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

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in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2023-24**

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)009

(Question Serial No. 0477)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Since the passage of the Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill in 2021, the scope of “animal” has expanded to include “cat” and “dog”. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of cases in relation to hitting of cats or dogs received and the number of prosecutions instituted;
2. the number of cases where the persons involved were unaware of the inclusion of stray dogs and cats in the Bill and used this as an excuse to evade their responsibility;
3. whether the Government will strengthen publicity and education on the definition stipulated in the relevant ordinance; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons; and
4. whether signage will be erected at accident black spots (such as Tai Mo Shan and Route Twisk) to remind motorists and CCTV be installed to step up law enforcement?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

1. Since the Road Traffic (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (the Amendment Ordinance) came into effect on 7 November 2021, the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) has received a total of 219 reports of vehicles hitting specified animals as at 31 January 2023. Among the reports, 54 cases involved hitting of specified animals without reporting to the Police and prosecutions were instituted in relation to 5 of them after investigation while the rest of the cases are still under investigation.
2. Under the Road Traffic Ordinance (the Ordinance), the driver of a vehicle shall stop if a traffic accident involving that vehicle occurs whereby damage is caused to a specified animal not in the vehicle and, in compliance with the requirements stipulated in the Ordinance, the driver shall provide his/her particulars to any police officer or any specified person. The Police will conduct investigation and take follow-up actions in accordance with the established mechanism. If there is sufficient evidence, the Police will institute prosecution against the persons concerned. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been promoting public awareness of the legal

requirements and emphasising that the definition of “animal” under the Ordinance covers any cat and dog, be they any stray cat and dog or cat and dog kept by people. Any misunderstanding of the legal provisions on the part of the persons concerned does not constitute a reasonable excuse for exemption from legal liability.

3. In 2021-22 and 2022-23, AFCD has been promoting public awareness of the requirements under the Amendment Ordinance through various media and platforms, including distributing promotional leaflets and posters, launching online publicity, producing radio Announcements in the Public Interest, as well as placing advertisements on the Internet and radio and at tunnel entrances and exits and tram stops, and on buses. In 2023-24, AFCD will continue its promotion and education efforts through the aforesaid channels.
4. Relevant departments, including AFCD, the Transport Department and the Police, will continue to monitor the situation of traffic accidents in various districts and will explore the need and feasibility of installing signage and CCTV facilities at individual locations as necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)010

(Question Serial No. 0478)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programme for dogs in the community, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of TNR programme in progress, the number of dogs involved, the effectiveness, and the expenditure and manpower involved; and
2. whether the programme will be extended to cover cats in the community; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. The Trap-Neuter-Return trial programme (the programme) was conducted by two animal welfare organisations (AWOs) at 2 trial sites in Cheung Chau and Tai Tong, Yuen Long between February 2015 and January 2018, while the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) was responsible for monitoring and handling related complaints and commissioning an independent consultant to conduct investigation and analysis. While the programme was completed, the 2 co-ordinating organisations of the programme agreed to continue managing and monitoring the dogs under the programme, and provide AFCD with regular reports on the condition, average lifespan and changes in the number of the dogs concerned. As at January 2023, a total of 106 dogs have been neutered under the programme and returned to their original habitat. The expenditure involved in the monitoring work under the programme by AFCD in 2022-23 was about \$130,000. Although the programme has not achieved the performance target of reducing the number of stray dogs at the trial sites for the time being, AFCD will provide the relevant assistance to AWOs or other organisations that are interested in implementing the Trap-Neuter-Return programme, including assisting them in liaising with the relevant District Councils and district stakeholders for consultation purpose.
2. AFCD has been assisting the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) with the implementation of the Cat Colony Care Programme (CCCP) in Hong Kong

since 2000. CCCP aims to reduce the number of stray cats in a gradual manner by means of trap, neuter and return. Under CCCP, SPCA recruits and trains volunteers to help catch stray cats in Hong Kong. The stray cats caught are then taken to SPCA where they are assessed, neutered, microchipped and vaccinated against rabies and other common feline infectious diseases before they are returned to their original habitat where they will be fed and observed by volunteers. AFCD and SPCA will regularly review the operation and effectiveness of CCCP to facilitate its implementation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)011****(Question Serial No. 0479)**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 Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (the Ordinance), would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the respective numbers of reported cases of suspected animal cruelty received over the past 3 years;
2. the number of prosecutions instituted by the Police and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department respectively, among which the number of non-convicted cases, as well as the maximum and minimum penalties imposed; and
3. the current progress of the proposal to review the Ordinance?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)Reply:

1. and 2. The number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received and details of prosecutions instituted by the Hong Kong Police Force and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received*	Number of prosecutions	Number of non-convicted cases	Penalties imposed	
				Fine (\$)	Range of imprisonment
2020	285	15	1	N/A	14 days to 8 months
2021	256	21	6	2,000 to 2,500	1 months and 12 days to 5 months
2022 (as at Sep)	179	16	1	1,000 to 3,000	14 days to 10 months

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

3. The Government is preparing for the legislative amendments of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) to further safeguard animal welfare. Proposed amendments include introducing a positive “duty of care” on persons responsible for animals, increasing the penalties on animal cruelty offences and enhancing enforcement powers. We are pressing ahead with the preparation work and aim to introduce the legislative amendments to the Legislative Council for scrutiny as soon as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)012

(Question Serial No. 2047)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Government has strengthened the regulation of animal trading and dog breeding activities since 2017. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the manpower and expenditure involved;
2. the number of prosecutions instituted by the Government against illegal trading of animals and the maximum and minimum penalties imposed;
3. the total number and effectiveness of online inspections conducted by the Government last year and the number of successful prosecutions and convictions;
4. the number of licences issued and cancelled for breaching the licensing conditions over the past 3 years; and
5. whether the Government will strengthen the regulation of animal trading and cat breeding activities; if yes, the details?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

1. The Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations (Cap. 139B) (the Regulations) came into effect on 20 March 2017 to strengthen the regulation of animal trading and dog breeding activities. In 2022-23, the manpower and expenditure (revised estimate) involved in the related regulatory work of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) were 30 staff members and \$20.4 million respectively.
2. In 2022, there were 21 successful prosecutions instituted by AFCD against trading animals without a valid licence or permit and the penalties imposed ranged from \$2,500 to \$10,000.
3. In 2022, AFCD conducted 1 625 online surveillance operations, during which 15 suspected cases of illegal animal trading were detected. After detailed

investigations by AFCD, successful prosecutions were instituted with conviction of the offenders in relation to 6 cases while 7 other cases are still under investigation.

4. The number of Animal Trader Licences (ATLs), Dog Breeder Licences (DBLs) and one-off permits issued by AFCD in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of licences issued			
	ATL	DBL (category A)	DBL (category B)	One-off permit
2020	291	8	25	1
2021	309	11	23	1
2022	340	12	22	0

Over the past 3 years, AFCD has cancelled 1 ATL due to the failure of the licensee concerned to comply with the licensing conditions.

5. In order to strengthen regulation of the activities of licensed cat traders, AFCD has reviewed the Code of Practice for Animal Traders (Cats) and plans to make amendments to require, inter alia, licensees to maintain records of the source of all the cats for sale and implant a microchip in all the cats for sale. AFCD has consulted the trade and other stakeholders on the amendments and expects to implement the new requirements within this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)013****(Question Serial No. 2605)**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 Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Please advise this Committee in each of the past 5 years: (1) the details and expenditure involved in the enforcement of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance, and the percentage in the overall expenditure of the Department; (2) the details and expenditure involved in public education and the protection of animal rights and welfare, and the percentage in the overall expenditure of the Department; and (3) the number of suspected cases of animal cruelty received among them, the number of successful prosecutions instituted, as well as the number of persons arrested, the number of persons convicted and the respective penalties in each case.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)Reply:

1. Upon receiving reports on suspected animal cruelty cases, the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) and/or the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will conduct investigations. Prosecution will be initiated if there is sufficient evidence.

AFCD's expenditure involved in the above work over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Percentage of the overall expenditure of the Department (%)
2018-19	3.2	0.2
2019-20	3.3	0.2
2020-21	2.9	0.2
2021-22	2.6	0.1
2022-23 (revised estimate)	2.2	0.1

2. 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 5 years, AFCD produced and broadcast educational videos and Announcements in the Public Interest on animal welfare through various platforms; published and distributed leaflets, posters and pamphlets on animal welfare through various channels; disseminated the latest information on animal welfare through a thematic website; placed advertisements on various platforms (e.g. public transport); organised roving exhibitions, “virtual reality games” exhibitions, dog obedience training courses and pet adoption activities in the 18 districts, and held talks at schools and housing estates on a regular basis. The expenditure involved is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on education and promotion of animal welfare (\$ million)	Percentage of the overall expenditure of the Department (%)
2018-19	19.6	1.2
2019-20	18.2	1.1
2020-21	25.9	1.4
2021-22	23.8	1.3
2022-23 (revised estimate)	21.5	1.1

3. The number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received and details of prosecutions instituted by the Police and AFCD under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports of suspected animal cruelty received*	Number of prosecutions instituted	Number of persons arrested	Number of successful prosecutions	Number of persons convicted	Penalties imposed	
						Fine (\$)	Range of imprisonment
2018	368	27	42	22	22	2,000 to 6,000	14 days to 1 year
2019	288	29	38	25	25	2,000 to 8,000	14 days to 10 months
2020	285	15	51	14	14	N/A	14 days to 8 months
2021	256	21	55	15	16	2,000 to 2,500	1 months and 12 days to 5 months
2022 (as at Sep)	179	16	21	15	18	1,000 to 3,000	14 days to 10 months

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)014

(Question Serial No. 1387)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is responsible for providing quarantine services and inspecting animals and plants imported into Hong Kong. It is learnt that import and sale of hamsters, subject to quarantine, is resumed after a cull of them was ordered last year because they had been infected with COVID-19 and suspected of infecting humans. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the current manpower and expenditure of the Department involved in handling animal quarantine; and
- (2) whether extra manpower and resources have been allocated for the additional animal quarantine work; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been carrying out inspections and quarantine operations at various boundary control points and the Hong Kong International Airport. In 2022-23, the number of staff and expenditure (revised estimate) involved in the inspection and quarantine work of AFCD were 102 staff members and \$58.8 million respectively.
- (2) In order to reduce the risk of spreading the COVID-19 epidemic through imported animals, all licensed animal traders who import mammals (including hamsters, guinea pigs and chinchillas) for commercial purposes are required to equip their licensed premises with isolation and quarantine facilities acknowledged by AFCD. AFCD will deploy staff to the licensed premises to take samples from imported animals for COVID-19 tests. Animals must be tested negative before they can be sold. AFCD staff will also collect environmental samples and/or animal samples from relevant premises on a regular basis for COVID-19 tests to step up monitoring. The above work is absorbed by the existing manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)015

(Question Serial No. 0165)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Under Programme (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets, the estimate for 2023-24 is decreased by 14.3% (18.4%). What are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The estimated provision for 2023-24 under Programme (1) is 14.3% (or \$86 million) and 18.4% (or \$116.6 million) lower than the revised estimate for 2022-23 and the original estimate for 2022-23 respectively. This is mainly due to reduced estimated cash flow requirement for 2023-24 on the item of one-off assistance package to trawler vessel owners, local deckhands and fish collector owners affected by the trawl ban, for which the work was generally completed in 2022-23. The reduction in provision is partially offset by the increased cash flow requirement of the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)016

(Question Serial No. 0166)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the details, expenditure and manpower involved in promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the expenditure and manpower involved in the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) since the introduction of SFDF and its Equipment Improvement Project, the number of beneficiaries, and among them, the number of in-service fishermen benefited; and
- (d) the implementation schedule for expanding the scope and enhancing the funding arrangements of SFDF.

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

Reply:

- (a) The Government has been promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry through (i) implementing a series of fisheries management measures (such as the ban on trawling and the introduction of a registration system for local fishing vessels) to help conserve and restore depleted marine resources; (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; (iv) providing infrastructure (such as establishing a modernised mariculture demonstration farm and training base at the Tung Lung Chau fish culture zone (FCZ)); (v) preparing the designation of 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Outer Tap Mun, Po Toi (Southeast) and Mirs Bay, which will provide some 590 hectares of marine fish culture area; and (vi) administering the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) to help fishermen adopt a sustainable and high value-added mode of operation, 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, with a view to supporting the development

of the industry in terms of application of advanced technology and intensification of production, and leveraging the opportunities arising from the development of the Greater Bay Area.

