Withdrawn by the applicant	6	0	1	1	0	8
Under processing	1	0	2	0	2	5

- (d) As at February 2022, 9 SFDF projects were completed, benefiting around 620 in-service fishermen. Upon completion of more projects including EIPs, more fishermen will benefit.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)007

(Question Serial No. 0870)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (-) Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Currently, the multiplier in the formula for calculating ex-gratia allowance (EGA) in respect of marine works resulting in a permanent loss of fishing grounds is 11 years; the multiplier in the formula for calculating EGA in respect of marine works resulting in a temporary loss of fishing grounds is 5 years; and mariculturists are eligible for EGA if the shortest water distance between their fish culture zones and the gazetted zone boundary is 5 kilometres or less. If applying such a method of calculation of EGA to Lantau Tomorrow Vision, the compensation package will be seriously out of line with the industry's operation reality. Has consideration been given to adjusting the EGA mechanism so that those affected can receive a reasonable compensation?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

Recognising that fishermen and mariculturists affected by public marine works may suffer a reduction of income, the Government has been disbursing ex-gratia allowances (EGA) under the established mechanism to reduce the impact of such works on those affected and help them re-establish their operations. The Government adjusted EGA as appropriate in 2012, including raising EGA payable in respect of marine works resulting in a permanent loss of fishing grounds from an equivalent of the notional value of fish catch in the affected area for 7 years to that for 11 years, whereas EGA payable in respect of marine works resulting in a temporary loss of fishing grounds was raised from an equivalent of the notional value of fish catch in the affected area for 3 years to that for 5 years. In addition, we also extended the eligibility of the proximity criterion for granting EGA to mariculturists. The Government has been monitoring the operating environment of the industry and the implementation of public marine works and will explore reviewing the EGA mechanism if there are sufficient justifications.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)008

(Question Serial No. 0799)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Regarding the subsidies for local agriculture and fisheries, the focus of the Budget is on promoting the adoption of new technologies in local agriculture and fisheries. Does the \$1 billion provision cover supporting arrangements for the application of new technologies by practitioners in the agriculture and fisheries industries, such as transformation of their operations from traditional fish rafts to modern ones and from horizontal farming to vertical operations?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The Government has been actively supporting the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries and enhancing their competitiveness through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund and Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund. Many projects have been approved under the two Funds to help the industries to adopt or switch to a modernised, sustainable and high value-added mode of operation, among which some can provide immediate support to the industries, such as the provision of professional on-site veterinary and veterinary drug prescription services for livestock and aquaculture farms, organic certification support services for crop and aquaculture farms as well as branding and marketing of local agricultural and fishery produce. In addition, some other projects map out the direction of development for the industry, such as supporting local fishermen to develop deep sea mariculture in the Greater Bay Area and sustainable fisheries in Belt and Road countries.

The Equipment Improvement Project and the Farm Improvement Scheme under the two Funds have also been providing financial assistance to eligible local fishermen and farmers for purchasing modernised and mechanised operational equipment and materials that can enhance their competitiveness. Fisheries equipment and materials include materials for constructing modern fish rafts, automatic fish feeders, water quality control and monitoring system, while agricultural equipment includes farm machinery such as tillers and sprayers, meters for testing soil and plant properties, as well as facilities for livestock waste treatment and biosecurity enhancement.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department launched pilot schemes under the two Funds in mid-February 2022 to provide financial assistance to local fishermen and farmers to develop modern agriculture and fisheries and to apply new technologies, including hydroponic technology, smart farm management, advanced livestock waste treatment technology, deep-sea mariculture and shellfish and crustacean farming, in addition to the transfer of the relevant knowledge, experience and achievements to other shareholders in the industries.

To further support the development of the industries in terms of application of advanced technology and intensification of production and leveraging the opportunities arising from the Greater Bay Area development, the Financial Secretary has proposed in the 2022-23 Budget making two separate injections of \$500 million each into the two Funds, as well as expanding their scope and streamlining the application procedures as appropriate.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**FHB(FE)009****(Question Serial No. 0809)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical ServicesControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and HealthQuestion:

In recent years, there has been a growing concern about animal rights in society. Would the Government advise of the following:

1. regarding the regulation of dog trading, the numbers and changes of the following licences and permits over the past 3 years:
 - a. Animal Trader Licences;
 - b. Dog Breeder Licences (category A);
 - c. Dog Breeder Licences (category B); and
 - d. one-off permits?
2. whether any complaints have been received about unlicensed pet breeders over the past 3 years? Please provide a brief description of the relevant law enforcement work.
3. the numbers of smuggled or accidentally imported animals seized during enforcement operations over the past 3 years, with a breakdown by animal type and the way they were handled such as quarantined and rehomed, euthanised or others?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)Reply:

1. The numbers of Animal Trader Licences (ATLs) (dog trading allowed), Dog Breeder Licences (DBLs) and one-off permits issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in each of the past 3 year are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of licences issued			
	ATL (dog trading allowed)	DBL (category A)	DBL (category B)	One-off permit
2019	41	9	24	3
2020	45	8	25	1
2021	54	11	23	1