The expenditure 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)
2020-21	158.9	105
2021-22	143.8	105
2022-23 (revised estimate)	251.4*	104

* The drastic increase in the expenditure for the relevant item in 2022-23 is mainly due to disbursement of the remaining fund of the ex-gratia allowance that previously reserved by the Government to inshore trawler owners.

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	3.6	8
2021-22	4.5	9
2022-23 (revised estimate)	5.3	11

- (c) As at February 2023, 18 SFDF projects (including the Equipment Improvement Projects) were completed, benefiting around 1 750 in-service fishermen. Upon completion of more projects, more fishermen will benefit.
- (d) In December 2022, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the injection of an additional \$500 million into SFDF. At the same time, the coverage of SFDF has been expanded and a series of enhancement measures have been implemented, including increasing the Government's maximum funding ratio for commercial projects which are innovative and pilot in nature, introducing new subsidies for "application projects" and "support services projects", raising the grant ceiling and ratio for Equipment Improvement Projects and setting up a Task Force to assist potential applicants in refining their project proposals and preparing the necessary documents, etc. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department started accepting new applications under the enhanced mechanism on 28 February 2023.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)017

(Question Serial No. 0167)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the location of agricultural, active agricultural and arable land in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) (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 (2020-21 to 2022-23):
 - 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;
 - 5. the administrative and technical support provided;
 - 6. the details of the expenditure and manpower involved;
 - 7. the number of landowners participating in the said schemes;
 - 8. the annual rent for the successful cases;
- (c) the total expenditure 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 (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (d) the progress of the work on Agri-Park and APAs and the estimated work schedules for the two projects;
- (e) the details, expenditure and manpower involved in promoting the sustainable development of agriculture (e.g. the development of eco-tourism, leisure agricultural industry, agricultural industry employing innovative technology, other sustainable agriculture) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (f) the implementation schedule of expanding the coverage of the funds and enhancing the funding arrangements of SADF.

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

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 is 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)		
	2020	2021	2022
North	283	272	248
Yuen Long	251	263	260
Tai Po	87	91	91
Tuen Mun	43	44	44
Islands	34	33	33
Sai Kung	24	24	24
Tsuen Wan	18	19	18
Others	15	17	15
Total	755	763	733

- (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. When rehabilitation begins, AFCD provides cultivation tiller for rehabilitation and farm machinery and equipment lending services, as well as technical support on soil amendment, crop planting and pest and disease control. Over the past 3 years, the manpower and expenditure involved in operating ALRS by AFCD, as well as the relevant statistics on the cases handled are listed in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively:

Table 1: Manpower and expenditure involved in operating ALRS

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	0.6	1
2021-22	0.6	1
2022-23 (revised estimate)	0.6	1

Table 2: Relevant statistics on the cases handled under ALRS

Year	2020	2021	2022
Number of landowners participating in ALRS	29	27	23
Number of new applications/ land area involved (hectare)	79/13.1	73/7.8	88/11.7
Number of successful cases	48	25	16
- Total land area involved (hectare)	4.0	2.1	1.6
- Range of annual rent (per dau chung*)	\$1 to \$92,308	\$1 to \$11,875	\$1 to \$48,000
- Average waiting time (year)	4.2	2.8	5.3
Number of applications on the waiting list as at year-end/ land area involved (hectare)	517/92.7	525/89.3	516/83.3

* 1 dau chung is equivalent to 7 260 square feet.

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 an 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. Regarding the first phase of the works of the Kwu Tung North and Fanling North NDAs, the Government has made preliminary allocation proposals to all the 17 affected farmers who have submitted applications, involving agricultural land in Wa Shan and Ma Tso Lung with a total area of about 6 800 m². Among the applicants, 7 of them have accepted the proposals while the rest of them did not. At present, the annual rent of farmland in Wa Shan and Ma Tso Lung is about \$793 per dau chung. Lodging and storage units are also available for rent at an annual rate of \$3,195 and \$1,492 respectively. The above rents are subject to annual adjustment. SALRS is mainly undertaken by staff of the Development Bureau and relevant departments. As the staff concerned are also responsible for other duties, a separate breakdown of the manpower and expenditure involved in SALRS is not available.

- (c) Over the past 3 years, the expenditure and manpower of AFCD involved in administering the 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)
2020-21	13.6	22
2021-22	13.8	22
2022-23 (revised estimate)	21.4	19

- (d) AFCD is establishing an Agri-Park in Kwu Tung South to help nurture agro-technology and knowledge of modern farm management. Agri-Park Phase 1 (with an area of about 11 hectares) has progressively commenced operation since late 2022 and the remaining agricultural land and infrastructure works are expected to be completed in stages from the fourth quarter of 2023. AFCD and other relevant departments are in parallel planning and preparing for the next stage of Agri-Park.

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 recommend 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 made reference to relevant overseas experience with a view to establishing various criteria for APA sites, and is drawing up proposals with regard to the locations and area suitable for the designation of APAs and the relevant policy initiatives. As a considerable size of agricultural land is involved, it is estimated that the study will be completed next year at the earliest.

- (e) 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 leisure farming and organic 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 as development and/or operation capital; and (vi) implementing various measures under the New Agriculture Policy. The expenditure 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)
2020-21	80.4	130
2021-22	77.3	126
2022-23 (revised estimate)	78.7	118

- (f) In December 2022, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the injection of an additional \$500 million into the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund. At the same time, the coverage of the Fund has been expanded and a series of enhancement measures have been implemented, including increasing the Government's maximum funding ratio for commercial projects which are innovative and pilot in nature, introducing new subsidies for "application projects" and "support services projects", raising the grant ceiling and ratio for "Farm Improvement Scheme" and setting up a Task Force to assist potential applicants in refining their project proposals and preparing the necessary documents for their applications. AFCD has started accepting new applications under the enhanced mechanism with effect from 28 February 2023.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)018

(Question Serial No. 0169)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

What were/will be the Government's work, staff establishment and expenditure for improving marketing of agricultural and fisheries products over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) and in the future?

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

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been providing proactive assistance to the agriculture and fisheries industries to promote their local premium products. Such promotional efforts include organisation of FarmFest, which is an annual major event, and participation in various local food exhibitions (e.g. the Food Expo, HOFEX and Organic Aquaculture Festival) jointly with the Fish Marketing Organization and Vegetable Marketing Organization (FMO/VMO). To facilitate consumers in purchasing local agricultural and fisheries products, AFCD and FMO/VMO have jointly developed the Local Fresh mobile app and set up the corresponding shopping website. In recent years, AFCD and FMO/VMO have also set up a Local Fresh store at a suitable location to provide a physical sales platform for local agricultural and fisheries products and organised holiday bazaars at the store on a regular basis to enable farmers and fishermen to promote their products directly, build their brands and increase their incomes. AFCD also operates the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme and Accredited Farm Scheme to build up a brand name of quality and safety for local agricultural and fisheries products so as to enhance the competitiveness of the industries.

Moreover, a local major catering group in collaboration with AFCD and FMO/VMO, designed special menus using local agricultural and fisheries products as ingredients, and launched major marketing activities to promote local agricultural and fisheries products in 2022. AFCD also strengthens support for fishermen and farmers through funded projects under the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund, such as promoting organic certification, funding the operation of organic farmers' markets, facilitating co-operation between fish farmers and the catering trade and

assisting farmers with the grading of agricultural products in marketing, in particular, the promotion of local products in the market through branding, group promotion and advertising.

As the marketing of local agricultural and fisheries products is a part of AFCD's overall duties in supporting the local agriculture and fisheries industries, no separate breakdown of the manpower and expenditure is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)019

(Question Serial No. 0174)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the artificial reef project, please advise of the following:

- (a) the situation of deployment of artificial reefs, the number of artificial reefs deployed and the areas concerned over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) whether the Government has ever assessed the effectiveness of the artificial reefs project; and
- (c) the reasons for not setting out the expenditure on artificial reefs this year, as well as the details of the actual and estimated expenditure.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

- (a) No artificial reefs (ARs) were deployed by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years.
- (b) and (c) AFCD has conducted regular underwater surveys on the fisheries resources in areas with ARs to assess their effectiveness. Results from past surveys indicate that areas with ARs deployed support higher diversity and abundance of fish species as compared with the natural habitat. Over 200 species of fish, including high-valued species like groupers, breams, snappers and sweetlips, have also been found using ARs as feeding, sheltering, spawning and nursing grounds.

The underwater surveys were completed in 2019-20, and no expenditure was incurred in this regard in 2022-23.

AFCD will conduct underwater surveys as appropriate to monitor and assess the effectiveness of AR deployment and will continue to explore the feasibility of further deploying ARs at suitable locations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)020

(Question Serial No. 0175)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding mariculture industry, please advise of the following:

- (a) the expenditure and manpower of the Government for monitoring water quality and red tides respectively over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the number of red tides occurred in Hong Kong and the species of phytoplankton that caused red tides respectively over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) with a breakdown by district in tabular form;
- (c) whether the Government had any statistics on the cases relating to massive fish deaths due to water quality or pollution incidents over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23). Please set out by district;
- (d) whether the Government had any statistics on the cases relating to massive fish deaths due to inclement weather (including typhoons, cold snaps) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23). Please set out by district;
- (e) the number of applications for the Emergency Relief Fund due to items (b), (c) and (d), the number of cases approved and the amount involved;
- (f) the new measures implemented by the Government to support the mariculture industry over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (g) the size and average density of rafts in fish culture zones (FCZs) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) with a breakdown by the 26 FCZs in tabular form;
- (h) the total size of FCZs over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (i) the expenditure and manpower involved in processing matters related to FCZs over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (j) the expenditure and manpower involved in processing matters related to the designation of 4 new FCZs as well as the work progress and timeframe;
- (k) the respective number of fish rafts in the 26 FCZs of Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) in tabular form; and
- (l) the manpower and the expenditure involved in conducting inspections at each FCZ over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) and the timeframe for the inspections.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- (a) The expenditure and manpower of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) for monitoring water quality and red tides over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	15.8	11
2021-22	18.5	11
2022-23 (revised estimate)	18.4	11

- (b) The number of red tides observed in different districts and the information on phytoplankton species that caused red tides over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

District	Number of red tides observed and the causative species involved		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
North	1 <i>Gonyaulax polygramma</i>	Nil	Nil
Tai Po	9 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Scrippsiella trochoidea</i> , <i>Mesodinium rubrum</i> , <i>Akashiwo sanguinea</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i> , <i>Gonyaulax polygramma</i>	1 <i>Karenia sp.</i> , <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	Nil
Sha Tin	1 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	Nil	Nil
Sai Kung	7 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Mesodinium rubrum</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i> , <i>Gonyaulax polygramma</i>	5 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	4 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>
Southern	13 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia pungens</i> , <i>Chaetoceros pseudocurvisetus</i> , <i>Guinardia delicatula</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i> , <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	19 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	13 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i> , <i>Scrippsiella trochoidea</i>

District	Number of red tides observed and the causative species involved		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Islands	4 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	9 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i> , <i>Akashiwo sanguinea</i> , <i>Takayama tuberculata</i>	7 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Dactyliosolen phuketensis</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>
Tuen Mun	2 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	11 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	2 <i>Cerataulina dentata</i>
Kwun Tong	1 <i>Amphora</i> sp.	Nil	Nil
Tsuen Wan	5 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>	8 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	2 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>
Kwai Tsing	1 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	Nil	Nil
Yuen Long	1 <i>Takayama tuberculata</i>	1 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i>	Nil
Central and Western	Nil	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>
Wan Chai	Nil	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>
Eastern	Nil	1 <i>Guinardia delicatula</i>	Nil
Kowloon City	Nil	1 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	Nil
Yau Tsim Mong	Nil	2 <i>Guinardia delicatula</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	Nil

- (c) and (d) There were no confirmed reports of massive fish deaths in fish culture zones (FCZs) due to water quality, pollution or inclement weather over the past 3 years.
- (e) Over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), AFCD received 22 applications for the Emergency Relief Fund in 2021-22 due to red tides affecting marine fish culture farms. Among these applications, 21 were approved, involving an amount of about \$180,000.
- (f) The Government has been promoting the sustainable development of mariculture. Apart from providing technical support services, credit facilities and training, promoting good aquaculture practices and monitoring the aquaculture environment, it has rolled out new supportive measures including: (i) resuming the issuance of marine fish culture licences for existing FCZs with surplus carrying

capacity; (ii) establishing a modernised mariculture demonstration farm equipped with a steel truss cage at the Tung Lung Chau FCZ so as to provide an infrastructure for practical training; (iii) preparing to designate 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, outer Tap Mun, Po Toi (Southeast) and Mirs Bay which will provide an area of about 590 hectares for mariculture; and (iv) helping fishermen adopt a sustainable and high value-added mode of operation and funding projects and researches that help enhance the overall competitiveness of the industry through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund, including developing deep sea mariculture, to support the development of the industry in terms of application of advanced technology and intensification of production, and leveraging the opportunities arising from the Greater Bay Area development.

- (g) The total area and average density of rafts in the 26 FCZs over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

FCZ	2020-21		2021-2022		2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)	
	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)
Ap Chau	255	6.1	255	6.1	255	6.1
Cheung Sha Wan	14 189	6.6	13 305	6.2	13 309	6.2
Kai Lung Wan	5 476	20.2	5 476	20.2	5 468	20.2
Kat O	2 909	9.0	2 913	9.0	2 989	9.2
Kau Lau Wan	1 199	10.7	1 199	10.7	1 143	10.2
Kau Sai	12 488	27.0	11 787	25.5	11 779	25.5
Leung Shuen Wan	5 702	33.0	5 668	32.8	5 676	32.8
Lo Fu Wat	1 422	26.3	1 122	20.8	978	18.1
Lo Tik Wan	21 064	19.3	21 630	19.8	21 586	19.8
Ma Nam Wat	5 064	12.6	5 054	12.6	5 067	12.6
Ma Wan	13 851	29.9	13 754	29.7	13 744	29.7
O Pui Tong	2 462	2.3	2 462	2.3	2 323	2.2
Po Toi	265	8.8	255	8.5	249	8.3
Po Toi O	3 367	8.8	3 186	8.3	3 149	8.2
Sai Lau Kong	296	4.1	140	1.9	140	1.9
Sha Tau Kok	11 766	6.5	11 926	6.6	12 170	6.8
Sham Wan	12 407	6.9	12 219	6.8	11 760	6.5
Sok Kwu Wan	26 134	18.5	26 414	18.7	26 498	18.8
Tai Tau Chau	12 101	19.3	12 058	19.2	12 032	19.2
Tap Mun	7 707	10.6	7 694	10.6	7 662	10.6
Tiu Cham Wan	131	0.8	131	0.8	131	0.8
Tung Lung Chau	10 772	13.5	10 703	13.4	10 275	12.8

FCZ	2020-21		2021-2022		2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)	
	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)
Wong Wan	2 500	11.1	2 500	11.1	2 500	11.1
Yim Tin Tsai	21 379	15.7	21 231	15.6	21 327	15.6
Yim Tin Tsai (East)	20 244	13.5	20 653	13.8	20 556	13.8
Yung Shue Au	35 474	10.4	36 595	10.7	37 017	10.8
Total	250 624	12.0	250 330	12.0	249 783	11.9

* Raft density refers to the ratio of the total raft area in the relevant FCZ to the total area of that FCZ.

- (h) The total area of FCZs remained at about 209 hectares over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).
- (i) The expenditure and manpower involved in processing applications related to the marine fish culture licence and conducting patrols and inspections in FCZs over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	13.9	21
2021-22	12.0	21
2022-23 (revised estimate)	10.9	21

- (j) The environmental impact assessment (EIA) studies for the designation of the 4 new FCZs are in the final stage. Subject to approval of the EIA reports, Environmental Permits for the 4 new FCZs are expected to be issued within the first half of 2023. We will amend the Marine Fish Culture Ordinance (Cap. 353) (the Ordinance) and the relevant legislation by adding the new FCZs to the existing list of FCZs. We plan to publish the proposed amendments in the Gazette and table them before the Legislative Council for negative vetting in the fourth quarter of 2023.

The consultancy fee of the EIA studies commissioned by AFCD in this regard is about \$7.5 million. The manpower on overseeing the consultancy studies and designating the 4 new FCZs is absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD.

- (k) The number of fish rafts in the 26 FCZs over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) is tabulated as follows:

FCZ	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)
Ap Chau	4	4	4
Cheung Sha Wan	62	67	67
Kai Lung Wan	39	39	39
Kat O	28	28	28
Kau Lau Wan	20	20	20
Kau Sai	65	59	59
Leung Shuen Wan	62	62	62
Lo Fu Wat	19	19	19
Lo Tik Wan	67	66	65
Ma Nam Wat	42	42	42
Ma Wan	94	94	93
O Pui Tong	5	5	5
Po Toi	6	6	6
Po Toi O	35	35	35
Sai Lau Kong	2	2	2
Sha Tau Kok	110	110	108
Sham Wan	161	161	161
Sok Kwu Wan	138	137	137
Tai Tau Chau	101	101	98
Tap Mun	72	72	72
Tiu Cham Wan	2	2	2
Tung Lung Chau	57	57	55
Wong Wan	18	18	18
Yim Tin Tsai	251	249	245
Yim Tin Tsai (East)	195	195	195
Yung Shue Au	283	282	282
Total	1 938	1 932	1 919

- (1) To ensure the operation of fish rafts is in compliance with the Ordinance, AFCD conducts regular inspections in the 26 FCZs. The expenditure and manpower involved in the inspections over the past 3 years are tabulated below. AFCD does not have a breakdown of the figures by individual FCZ.

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	11.6	18
2021-22	9.6	18
2022-23 (revised estimate)	8.9	18

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)021

(Question Serial No. 0176)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

- (a) Please set out the number, size and distribution of vegetable farms, flower farms, organic farms, leisure farms, vegetable marketing co-operative societies, vegetable depots, farms in industrial buildings, fish rafts and licences for marine fish culture, fish ponds and oyster breeding rafts currently in operation.
- (b) What are the number, size and distribution of local pig farms and chicken farms, and the licensed rearing capacity of each farm over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23)? Please set out the information with a breakdown by the 18 districts.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- (a) As at 31 December 2022, there were about 2 400 crop farms (including vegetables, flowers and orchards) with a total cultivated area of about 733 hectares. These farms were mainly located in the North District and Yuen Long. Amongst these crop farms, there were 342 organic vegetable farms which had joined the Organic Farming Support Service Scheme of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department with a total area of about 101 hectares. It is estimated that there were 129 leisure farms with a total area of about 130 hectares. There were also 16 farms located in industrial buildings in Chai Wan, Kwun Tong, Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Tai Po, Tuen Mun and Sha Tin districts with a total area of about 3 hectares.

The number and distribution of vegetable marketing co-operative societies (VMCSs) and vegetable depots by district as at 31 December 2022 are tabulated as follows:

District	VMCSs	Vegetable depots
Yuen Long	13	0
North	9	0
Tuen Mun	3	1
Islands	2	0
Tai Po	1	0
Tsuen Wan	1	0
Total	29	1

Information of marine fish culture farms, pond fish farms and oyster rafts as at 31 December 2022 is as follows:

- (i) There were 913 licensed marine fish culture farms with about 1 920 fish rafts in 26 designated Fish Culture Zones (FCZs)*. The size of farms ranged from about 13 to 6 800 m².
- (ii) There were about 350 pond fish farms with about 1 370 fish ponds, mainly in the north-west New Territories. The size of pond fish farms ranged from about 80 to 425 000 m².
- (iii) There were about 12 600 oyster rafts in Deep Bay, the size of which ranged from about 100 to 300 m².

* There are 26 designated FCZs located at Sha Tau Kok, Ap Chau, Kat O, O Pui Tong, Sai Lau Kong, Wong Wan, Tap Mun, Kau Lau Wan, Sham Wan, Lo Fu Wat, Yung Shue Au, Leung Shuen Wan, Tiu Cham Wan, Tai Tau Chau, Kai Lung Wan, Kau Sai, Ma Nam Wat, Po Toi O, Po Toi, Sok Kwu Wan, Lo Tik Wan, Ma Wan, Yim Tin Tsai, Cheung Sha Wan, Yim Tin Tsai (East) and Tung Lung Chau respectively.

- (b) Over the past 3 years, the number of local pig farms and chicken farms remained the same as 43 and 29 respectively. The distribution, licensed area and licensed rearing capacity of these farms as at 31 December 2022 are tabulated as follows:

Pig farms

	2020			2021			2022		
	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)
1	Yuen Long	384.65	300	Yuen Long	384.65	300	Yuen Long	384.65	300
2	Yuen Long	626.82	450	Yuen Long	626.82	450	Yuen Long	626.82	450
3	Yuen Long	706.90	1 000	Yuen Long	706.90	1 000	Yuen Long	706.90	1 000
4	Yuen Long	838.59	1 500	Yuen Long	838.59	1 500	Yuen Long	838.59	1 500
5	Yuen Long	902.78	1 000	Yuen Long	902.78	1 000	Yuen Long	902.78	1 000
6	Yuen Long	938.49	850	Yuen Long	938.49	850	Yuen Long	938.49	850
7	Yuen Long	1 142.90	600	Yuen Long	1 142.90	600	Yuen Long	1 142.90	600
8	Yuen Long	1 180.97	1 200	Yuen Long	1 180.97	1 200	Yuen Long	1 180.97	1 200
9	Yuen Long	1 327.53	1 000	Yuen Long	1 327.53	1 000	Yuen Long	1 327.53	1 000
10	Yuen Long	1 374.87	1 200	Yuen Long	1 374.87	1 200	Yuen Long	1 374.87	1 200
11	Yuen Long	1 709.24	1 500	Yuen Long	1 709.24	1 500	Yuen Long	1 709.24	1 500
12	Yuen Long	1 725.58	1 900	Yuen Long	1 725.58	1 900	Yuen Long	1 725.58	1 900
13	Yuen Long	1 864.27	600	Yuen Long	1 864.27	600	Yuen Long	1 864.27	600
14	Yuen Long	1 923.26	1 500	Yuen Long	1 923.26	1 500	Yuen Long	1 923.26	1 500
15	Yuen Long	2 105.33	1 990	Yuen Long	2 105.33	1 990	Yuen Long	2 105.33	1 990
16	Yuen Long	2 146.27	1 600	Yuen Long	2 146.27	1 600	Yuen Long	2 146.27	1 600
17	Yuen Long	2 220.09	1 000	Yuen Long	2 220.09	1 000	Yuen Long	2 220.09	1 000
18	Yuen Long	2 614.85	2 000	Yuen Long	2 614.85	2 000	Yuen Long	2 614.85	2 000
19	Yuen Long	2 765.33	2 600	Yuen Long	2 765.33	2 600	Yuen Long	2 765.33	2 600
20	Yuen Long	2 860.03	1 500	Yuen Long	2 860.03	1 500	Yuen Long	2 860.03	1 500
21	Yuen Long	2 960.03	3 500	Yuen Long	2 960.03	3 500	Yuen Long	2 960.03	3 500
22	Yuen Long	3 015.53	2 000	Yuen Long	3 015.53	2 000	Yuen Long	3 015.53	2 000
23	Yuen Long	3 130.14	1 500	Yuen Long	3 130.14	1 500	Yuen Long	3 130.14	1 500
24	Yuen Long	3 205.77	2 000	Yuen Long	3 205.77	2 000	Yuen Long	3 205.77	2 000
25	Yuen Long	3 699.22	1 800	Yuen Long	3 699.22	1 800	Yuen Long	3 699.22	1 800
26	Yuen Long	3 914.32	3 000	Yuen Long	3 914.32	3 000	Yuen Long	3 914.32	3 000
27	Yuen Long	3 955.47	2 500	Yuen Long	3 955.47	2 500	Yuen Long	3 955.47	2 500
28	Yuen Long	3 965.31	2 000	Yuen Long	3 965.31	2 000	Yuen Long	3 965.31	2 000
29	Yuen Long	4 106.13	3 000	Yuen Long	4 106.13	3 000	Yuen Long	4 106.13	3 000
30	Yuen Long	4 248.04	3 000	Yuen Long	4 248.04	3 000	Yuen Long	4 248.04	3 000
31	Yuen Long	4 524.78	2 600	Yuen Long	4 524.78	2 600	Yuen Long	4 524.78	2 600
32	Yuen Long	5 085.70	1 500	Yuen Long	5 085.70	1 500	Yuen Long	5 085.70	1 500
33	Yuen Long	6 345.66	6 000	Yuen Long	6 345.66	6 000	Yuen Long	6 345.66	6 000
34	Yuen Long	7 108.62	4 000	Yuen Long	7 108.62	4 000	Yuen Long	7 108.62	4 000
35	North	556.96	250	North	556.96	250	North	556.96	250
36	North	557.91	800	North	557.91	800	North	557.91	800
37	North	691.19	500	North	691.19	500	North	691.19	500
38	North	1 239.02	1 500	North	1 239.02	1 500	North	1 239.02	1 500
39	North	1 280.91	600	North	1 280.91	600	North	1 280.91	600
40	North	1 611.16	950	North	1 611.16	950	North	1 611.16	950
41	North	2 407.85	2 000	North	2 407.85	2 000	North	2 407.85	2 000
42	North	4 953.09	4 000	North	4 953.09	4 000	North	4 953.09	4 000
43	Sai Kung	388.79	350	Sai Kung	388.79	350	Sai Kung	388.79	350
Total		104 310.35	74 640		104 310.35	74 640		104 310.35	74 640