2. The numbers of complaints received by AFCD about suspected unlicensed dog breeding activities over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Complaints received (cases)
2019	19
2020	25
2021	13

Regarding all premises for dog breeding purpose and selling those breeding dams or their offspring, application for a valid DBL must be made in advance under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations (Cap. 139B) (the Regulations). All holders of DBL issued under the Regulations must comply strictly with the statutory requirements concerning accommodation, living conditions, provision of food and water, pest control, etc. for such animals under the Regulations as well as the relevant licensing conditions. AFCD deploys staff to conduct regular and surprise inspections to licensed dog breeding premises to ensure that such premises are in compliance with the licensing requirements. AFCD also conducts investigations into suspected unlicensed dog breeding activities from time to time proactively or upon reports from members of the public. If there is evidence of contravention of the Regulations, prosecutions will be instituted against the persons concerned. Besides, AFCD has set up a dedicated investigation unit to monitor advertisements for animal trading and breeding on the Internet, taking appropriate follow-up actions on suspicious cases and responding to related complaints.

3. Under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance (Cap. 139) and the Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421), any person who imports or transits animals (such as cats, dogs and birds) into or through Hong Kong must obtain a special permit in advance from AFCD and comply with the terms set out in the permit. The numbers of live animals imported without a relevant permit which were seized by AFCD at the airport and land boundary control points over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Cats/ dogs (number)	Other mammals (number)	Birds (number)	Pet reptiles (number)	Food poultry (number)	Food reptiles
2019	24	31	623	2 159	3	48 kg and 292 reptiles
2020	16	418	564	297	0	0
2021	14	24	191	2 028	0	0

The handling of the aforesaid animals and the respective numbers of animals handled over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Cats/ dogs (number)	Other mammals (number)	Birds (number)	Pet reptiles (number)	Food poultry (number)	Food reptiles
2019						
Reclaimed by owner/ repatriated	17	0	0	1 009	0	0
Arranged for adoption	0	0	0	0	0	0
Humanely dispatched	7	27	512	22	3	291 reptiles
Endangered species required to be dealt with separately	0	0	110	1 122	0	1 reptile and 48 kg
2020						
Reclaimed by owner/ repatriated	10	0	0	117	0	0
Arranged for adoption	5	377	0	6	0	0
Humanely dispatched	1	1	139	22	0	0
Endangered species required to be dealt with separately	0	0	62	37	0	0
2021						
Reclaimed by owner/ repatriated	1	0	0	0	0	0
Arranged for adoption	13	20	0	89	0	0
Humanely dispatched	0	0	0	1 128	0	0
Endangered species required to be dealt with separately	0	0	191	483	0	0

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-ENB001

(Question Serial No. S020)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment

Question:

1. Are the relocated wild pigs microchipped to monitor their whereabouts and the population of those which have returned to urban areas? If yes, what is the expenditure involved? If not, will the Government consider microchipping wild pigs to strengthen the study on the behaviours and whereabouts of wild pigs in Hong Kong as well as to formulate effective management and control measures?
2. Has the Government conducted any research to explore ways to keep the relocated wild pigs confined to the relocation sites? If yes, what are the details? If not, will such research be conducted?
3. Has the Government undertaken research projects in collaboration with universities or concern groups to study the conservation of local wild pigs and the control of their population? If yes, what were the research projects undertaken over the past 3 years and the expenditure involved? If not, will the Government allocate resources to conduct relevant researches?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to vaccinate or sterilise wild pigs caught and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. During the CCRP, the AFCD staff would microchip the captured wild pigs for record purpose before relocating them to the countryside, which enabled checking on their capture history and whether contraception treatment or sterilisation had been administered according to the microchip number when these wild pigs were recaptured. The price of each microchip was about \$30. The total expenditure involved in the purchase of microchips was about \$24,000 throughout the period of the CCRP. In addition, the AFCD collaborated with the Ocean Park Conservation Fund between 2017 and 2021 to undertake a research on the effectiveness of the contraceptive vaccine for wild pigs as well as to develop and apply an endoscopic contraception technique on wild pigs. The total expenditure of the relevant research was about \$5.2 million.

The expenditures involved in the CCRP (including the research expenditure on the relevant contraceptive vaccine and the endoscopic contraception technique) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure involved in the CCRP (\$ million)
2019-20	7.2
2020-21	9.4
2021-22 (revised estimate)	8.6

However, the progress of contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. The AFCD's investigation also reveals that once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will continually return to urban areas to seek food and cause nuisance even if they have been relocated to the countryside. In view of this and to cope with the festering nuisance of wild pigs, under the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the AFCD announced new measures on 12 November 2021 to conduct regular wild pig capture operations, during which veterinary officers will use dart guns to capture target wild pigs for humane dispatch through medicine injection.

Furthermore, the AFCD commenced a study in collaboration with the University of Hong Kong in 2020 to analyse the reasons for members of the public to feed wild pigs in order to formulate more targeted promotion and education strategies. The study is expected to be completed by the end of 2022 and the expenditure involved is about \$1.35 million.

- End -