Chicken farms

	2020			2021			2022		
	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)
1	Yuen Long	387.23	10 000	Yuen Long	387.23	10 000	Yuen Long	387.23	10 000
2	Yuen Long	569.30	25 000	Yuen Long	569.30	25 000	Yuen Long	569.30	25 000
3	Yuen Long	648.36	20 000	Yuen Long	648.36	20 000	Yuen Long	648.36	20 000
4	Yuen Long	682.16	19 000	Yuen Long	682.16	19 000	Yuen Long	682.16	19 000
5	Yuen Long	723.86	19 900	Yuen Long	723.86	19 900	Yuen Long	723.86	19 900
6	Yuen Long	775.26	20 000	Yuen Long	775.26	20 000	Yuen Long	775.26	20 000
7	Yuen Long	948.17	18 000	Yuen Long	948.17	18 000	Yuen Long	948.17	18 000
8	Yuen Long	1 067.54	31 000	Yuen Long	1 067.54	31 000	Yuen Long	1 067.54	31 000
9	Yuen Long	1 137.70	48 000	Yuen Long	1 137.70	48 000	Yuen Long	1 137.70	48 000
10	Yuen Long	1 250.84	42 000	Yuen Long	1 250.84	42 000	Yuen Long	1 250.84	42 000
11	Yuen Long	1 336.34	39 000	Yuen Long	1 336.34	39 000	Yuen Long	1 336.34	39 000
12	Yuen Long	1 563.39	48 000	Yuen Long	1 563.39	48 000	Yuen Long	1 563.39	48 000
13	Yuen Long	1 610.01	26 000	Yuen Long	1 610.01	26 000	Yuen Long	1 610.01	26 000
14	Yuen Long	1 655.73	36 000	Yuen Long	1 655.73	36 000	Yuen Long	1 655.73	36 000
15	Yuen Long	2 004.75	41 000	Yuen Long	2 004.75	41 000	Yuen Long	2 004.75	41 000
16	Yuen Long	2 477.98	46 000	Yuen Long	2 477.98	46 000	Yuen Long	2 477.98	46 000
17	Yuen Long	2 597.37	50 000	Yuen Long	2 597.37	50 000	Yuen Long	2 597.37	50 000
18	Yuen Long	2 944.67	62 800	Yuen Long	2 944.67	62 800	Yuen Long	2 944.67	62 800
19	Yuen Long	3 163.24	70 000	Yuen Long	3 163.24	70 000	Yuen Long	3 163.24	70 000
20	Yuen Long	3 226.20	108 000	Yuen Long	3 226.20	108 000	Yuen Long	3 226.20	108 000
21	Yuen Long	3 372.57	35 000	Yuen Long	3 372.57	35 000	Yuen Long	3 372.57	35 000
22	Yuen Long	4 604.03	102 000	Yuen Long	4 604.03	102 000	Yuen Long	4 604.03	102 000
23	Yuen Long	4 693.83	80 000	Yuen Long	4 693.83	80 000	Yuen Long	4 693.83	80 000
24	Yuen Long	10 454.52	162 300	Yuen Long	10 454.52	162 300	Yuen Long	10 454.52	162 300
25	North	708.10	18 000	North	708.10	18 000	North	708.10	18 000
26	North	873.34	27 000	North	873.34	27 000	North	873.34	27 000
27	North	1 757.95	38 500	North	1 757.95	38 500	North	1 757.95	38 500
28	North	4 518.98	48 000	North	4 518.98	48 000	North	4 518.98	48 000
29	Tuen Mun	433.41	10 000	Tuen Mun	433.41	10 000	Tuen Mun	433.41	10 000
Total		62 186.83	1 300 500		62 186.83	1 300 500		62 186.83	1 300 500

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)022****(Question Serial No. 0177)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Please advise of the number of Hong Kong fishermen, the number of their fishing vessels, and their production values (both within and outside Hong Kong) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)Reply:

Vessels navigating in Hong Kong waters are required to possess a valid operating licence issued by the Marine Department (MD) which certifies the vessels' safety and seaworthiness. Vessels engaging in fishing operations in Hong Kong waters are required to further register with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) under the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171). The number of fishing vessels registered with MD, local fishing vessels registered with AFCD and local capture fishermen as well as the production value of their fishing operations over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year (as at the end of the year)	Number of local fishing vessels registered with MD [#]	Number of local fishing vessels registered with AFCD	Number of local capture fishermen [^]	Production value (\$ million) [^]	
				From Hong Kong waters	From waters outside Hong Kong
2020	6 390	4 139	10 149	1,043	1,664
2021	6 376	4 321	10 510	1,055	1,712
2022	6 139	4 343	10 324	1,081	1,089

[#] Based on MD's information on the number of fishing vessels (Class III vessel) licensed under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D).

[^] Based on the fisheries survey on capture fishermen conducted by AFCD.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)023

(Question Serial No. 0178)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the loans in relation to the agriculture and fisheries industries, please advise of the following:

- (a) the loans currently provided by the Government to the agriculture and fisheries industries respectively;
- (b) the number of applications for the above loans, the number of loans approved, the total amount of the fund(s) and the total loans granted in each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) (please set out by loans);
- (c) the maximum amount of the above loans granted in each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (d) the number of deferred repayment and bad debt cases among the loans mentioned in (a) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

- (a) Currently, the Government provides credit facility to farmers, fish farmers and fishermen through 7 loan funds administered by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. They are the J.E. Joseph Trust Fund (JEJTF), the Vegetable Marketing Organization Loan Fund (VMOLF), the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund (KAALF), the Fisheries Development Loan Fund (FDLF), the Fish Marketing Organization Loan Fund (FMOLF), the World Refugee Year Loan Fund and the Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere Loan Fund (CARE Loan Fund).
- (b) The total capital of the above loan funds, the number of applications, the number of loans and the amount of loans issued over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

JEJTF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 December) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2020	20.4	4	4	0.7
2021	20.5	6	6	1.2
2022	20.7	6	6	1.1

VMOLF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 December) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2020	13.2	21	21	1.7
2021	13.3	19	19	1.6
2022	13.5	16	16	1.4

KAALF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 December) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2020	15.7	26	25	3.2
2021	15.7	24	24	3.4
2022	15.9	21	21	3.1

FDLF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 December) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2020	1,100	0	3	31.5
2021	1,100	7	0	6.9
2022	1,100	2	1	5.6

FMOLF (including normal loans and special fishing moratorium loans)

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 December) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount# (\$ million)
2020	397.9	636	595	99.9
2021	398.0	250	245	92.1
2022	397.3	232	224	83.6

* Referring to the number of loans with their first instalment issued in the respective year.

Referring to the total amount of loans issued in the respective year, including all stages of instalments.

Over the past 3 years, the World Refugee Year Loan Fund and the CARE Loan Fund received no application for loans. Their capitals stand at some \$2 million and \$200,000 respectively.

- (c) The maximum amount for each loan under the loan funds in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Loan Funds	2020 (\$)	2021 (\$)	2022 (\$)
JEJTF	200,000	200,000	200,000
KAALF	200,000	200,000	200,000
VMOLF	200,000	140,000	200,000
FDLF	9,900,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
FMOLF	990,000	450,000	450,000

- (d) The number of deferred repayment and bad debt cases of the above loan funds is tabulated as follows:

Number of deferred repayment cases

Loan Funds	2020 (number of cases)	2021 (number of cases)	2022 (number of cases)
JEJTF	0	0	0
KAALF	4	2	3
VMOLF	8	4	5
FDLF [^]	2	1	33
FMOLF	517	525	546

[^] The figures of FDLF do not include the granting of a deferral of loan repayment and waiving of interests for 1 year to borrowers of FDLF in view of the COVID-19 epidemic in 2020 and 2022 respectively. Subsequent to the two deferrals of loan repayment, the due date for making the final repayment by borrowers has been deferred by a total of two years.

Number of bad debt cases

Loan Funds	2020 (number of cases)	2021 (number of cases)	2022 (number of cases)
JEJTF	0	0	0
KAALF	1	1	0
VMOLF	1	0	0
FDLF	0	0	0
FMOLF	0	0	0

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)024****(Question Serial No. 0179)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding fishing vessels and industry-related vessels, please advise of the following:

- (a) the respective numbers of pair trawlers, stern trawlers, shrimp trawlers, hang trawlers, purse seiners with light, purse seiners, liners and gillnetters, fish carriers, other fishing vessels and industry-related vessels over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the number of fishing vessels registered in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (c) among the registered fishing vessels mentioned in part (b), the respective numbers of vessels conducting fishing activities with the methods mentioned in part (a).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)Reply:

- (a) The Marine Department's (MD) information on the number of fishing vessels (Class III vessel) licensed under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Type of vessel	Number of local fishing vessels		
	2020	2021	2022
Fish carrier	26	21	19
Fishing sampan "C7"	1 908	1 861	1 832
Fishing vessel	1 680	1 626	1 384
Outboard open sampan "P4"	2 776	2 868	2 904
Total	6 390	6 376	6 139

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have a further breakdown of the number of fishing vessels.

- (b) Vessels navigating in Hong Kong waters are required to possess a valid operating licence issued by MD which certifies the safety and seaworthiness of the vessel concerned. Vessels engaging in fishing operations in Hong Kong waters are required

to further register with AFCD under the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) (the Ordinance). There were 4 139, 4 321 and 4 343 fishing vessels registered under the Ordinance in 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively.

- (c) The breakdown of various fishing methods used by fishing vessels registered in accordance with the requirements mentioned in (b) above over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Fishing method	Number of local fishing vessels registered with AFCD		
	2020	2021	2022
Purse seining/purse seining with light	45	44	42
Long lining/hand lining	34	34	31
Gill netting	516	521	521
Cage trapping	41	52	43
Mixed fishing methods	3 503	3 670	3 706
Total	4 139	4 321	4 343

Since trawling is prohibited in Hong Kong waters, no trawler could be registered under the Ordinance.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)025

(Question Serial No. 0180)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

Question:

With regard to the development of the agriculture and fisheries industries, please advise of the following:

- (a) the current work progress of the Agriculture Park (Agri-Park) Phase 1 in Kwu Tung which has commenced operation in phases since late 2022 and the work schedule for Phase 2; and
- (b) for the 4 new fish culture zones (FCZs) planned to be designated by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) this year, the details of renting them to fishermen associations, the details of and manpower involved in the management of the new FCZs, the current work progress and the work schedule.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has established an Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) in Kwu Tung South to help nurture agro-technology and knowledge of modernised farm management. Agri-Park Phase 1 (covering an area of about 11 hectares) has gradually come into operation since late 2022, and the works for the remaining parts of agricultural land and infrastructure facilities are expected to be completed in stages from the fourth quarter of 2023. AFCD and other relevant departments are in parallel planning and preparing for Agri-Park's next stage of work.
- (b) AFCD is planning to designate 4 new fish culture zone (FCZs) at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, outer Tap Mun, Po Toi (Southeast) and Mirs Bay. The new FCZs can further facilitate mariculture development and assist capture fishermen in switching to sustainable modes of operation. The statutory environmental impact assessment (EIA) studies for the 4 new FCZs are in the final stage. Subject to the approval of the EIA reports, it is expected that the Environmental Permits for the 4 new FCZs can be issued within the first half of 2023. We will amend the Marine Fish Culture Ordinance (Cap. 353) and relevant legislation by including the new FCZs on the existing list of FCZs. We aim

to publish the proposed amendments in the Gazette and table them before the Legislative Council for negative vetting in the fourth quarter of 2023.

AFCD will issue fish culture licences for operations in the new FCZs, and will prescribe new licensing conditions to ensure that mariculture operations in the new FCZs can achieve the intended purposes. AFCD will finalise the details on operation and management of the new FCZs and the arrangements for the renting of deep sea cages and related equipment set up by the Government after consultation with the trade. It is expected that the first batch of the new licences will be issued by the first quarter of 2024 the earliest. For the resources to be required in the management of the new FCZs, AFCD will make timely assessment and appropriate arrangements.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)026

(Question Serial No. 0181)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding water quality, please advise of the following:

- (a) the mechanism and standard currently adopted by the Government to assess whether the water quality is suitable for fish culture; whether there has been any occasion on which the water quality in the 26 fish culture zones was unsuitable for fish culture over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) and the details; and
- (b) the mechanism and standard currently adopted by the Government to assess the impacts of the water quality around marine works on fisheries resources; whether there has been any occasion on which the water quality in local fishing grounds was unsuitable for fish culture over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) and the details.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- (a) Marine water quality is measured by a set of water quality objectives (WQOs) established under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 358). The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department monitors the water quality of fish culture zones (FCZs) having regard to 4 WQOs, viz dissolved oxygen, pH, unionised ammonia and E. coli. Over the past 3 years, the water quality in all 26 FCZs was in general suitable for mariculture as it complied with the aforesaid 4 WQOs levels, and there was no incident during the period that had caused massive fish kills or impact on FCZs of a permanent nature.
- (b) The Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499) requires proponents of designated projects to assess the potential environmental impacts. Fisheries impact assessment is conducted as part of an environmental impact assessment (EIA) study for a proposed development project that may affect fishing and aquaculture activities, fisheries resources and production, as well as fisheries habitats, fishing grounds, nursery and spawning grounds and aquaculture sites. In addition, project proponents are also required to implement Environmental Monitoring and Audit (EM&A) programmes to monitor the water quality as required by the Director of Environmental Protection.

Over the past 3 years, no unacceptable impacts arising from marine works on fisheries had been identified in EIAs, or reported under the monitoring of EM&A programmes.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)027****(Question Serial No. 0182)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the wholesale of fish, please advise of the following:

- (a) the annual total and daily average wholesale quantities, as well as the highest and lowest figures thereof for different kinds of marine fish (including Golden thread, Horse-heads, Yellow croakers, Big-eyes, Scads, Breams, Hair-tails, Mackerels, Croakers, Filefish, etc.) and freshwater fish (including Grass carp, Big head, Mud carp, etc.) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (b) the monthly average, the highest and lowest prices of different kinds of marine fish (including Golden thread, Horse-heads, Yellow croakers, Big-eyes, Scads, Breams, Hair-tails, Mackerels, Croakers, Filefish, etc.) and freshwater fish (including Grass carp, Big head, Mud carp, etc.) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)Reply:

- (a) Information on the quantity of freshwater fish traded through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years is shown below. We do not have a breakdown of the figures for different kinds of freshwater fish.

Year	Total quantity (tonnes)	Daily average quantity (tonnes)	Highest daily quantity (tonnes)	Lowest daily quantity (tonnes)
2020	43 585	119	179	14
2021	47 313	130	180	18
2022	34 419	94	169	6

Information on the wholesale quantity of marine fish traded over the past 3 years is shown in **Annex A**.

- (b) Information on the monthly price of freshwater fish traded through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years is shown below. We do not have a breakdown of the figures for different kinds of freshwater fish.

Year	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/tonne)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	26,712	26,357	26,457	26,474	26,493	26,696	26,532	26,642	26,802*	26,399	26,308	25,929^
2021	25,610^	26,230	26,922	27,200	28,354	29,378	30,184	30,218*	29,964	29,565	29,276	28,870
2022	29,036^	29,403	31,873	32,965	33,943*	33,203	33,867	32,096	31,286	31,736	30,205	30,992

* Highest monthly average price in the respective year

^ Lowest monthly average price in the respective year

Information on the monthly average wholesale price of marine fish over the past 3 years is shown in **Annex B**.

Wholesale quantity of marine fish from 2020 to 2022

Year	Fish	Total quantity (tonnes)	Daily average quantity (tonnes)	Highest daily quantity (tonnes)	Lowest daily quantity (tonnes)
2020	Golden thread (紅衫)	2 617.2	7.2	8.6	5.4
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	2 967.1	8.1	9.4	6.2
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	2 554.5	7.0	8.2	5.1
	Big-eyes (木棉)	1 899.2	5.2	6.0	4.0
	Scads (池魚)	854.6	2.3	3.0	1.7
	Breams (立魚)	2 246.2	6.1	7.1	4.4
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	1 364.7	3.7	4.7	2.2
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	1 691.8	4.6	5.6	2.8
	Croakers (鰻魚)	413.3	1.1	1.7	0.6
2021	Golden thread (紅衫)	2 787.5	7.6	9.1	6.4
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	2 976.0	8.2	9.4	6.5
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	2 045.8	5.6	7.1	3.5
	Big-eyes (木棉)	2 200.0	6.0	6.5	4.6
	Scads (池魚)	868.4	2.4	3.1	1.2
	Breams (立魚)	2 205.9	6.0	6.7	5.3
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	1 374.2	3.8	4.6	2.7
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	1 686.2	4.6	5.2	3.2
	Croakers (鰻魚)	440.4	1.2	1.5	0.8
2022	Golden thread (紅衫)	2586.4	7.1	8.4	4.8
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	2880.9	7.9	9.1	5.6
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	2127.5	5.8	6.7	3.7
	Big-eyes (木棉)	2085.4	5.7	6.4	3.7
	Scads (池魚)	516.0	1.4	2.0	0.9
	Breams (立魚)	2074.5	5.7	6.9	4.3
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	1081.3	3.0	3.8	1.5
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	1378.7	3.8	4.6	2.1
	Croakers (鰻魚)	298.4	0.8	1.2	0.3

Data on Filefish (沙鯪) are not readily available.

Monthly average wholesale price of marine fish from 2020 to 2022

Year	Fish	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/kg)											
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	Golden thread (紅衫)	81.29*	79.01	79.46	76.66	76.14	73.85	70.01	71.26	67.72^	71.68	73.60	71.39
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	60.15*	57.12	59.56	57.46	56.05	54.04	51.29^	52.63	52.52	54.47	57.04	59.08
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	85.85	89.18	91.89	88.80	79.92	73.19^	73.66	73.88	87.01	90.98	107.79*	107.03
	Big-eyes (木棉)	97.78*	93.28	92.86	89.68	88.73	85.27	82.04	82.79	71.40^	81.28	83.28	79.99
	Scads (池魚)	24.24	24.03	23.64^	24.66	25.27	25.05	25.62	29.14*	25.09	25.06	26.96	27.82
	Breams (立魚)	83.83*	78.79	77.06	78.12	80.56	76.58	74.79	73.78	66.04^	74.31	78.41	78.63
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	41.41	40.17^	43.48	45.46	49.56	54.07	53.77	55.45*	48.48	46.80	44.06	46.52
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	76.74	75.39	74.98	75.86	77.01*	75.25	74.96	75.29	68.70^	72.39	71.70	70.92
	Croakers (鰻魚)	24.11	22.89^	25.76	24.92	26.42	27.63	28.46	30.73	27.16	29.86	34.75*	33.85
2021	Golden thread (紅衫)	75.76	77.88*	71.41	65.96^	67.76	72.23	74.14	74.94	73.92	72.40	75.55	73.34
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	60.97	62.44*	59.91	54.84	54.36	57.46	59.43	60.15	57.98	53.90	51.72^	54.78
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	100.39	86.73	101.01	77.07	72.76	73.72	73.91	71.68^	81.48	87.03	94.77	102.87*
	Big-eyes (木棉)	82.43	78.42	82.99	84.64	84.69	88.64	89.70*	88.31	69.09^	79.56	89.20	85.58
	Scads (池魚)	29.18*	28.13	25.47	22.21^	23.18	25.75	25.89	26.70	22.25	24.24	24.51	23.39
	Breams (立魚)	79.20	79.58*	74.85	71.47	72.89	78.29	78.45	77.58	68.22^	69.69	75.81	77.86
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	47.45	52.17	49.62	44.68^	49.42	56.95	60.07	61.16*	50.69	53.25	54.48	57.71
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	73.96	82.31*	74.42	66.64	68.16	71.57	70.92	70.71	64.05^	64.28	67.42	68.45
	Croakers (鰻魚)	35.03	33.00	35.30*	27.19	29.72	32.06	31.05	30.17	28.53	27.06^	29.96	27.66
2022	Golden thread (紅衫)	77.06^	87.08	92.99	97.89	98.87	104.06	108.55*	105.05	100.94	92.73	90.99	87.51
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	53.64^	56.63	68.54	67.60	65.29	67.80	69.84*	68.29	64.83	56.46	55.31	55.97
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	93.70	110.75*	75.33	73.22	73.01^	75.19	76.31	74.36	71.87	73.27	85.28	87.46
	Big-eyes (木棉)	91.80	94.25	108.19	109.92	108.32	111.72	117.41*	115.30	105.17	89.06^	101.92	101.99
	Scads (池魚)	24.40	24.51	27.05	27.73	29.41	33.09	36.10*	33.78	24.47	21.56^	23.06	23.36
	Breams (立魚)	75.31	78.37	87.33	88.06	86.93	89.36*	88.34	83.80	71.67	70.95^	76.52	78.23
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	61.05	52.33^	68.76	74.30	76.25	78.86	80.67*	77.56	61.78	55.72	53.76	58.30
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	75.86	71.84^	77.08	78.04	78.61	81.04	84.84*	84.25	80.39	77.47	79.57	78.15
	Croakers (鰻魚)	30.90	31.67^	33.45	35.56	37.81	41.67	47.13*	45.75	36.89	36.13	39.74	37.04

Data on Filefish (沙鯪) are not readily available.

* Highest monthly average wholesale price in the respective year.

^ Lowest monthly average wholesale price in the respective year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)028****(Question Serial No. 0184)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the wholesale of vegetables, please advise of the following:

- (a) the annual total and daily average wholesale quantities, as well as the highest and lowest figures thereof for different kinds of vegetables (including flowering cabbage, water cress, white cabbage, broccoli, Chinese lettuce, green cabbage, chrysanthemum garland, tomato, Chinese kale, pea shoot, European celery, potato and spinach, etc.) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (b) the monthly average, the highest and lowest prices of different kinds of vegetables (including flowering cabbage, water cress, white cabbage, broccoli, Chinese lettuce, green cabbage, chrysanthemum garland, tomato, Chinese kale, pea shoot, European celery, potato and spinach, etc.) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)Reply:

- (a) In respect of vegetables transacted through government wholesale markets, the information sought is tabulated below. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have a breakdown of the figures for different kinds of vegetables.

Year	Quantity (tonnes)			
	Total	Daily average	Highest daily	Lowest daily
2020	254 245	695	878	61
2021	238 229	653	862	103
2022	217 127	595	721	101

- (b) The monthly average price, the highest and the lowest monthly average prices of vegetables transacted through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years are tabulated below. AFCD does not have a breakdown of the figures for different kinds of vegetables.

Year	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/tonne)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	11,745	11,977	11,325	11,508	10,904 [^]	11,375	11,441	11,717	12,022	12,416	12,596	12,668 [*]
2021	13,623	14,104	13,057	12,444	12,061 [^]	12,082	12,173	12,100	12,237	13,341	14,505 [*]	13,924
2022	12,986	17,001 [*]	16,640	15,420	13,907	13,740	13,893	13,435	13,964	13,909	12,590 [^]	14,667

* Highest monthly price

[^] Lowest monthly price

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)029****(Question Serial No. 0185)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the wholesale of eggs, please advise of the following:

- (a) the annual total and daily average wholesale quantities, as well as the highest and lowest figures thereof for different kinds of eggs (including brown-shelled egg (medium) from the Mainland, Grade II brown-shelled eggs from Germany (360/box), brown-shelled eggs (medium) from the USA, etc.) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (b) the monthly average, the highest and lowest prices for different kinds of eggs (including brown-shelled eggs (medium) from the Mainland, Grade II brown-shelled eggs from Germany (360/box), brown-shelled eggs (medium) from the USA, etc.) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)Reply:

- (a) The volume of hen eggs transacted through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years is tabulated below. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have a breakdown by type of eggs and place of origin.

Year	Quantity (tonnes)			
	Total	Daily average	Highest daily	Lowest daily
2020	65 669	179	389	6
2021	67 214	184	404	4
2022	68 822	189	368	6

- (b) The monthly average price, the highest and the lowest monthly average prices of brown-shelled medium eggs from the Mainland and the USA transacted through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years are tabulated below. AFCD does not have similar figures for brown-shelled medium eggs or other types of eggs from other places of origin.

Year	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/tonne) for brown-shelled medium eggs (the Mainland)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	16,194*	16,172	16,135	16,160	16,168	15,580	15,258	15,465	15,093	15,058	14,907	14,819^
2021	15,290	16,036*	15,755	15,220^	15,290	15,433	15,516	15,413	15,460	15,381	15,480	15,381
2022	15,400	15,357^	15,606	15,807	16,206	15,760	15,852	15,858	16,220	17,710	18,140	18,297*

Year	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/tonne) for brown-shelled medium eggs (the USA)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	14,839	14,821^	14,839	15,100	15,265*	15,193	14,974	14,948	15,027	15,006	14,960	14,858
2021	15,071^	15,536	15,942*	15,787	15,535	15,627	15,439	15,523	15,680	15,594	15,380	15,394
2022	15,529^	15,607	15,897	15,993	17,742	18,153	18,168	18,161	18,880	19,439*	18,973	19,181

* Highest monthly average wholesale price

^ Lowest monthly average wholesale price

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)030****(Question Serial No. 0186)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the wholesale of live chickens, please advise of:

- (a) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported and local live chickens, as well as the largest and the smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the monthly average price, as well as the highest and the lowest monthly prices of imported and local live chickens over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported minor poultry, as well as the largest and the smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (d) the monthly average price, as well as the highest and the lowest monthly prices of imported minor poultry over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (e) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported day-old chicks, as well as the largest and the smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (f) the percentage of live chickens, minor poultry and day-old chicks imported from various places over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)Reply:

- (a) Over the past 3 years, there was no import of live chickens from the Mainland, while the quantity of local live chickens traded through the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market (CSWTWPM) is tabulated as follows:

Year	Quantity (number)			
	Total	Daily average	Highest daily	Lowest daily
2020	4 391 952	12 000	41 132	6 730
2021	4 334 808	11 876	41 270	3 880
2022	3 929 112	10 765	42 147	6 250

The monthly wholesale quantity of local live chickens over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Monthly quantity (number)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	416 476	317 682	368 588	339 879	351 677	354 048	350 994	359 008	401 284	368 723	359 802	403 791
2021	353 542	390 537	345 423	344 082	373 933	385 194	331 508	339 902	395 255	340 245	346 047	389 140
2022	432 426	273 778	273 654	319 588	287 661	280 402	316 960	312 857	345 211	353 054	347 729	385 792

- (b) Over the past 3 years, there was no import of live chickens from the Mainland, while the average price of local live chickens traded through CSWTWPM is tabulated as follows:

Year	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/kg)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	69.66	70.43*	65.92	67.05	67.61	68.68	64.93	56.02	54.35^	55.81	55.28	66.67
2021	83.79	93.06*	77.60	66.31	58.25	53.17	51.09	48.50	48.03	47.85^	47.85^	58.79
2022	84.14	88.10*	76.25	67.65	71.72	80.32	78.45	66.32	55.55	51.15	47.85^	51.81

* Highest monthly average price in the respective years

^ Lowest monthly average price in the respective years

- (c) and (d) There was no import of live minor poultry from the Mainland over the past 3 years.

- (e) The quantity of day-old chicks imported over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Quantity (number)			
	Total	Daily average	Highest daily	Lowest daily
2020	3 425 400	9 359	26 500	2 480
2021	3 439 710	9 424	25 700	3 000
2022	2 816 900	7 718	40 000	2 000

The monthly quantity of imported day-old chicks over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Monthly quantity (number)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	242 300	284 440	294 080	279 280	279 180	298 580	277 860	270 100	293 200	276 060	347 620	282 700
2021	300 900	296 700	314 400	295 500	276 850	283 880	262 600	251 000	278 280	320 100	296 000	263 500
2022	311 200	93 900	62 500	149 100	252 550	281 000	249 300	282 150	281 300	314 800	278 700	260 400

- (f) Over the past 3 years, there was no import of live chickens and minor poultry from the Mainland, while all imported day-old chicks were from the Guangdong Province.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)031

(Question Serial No. 0187)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the imports and exports of fresh food as well as agricultural and fisheries products, please advise of the following:
the total values of locally produced fresh food and agricultural and fisheries products for supply to the local market over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The total values of locally produced fresh agricultural and fisheries products (including live pigs, live chickens, live and chilled fish and shellfish, vegetables and fruits) supplied to the local market in 2020, 2021 and 2022 were about \$3,310 million, \$3,170 million and \$2,880 million respectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)032****(Question Serial No. 0188)**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 Environment and EcologyQuestion:

On the regulation and technical services for the flower cultivation industry, please advise of the following:

- (a) the details of, and the expenditure and manpower involved in the Government's regulation and technical services for the flower cultivation industry in each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the details of, and the estimated expenditure and manpower involved in the regulation and technical services for the flower cultivation industry over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) the total value and quantity of local production and import of flowers over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (d) the measures that the Government currently takes to promote the local flower cultivation industry.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)Reply:

- (a), (b) and (d) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) provides supporting services to all crop farmers including flower farmers. The services provided include technical support in respect of cultivation techniques, control of plant pests and diseases and soil analysis, as well as the lending of farm machinery. The resources deployed for these services over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	9.6	18
2021-22	10.1	18
2022-23 (revised estimate)	8.6	18

The manpower and expenditure involved in providing supporting services to the flower cultivation industry and promotion of the industry is an integral part of the above provision and there is no separate breakdown.

In 2023-24, AFCD will continue to provide the above services to crop farmers including flower farmers with a similar level of resources as in 2022-23.

As some of the agricultural land and farming facilities of the Agricultural Park Phase 1 have gradually come into operation since late 2022, some local flower farms will rent the agricultural land of the Agricultural Park for development. AFCD will provide technical support to help the tenants nurture agro-technology and knowledge of modernised farm management.

- (c) AFCD does not have the data on quantities in respect of local production and import of flowers. The value of local production and net imports over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Value of local production (\$ million)	Value of net imports (\$ million)
2020	150	266
2021	152	284
2022	160	257

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)033

(Question Serial No. 0189)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding epidemic prevention for livestock and poultry keeping industry, please advise of the following:

- (a) the latest progress of the epidemic prevention work, and the work plan, estimated expenditure and manpower involved in the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the type of pig and poultry vaccines introduced into the local industry and the expenditure involved respectively over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) the total expenditure involved respectively in vaccinating pigs and poultry over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), and the respective average costs, as well as the respective numbers of pigs and poultry vaccinated;
- (d) regarding the outbreaks of epidemic diseases in livestock and poultry at different levels of the local supply chain, the number, locations (e.g. markets, wholesale markets or farms), and virus(es) concerned respectively over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (e) whether the Government will implement any new measures to strengthen the work on prevention of influenza related to poultry and livestock; and
- (f) whether the Government will implement any new measures to strengthen the work on prevention of African Swine Fever.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) prevents and controls the outbreak of animal and zoonotic diseases in local chicken and pig farms, mainly through (i) conducting regular inspections to local farms to ensure that the farmers comply with the biosecurity, farm hygiene and other relevant requirements, including vaccination of poultry against Avian Influenza (AI) and taking enforcement actions against non-compliant cases; (ii) providing technical advice and assistance to farmers on proper farm management, prevention and control of animal diseases; and (iii) organising education seminars on farm management and disease prevention for local farmers and their workers, as well as producing publicity materials to raise farmers' awareness of prevention and control of diseases. In addition, AFCD is providing

financial assistance to the City University of Hong Kong through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund to provide free veterinary consultation services for local chicken and pig farms with a view to improving the overall animal health conditions and strengthening disease prevention and control.

AFCD's expenditure and manpower involved in this area of work over the past 3 years are as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	67.3	72
2021-22	70.2	72
2022-23 (revised estimate)	74.8	74

- (b) Over the past 3 years, AFCD required all local chicken farms to apply H5/H7 AI vaccine, which could protect the chickens against both H5 and H7N9 AI viruses. AFCD provided technical assistance in the process. As the expenditure involved in this area of work was absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD, there was no breakdown in this regard.
- (c) Apart from the mandatory H5/H7 AI vaccination programme for chickens in local chicken farms, pig or chicken farmers may decide on their own whether other vaccines should be used for better protection of their farm animals against various diseases. Commonly used vaccines include those against porcine circovirus, foot and mouth disease, porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome in pigs, and those against Newcastle disease, infectious bronchitis and Gumboro disease in poultry. All the vaccines used in local farms are purchased by farmers at their own cost. AFCD does not have information on the total expenditure and the average costs involved in vaccinating pigs and poultry.
- (d) Over the past 3 years, African Swine Fever (ASF) cases were reported in two local pig farms in February 2021 and February 2023 respectively.
- (e) AFCD has been mandatorily requiring all local chicken farms to apply H5/H7 AI vaccine. In order to strengthen the immunity of local chickens against H5/H7 AI, AFCD has required local chicken farms to switch to use the most updated of H5/H7 AI trivalent vaccine starting from 1 October 2022. The new vaccine can protect against both H5 and H7N9 AI viruses, and has better protectiveness against the AI virus strains currently circulating in Asia. With the use of the new vaccine, AFCD has also updated AI surveillance measures in local chicken farms, which include cancelling the arrangement of keeping "sentinel chickens" to further reduce disease transmission risk, and strengthening AI virus testing in vaccinated chickens and environmental samples for early detection of potential cases.
- (f) AFCD has been closely monitoring the epidemic situation of 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 inspections to all local pig farms and collecting pig samples for ASF virus testing when necessary;
- (ii) advising local farmers to implement proper biosecurity measures and providing assistance and loans to facilitate purchase of 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, catering waste or other food wastes 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 spillage 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 representatives in a timely manner, and increasing local pig farmers' knowledge of preventing ASF through producing various publicity materials on information about ASF, including posters, videos and guidelines on the procedures of cleansing and disinfecting pig-carrying trucks, so as to provide local pig farmers with information about the disease, its infection as well as the prevention and control measures that pig farms should heed;
- (x) co-operating with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in conducting a regular surveillance programme for ASF in local wild pig carcasses and testing samples collected from humanely dispatched wild pigs for ASF for early detection of potential cases;
- (xi) providing financial assistance to the City University of Hong Kong through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund to provide free veterinary consultation services for local pig farms with a view to improving the overall animal health conditions of local pig farms; and
- (xii) devising an action plan and providing the necessary equipment for culling of pigs.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)034

(Question Serial No. 0191)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding co-operative societies, please advise of:

- (a) the number of co-operative societies related to the fisheries and agriculture industries, as well as other co-operative societies respectively over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (b) the expenditure and manpower involved in co-operative societies related to the fisheries and agriculture industries, as well as other co-operative societies respectively over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The requested information is tabulated at the **Annex**.

Industry	2020-21			2021-22			2022-23		
	Number of co-operative societies*	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)	Number of co-operative societies*	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)	Number of co-operative societies [#]	Expenditure (revised estimate) (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
Agriculture	54	1.7	3	54	1.8	3	54	1.9	3
Fisheries	54	1.9	3	54	2.7	4	54	2.8	4
Others	59	5.8	9	56	5.7	9	54	6.0	9
Total	167	9.4	15	164	10.2	16	162	10.7	16

* As at end of the year

As at February 2023

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)035****(Question Serial No. 0194)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the Mainland Fishermen Deckhands Scheme (the Scheme) of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, please advise of the following:

- (a) the expenditure and manpower involved in processing the applications under the Scheme over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the number of applications for and deckhands involved in different types of fishing vessels (including pair trawlers, stern trawlers, shrimp trawlers, hang trawlers, purse seiners with light, purse seiners, liners and gillnetters, fish carriers and other fishing vessels) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) the number of fishing vessels applying for Mainland deckhands with a breakdown by type over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (d) the number of cases contravening the relevant legislation and codes of the Scheme, and the heaviest penalties imposed, over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)Reply:

- (a) The expenditure and manpower involved in processing the applications under the Mainland Fishermen Deckhands Scheme (the Scheme) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (Number of staff)
2020-21	1.7	3
2021-22	2.6	3
2022-23 (revised estimate)	2.1	3

(b) and (c) The number of applications and deckhands involved by type of fishing vessels over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Vessel type	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23*	
	Number of#					
	Applications	Deckhands involved	Applications	Deckhands involved	Applications	Deckhands involved
Pair trawler	29 (27)	160	40 (40)	210	110 (109)	709
Stern trawler	46 (45)	197	46 (44)	217	52 (52)	270
Shrimp trawler	44 (44)	197	52 (51)	257	36 (36)	184
Hang trawler	21 (21)	125	23 (23)	137	20 (20)	119
Purse seiner with light and purse seiner	64 (64)	478	55 (54)	415	53 (51)	381
Liner and gill netter	84 (82)	539	80 (77)	524	58 (57)	396
Fish carrier	291 (287)	1 924	266 (265)	1 798	159 (159)	1 111
Other fishing vessels	18 (18)	116	14 (14)	96	15 (15)	101
Total	597 (588)	3 736	576 (568)	3 654	503 (499)	3 271

* As at February 2023

The number in brackets indicates the number of fishing vessels applying for Mainland deckhands by type of fishing vessel. The number of applications is larger than that of fishing vessels because some fishing vessels have submitted new applications after withdrawing their previous applications.

(d) There were 3, 5 and 0 cases contravening the rules of the Scheme in 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 (as at February 2023) respectively. The heaviest penalties imposed under the Scheme include cancellation of all deckhand quota approved for the subject vessel and prohibition of the person concerned from applying under the Scheme for 2 years.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)036

(Question Serial No. 0195)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the reprovisioning of livestock farms, please advise of the following:

- (1) the distribution of those sites currently designated as (i) livestock waste prohibition areas, (ii) livestock waste control areas and (iii) livestock waste restriction areas (mark the locations and boundaries of such sites in different colours on a map); the respective numbers of (i) pig farms and (ii) chicken farms operating in those 3 types of areas in each of the past 5 years (2018-19 to 2022-23); the differences in respect of the restrictions (including the requirements and procedure regarding application for operating a livestock farm) imposed by the Government on the operation of livestock farms in those 3 types of areas;
- (2) the sites which are in compliance with the relevant provisions of the 2 aforesaid pieces of legislation and other relevant legislation and are available to farmers for building new livestock farms or reprovisioning existing farms, as well as the areas of such sites (mark the locations of such sites on a map); and
- (3) as farmers may, through the Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme, identify sites for relocating their livestock farms, whether any farmer who had been affected by planned development projects has succeeded in identifying suitable sites for relocating their farms through the Scheme over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); if yes, the details; if not, whether the Government has put in place new measures to help such farmers in reprovisioning their livestock farms and suitably expanding their farms to improve their livestock keeping technology.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

After consultation with the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the Environmental Protection Department, the reply of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- (1) Under sections 15, 15A and 15AA of the Waste Disposal Ordinance (Cap. 354) (the Ordinance), Hong Kong is classified into 3 areas, namely livestock waste

prohibition, control and restriction areas as shown at **Annex**. The control on the operation of livestock farms is generally as follows:

- (i) the urban areas of Hong Kong are livestock waste prohibition areas, where livestock keeping is banned;
- (ii) within livestock waste control areas, a livestock keeper must apply for a licence from AFCD and comply with the Waste Disposal (Livestock Waste) Regulations (Cap. 354A) (the Regulations); and
- (iii) within livestock waste restriction areas (i.e. parts of the New Territories and outlying islands), no livestock keeping is allowed, unless the relevant premises had been in use continuously for livestock keeping during the 12 months before 1994 and the livestock keeper holds a licence from AFCD, or is authorised to do so by the Director of Environmental Protection, and the livestock keeping operation complies with the Regulations.

The number of licensed livestock farms in the 3 areas over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Livestock waste prohibition areas		Livestock waste control areas		Livestock waste restriction areas	
	Pig farms	Chicken farms	Pig farms	Chicken farms	Pig farms	Chicken farms
2018	0	0	42	26	1	3
2019	0	0	42	26	1	3
2020	0	0	42	26	1	3
2021	0	0	42	26	1	3
2022	0	0	42	26	1	3

- (2) and (3) No livestock farm has been affected by government development projects and cleared since 2020. The Government will provide compensation to persons affected by government development projects according to applicable policies. In the event that a licensed livestock farm is affected by government development projects, the licensee may, in addition to receiving cash ex-gratia compensation, consider relocation. The relocation site must fulfil the requirements under the Ordinance and the Regulations governing the handling of livestock waste, the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Licensing of Livestock Keeping) Regulation (Cap. 139L) with regard to livestock keeping control, biosecurity, environmental protection, etc. and the legislation related to planning and land controls.

To provide appropriate support for livestock farms affected by government development projects, DEVB, the Environment and Ecology Bureau, AFCD and the relevant departments have set up an inter-departmental working group to draw up plans to provide assistance across different aspects. When identifying sites to assist relocating livestock farms, DEVB has given considerations about the areas mentioned in (1) above and identified 3 sites located in the vicinity of Sheung Shui which are suitable to be used as multi-storey livestock farms by the industry for

relocation of livestock farms affected by government development projects. The size of each site is about 1 to 2 hectares. DEVB will co-ordinate relevant departments in conducting feasibility studies on the infrastructure and formation works for the sites and will carry out the relevant works. Upon completion of the works, the sites will be handed over to AFCD for taking forward the industry's relocation arrangement which involves development of multi-storey livestock farms. The Government will meet with the trade representatives and farmers affected by government development projects to discuss the issues shortly.



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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)037****(Question Serial No. 0197)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the surveys on fisheries resources, please advise of:

- (a) the manpower and the expenditure involved over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) and the timeframe for the surveys;
- (b) the area of the waters involved in, the number of and the mechanism put in place for the surveys (please show with a map);
- (c) the ways that the Department currently uses to inform the fishing vessels operating in relevant waters; and
- (d) during the surveys, the frequency of contractor monitoring as well as measures taken by the Department's staff on board the subject vessels to ensure compliance with the contract terms.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) conducts surveys to monitor the status of fisheries resources in Hong Kong waters. The expenditure and manpower involved over the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Financial year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	8.6	4
2021-22	11.2	5
2022-23 (revised estimate)	12.8	5

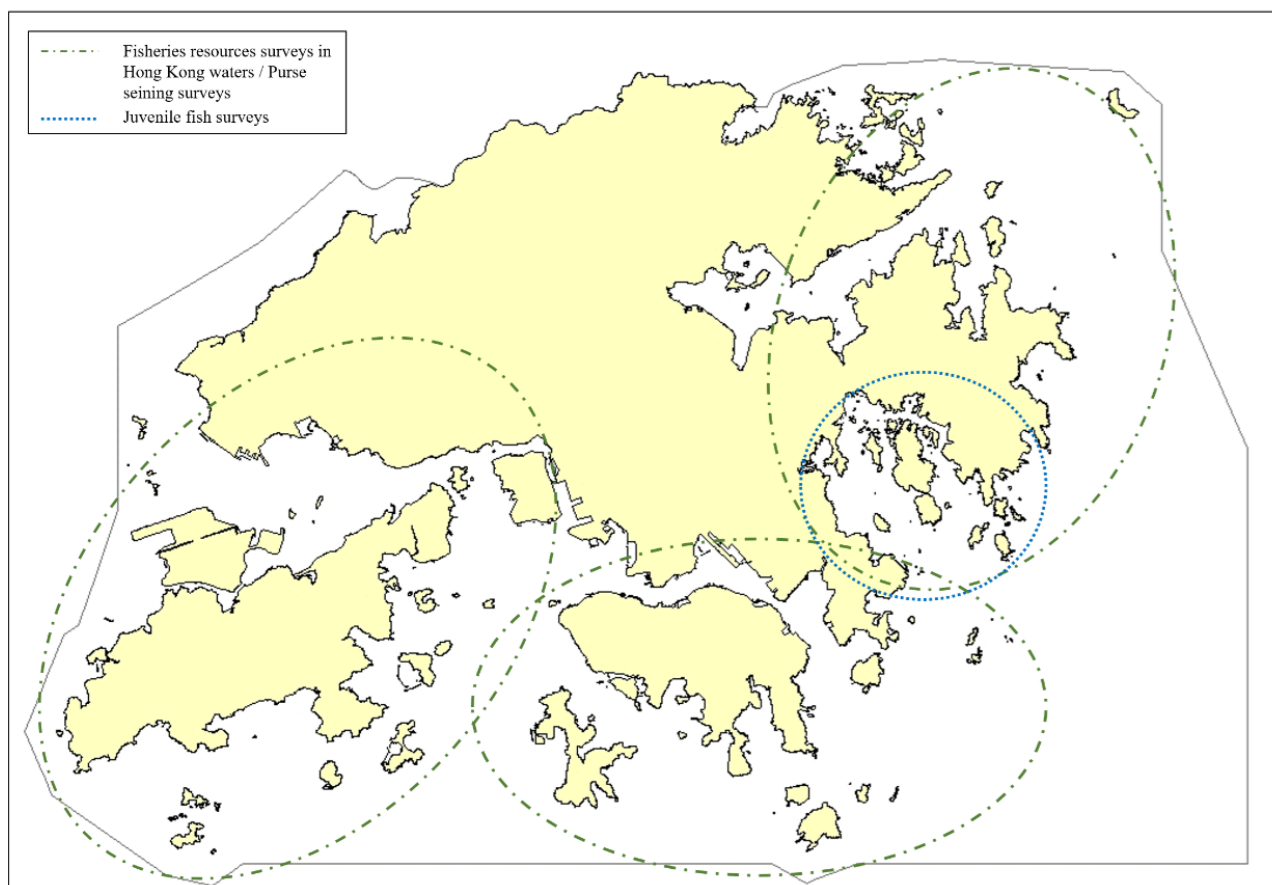
- (b) The surveys mentioned in part (a) above include:
 - (i) the monitoring programme for fisheries resources in Hong Kong waters undertaken 6 times a month by cage-trapping, long-lining and gill-netting at sampling stations in the eastern, southern and western coastal waters of Hong Kong;

- (ii) purse seining surveys conducted 3 to 5 times a month to study the operation of local purse seiners and to collect data on fish catch at sampling stations in the eastern, southern and western coastal waters of Hong Kong; and
- (iii) juvenile fish surveys conducted 9 times per season at sampling stations at the spawning and nursery grounds in Port Shelter.

A map indicating the sampling stations is at the **Annex**.

- (c) All fisheries resources surveys conducted by AFCD at present employ non-trawling methods such as cage-trapping, long-lining, gill-netting and purse seining. The surveys are conducted in a way similar to regular fishing operations and are carried out by fishermen with relevant experience, which do not generally affect other fishing vessels in operation. Therefore, the Department did not inform the fishing vessels operating in the waters nearby before the surveys.
- (d) Over the past 3 years, AFCD officers went on board 52 times in total to monitor the performance of the contractors. Apart from collecting scientific information on the samples, AFCD officers also took photographs and made records when monitoring the performance of the contractors on board to ensure compliance with the contract terms.

Sampling Locations of Fisheries Resources Surveys



- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)038****(Question Serial No. 1567)**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 Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding illegal fishing activities, please advise of the following:

- (a) the respective numbers of (i) patrols and (ii) joint operations conducted in the marine parks/marine reserve set out in the table below over each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);

Year		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
The Brothers Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			

- (b) the respective numbers of cases relating to illegal fishing activities in the marine parks/marine reserve mentioned in item (a) over each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) regarding: (i) the number of complaint cases received; (ii) the number of cases relating to illegal fishing activities detected during patrols or joint operations but no arrest was made; (iii) the number of persons arrested and cases; (iv) the number of persons convicted and cases; (v) the maximum and minimum penalties imposed on the persons convicted; and (vi) the number of repeat offenders arrested and cases (please set them out in the table below);

	Year		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of complaint cases received			
Number of cases relating to illegal fishing activities detected during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was made)			
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)			
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)			
Maximum and minimum penalties			
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)			

- (c) the respective numbers of (i) patrols and (ii) joint operations conducted in Hong Kong waters (except in various marine parks/marine reserve) set out below over each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);

		Year		
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Waters over the Hong Kong territory	(i)			
	(ii)			
Waters around Cheung Chau	(i)			
	(ii)			
Waters around Shek Kwu Chau	(i)			
	(ii)			
Waters around Soko Islands	(i)			
	(ii)			
Waters off the Brothers	(i)			
	(ii)			
Waters off Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau	(i)			
	(ii)			

- (d) the respective numbers of cases relating to illegal fishing activities in the waters mentioned in item (c) over each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) regarding: (i) the number of complaint cases received; (ii) the number of cases relating to illegal fishing activities detected during patrols or joint operations but no arrest was made; (iii) the number of persons arrested and cases; (iv) the number of persons convicted and cases; (v) the maximum and minimum penalties imposed on the persons convicted; and (vi) the number of repeat offenders arrested and cases (please set them out in the table below);

	Year		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Number of complaint cases received			
Number of cases relating to illegal fishing activities detected during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was made)			
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)			
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)			
Maximum and minimum penalties			
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)			

- (e) whether the Government would consider strengthening the measures in combating illegal fishing activities, including: (i) purchasing additional patrol launches; (ii) increasing the number of patrols; (iii) increasing the number of joint operations; (iv) purchasing additional equipment; (v) imposing heavier penalty and (vi) other measures; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;
- (f) the expenditure and manpower involved in enforcement operations against illegal fishing activities over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (g) the number of patrol launches and the coverage and number of patrols conducted against illegal fishing activities over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (h) regarding illegal fishing activities, the fishing practices detected during patrols or joint operations over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), and the respective numbers and percentages involved.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

- (a) The numbers of (i) patrols conducted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD); and (ii) its joint operations mounted with the Marine Police at marine parks and marine reserve over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Location		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park	Patrol	641	726	546
	Joint operation	13	24	29
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park	Patrol	429	544	501
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park	Patrol	367	325	338
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park	Patrol	319	392	377
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve	Patrol	490	450	375
	Joint operation	0	0	0

Location		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)
The Brothers Marine Park	Patrol	450	362	341
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Southwest Lantau Marine Park	Patrol	384	486	443
	Joint operation	0	0	0
South Lantau Marine Park [#]	Patrol			204
	Joint operation			0

[#] The South Lantau Marine Park was designated in June 2022.

- (b) The statistics on illegal fishing activities at marine parks and marine reserve over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Item	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)
Number of complaints received	12	17	17
Number of cases relating to illegal fishing activities detected during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was made)	7 (4)	16 (6)	15 (5)
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)	3 (3)	10 (10)	10 [#] (10)
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)	3 (3)	5 (5)	7 (7)
Minimum and maximum penalties imposed	A fine of \$1,500 to \$2,500	A fine of \$800 to \$2,000	A fine of \$800 to \$1,000
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

[#] 3 prosecution cases are still in progress.

- (c) The numbers of (i) patrols conducted by AFCD; and (ii) its joint operations[^] mounted with the Marine Police in the waters outside marine parks and marine reserve over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Waters		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)
Waters over the Hong Kong territory	(i)	1 657	1 834	1 844
	(ii)	67	137	133
Waters around Cheung Chau, Shek Kwu Chau and Soko Islands	(i)	434	346	295
	(ii)	42	49	45
Waters off the Brothers	(i)	152	254	235
	(ii)	3	24	23
Waters off Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau	(i)	151	254	235
	(ii)	3	24	23

[^] Concurrently with operations of relevant Mainland enforcement agencies in nearby Mainland waters in some cases.

- (d) The statistics on illegal fishing activities in the waters mentioned in (c) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Item	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)
Number of complaints received	161	128	127
Number of cases relating to illegal fishing activities detected during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was made)	121 (105)	81 (74)	47 (43)
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)	16 (63)	7 (15)	4* (4)
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)	17 (60)	7 (15)	3 (3)
Minimum and maximum penalties imposed	A fine of \$550 to \$2,000; imprisonment for 2 to 6 weeks	A fine of \$1,000; imprisonment for 2 to 6 weeks	A fine of \$1,000
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

* 1 of the cases is still under investigation.

- (e) AFCD enforces the relevant legislation through a risk-based approach, deploying resources flexibly to conduct random and targeted patrols in local waters (including marine parks and marine reserve) having regard to the circumstances and intelligence to combat illegal fishing activities. AFCD also maintains close liaison with the Marine Police and Mainland enforcement agencies with a view to mounting joint operations (including using the “vessel arrest system” to intercept trawlers that refuse to stop for inspection) as and when appropriate.

Under the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171), any person who uses prohibited fishing gear for fishing is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and an imprisonment for 6 months upon conviction. In addition, under the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476), any person who carries out illegal fishing activities in marine parks and marine reserve is liable to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and an imprisonment for 1 year upon conviction. AFCD considers that the existing statutory provisions already have deterrent effect, and the court will impose fines and even imprisonment taking into account the facts of the cases of illegal fishing activities.

To enhance law enforcement capacity, AFCD consolidated its internal resources to set up a dedicated enforcement team at sea in mid-August 2020 to enhance the mobility and responsiveness of enforcement actions against illegal fishing. The law enforcement manpower and the number of vessels have increased from 18 before the formation of the team to 35 (as at end February 2023) and from 3 to 7 respectively. AFCD also deploys the real-time satellite automatic identification system developed in recent years to help identify fishing vessels that engage in illegal fishing. The system helps to acquire information of these vessels, such as their past navigation routes, locations and numbers, etc. for follow-up investigation and tracking. In addition, AFCD works with fishermen associations to gather intelligence regarding illegal fishing by using their fishing vessels. Together with the analysis of real-time satellite data, this would help the Department obtain more information on illegal fishing to formulate more effective and targeted enforcement operations, with a view to enhancing the efficiency of enforcement actions at sea. AFCD has also conducted a feasibility study on the use of artificial intelligence for analysing information such as satellite positioning and videos and the use of unmanned aircraft for detecting illegal fishing activities.

AFCD will continue to enhance enforcement, exchange information and intelligence with the relevant government departments and Mainland enforcement agencies, and adjust its enforcement strategy from time to time in the light of circumstances and intelligence gathered with a view to making joint efforts to combat illegal fishing and enhancing the effectiveness of the fight against illegal fishing.

- (f) The expenditure and manpower on law enforcement against illegal fishing by the Government over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	19.2	34
2021-22	24.1	34
2022-23 (revised estimate)	26.0	35

- (g) AFCD has deployed 7 vessels for regular and targeted patrols at random hours (including night time and early morning) to combat illegal fishing under the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) and the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476). AFCD officers, when discharging duties on other vessels, will also stay vigilant to any illegal fishing activities, and inform AFCD's enforcement team and the Marine Police for

follow-ups. The coverage and number of patrols conducted are set out in (a) and (c) above.

- (h) Information on illegal fishing practices detected during patrols over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Illegal fishing practices	2020-21		2021-22		2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Shrimp trawling	57	47.1	45	55.5	30	63.8
Hang trawling	8	6.6	2	2.5	3	6.4
Stern trawling	1	0.8	0	0	0	0
Pair trawling	13	10.8	8	9.8	3	6.4
Purse seining	1	0.8	0	0	0	0
Gill netting	30	24.8	17	21.0	10	21.3
Cage trapping	5	4.1	2	2.5	1	2.1
Long lining	3	2.5	3	3.7	0	0
Set netting	2	1.7	2	2.5	0	0
Others	1	0.8	2	2.5	0	0
Total	121	100.0	81	100.0	47	100.0

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)039****(Question Serial No. 1568)**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 Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the imports of birds, poultry and ostriches, please advise of the following:

- (a) the number of birds imported by bird species (in particular those endangered species which require possession licences) and place of import over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the number of shops with animal trader licences over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (c) the number of birds in Hong Kong currently issued with possession licences by the Government, and the number of possession licences issued by the Government over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) controls the import of live birds in accordance with the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Regulations (Cap. 139A) and the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) (the Ordinance). Our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- (a) The requested information is tabulated at **Annex**.
- (b) The number of animal trader licences for selling birds issued by AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of bird trader licences issued
2020	37
2021	34
2022	38

- (c) Under the Ordinance, possession of live endangered birds which are listed in Appendix I, and of live endangered birds which are listed in Appendix II and are of wild

origin, requires a possession licence (PL) for each keeping premises if they are kept for commercial purposes. A PL can cover more than 1 species/individual. Currently, there are 14 valid PLs issued in respect of live endangered birds, covering 308 individuals of 22 species.

The numbers of PLs issued by AFCD (including licences renewed) covering live endangered birds in 2020, 2021 and 2022 were 0, 3 and 4 respectively.

Birds Imported into Hong Kong from 2020 to 2022

Year	Species	Quantity (head)	Country/place of export
2020	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	830	Malaysia
	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	64	Taiwan
	<i>Amadina erythrocephala</i>	50	Mali
	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>	70	Mali
	<i>Amazona aestiva</i> *	14	Belgium, Czech Republic
	<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i> *	8	Belgium
	<i>Ara ararauna</i> *	1	Czech Republic
	<i>Ara chloropterus</i> *	6	Belgium
	<i>Ara severus</i> *	3	Belgium
	<i>Cacatua leadbeateri</i> *	2	Belgium
	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>	20	Mali
	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	2 110	Malaysia
	<i>Crithagra atrogularis</i>	50	Malaysia
	<i>Crithagra citrinipectus</i>	50	Malaysia
	<i>Crithagra mozambicus</i>	300	Malaysia
	<i>Erythrura gouldiae</i>	350	Malaysia
	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>	150	Mali
	<i>Euplectes orix</i>	260	Mali
	<i>Lamprolornis iris</i>	20	Mali
	<i>Lonchura atricapilla</i>	6 600	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura maja</i>	6 600	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>	100	Mali
	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	7 800	Malaysia
	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	2 341	Czech Republic, Japan, Malaysia
	<i>Nymphicus hollandicus</i>	1 605	Mali, Taiwan
	<i>Passer luteus</i>	50	Mali
	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>	40	Mali
	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	592	Mali, Taiwan
	<i>Serinus canaria</i>	610	Czech Republic, Malaysia
	<i>Serinus flaviventris</i>	100	Malaysia
	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i>	1 000	Mali
	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	3 103	Mali
	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>	130	Mali
	<i>Vidua paradisaea</i>	150	Mali
	<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	60	Mali

Year	Species	Quantity (head)	Country/place of export
2021	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	1 336	Malaysia
	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	1 570	Malaysia
	<i>Erythrura gouldiae</i>	200	Malaysia
	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>	400	Mali
	<i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>	400	Mali
	<i>Lonchura atricapilla</i>	6 400	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura maja</i>	8 050	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>	1 200	Malaysia, Mali
	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	300	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	10 050	Malaysia
	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	1 070	Malaysia
	<i>Nymphicus hollandicus</i>	1 145	Malaysia
	<i>Passer luteus</i>	500	Guinea
	<i>Quelea quelea</i>	500	Guinea
	<i>Serinus canaria</i>	350	Malaysia
	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i>	1 300	Guinea , Mali
	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	700	Guinea , Mali
	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	200	Mali
	<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	150	Mali
2022	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	320	Malaysia
	<i>Amandava subflava</i>	100	Kenya
	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>	150	Kenya
	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	730	Malaysia
	<i>Erythrura gouldiae</i>	200	Malaysia
	<i>Euplectes orix</i>	100	Kenya
	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>	100	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis iris</i>	16	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>	16	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>	16	Kenya
	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	780	Malaysia, Uzbekistan
	<i>Neochmia ruficauda</i>	40	Malaysia
	<i>Nymphicus hollandicus</i>	768	Malaysia, Uzbekistan
	<i>Poephila acuticauda</i>	50	Malaysia
	<i>Serinus canaria</i>	109	Belgium, Malaysia
	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i>	6 240	Guinea, Singapore, Kenya
	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	4 160	Guinea, Kenya
	<i>Taeniopygia bichenovii</i>	20	Malaysia
	<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	130	Guinea

* Endangered species specified in the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)040****(Question Serial No. 2816)**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 Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Fish farmers shall obtain permits issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) before temporarily relocating their fish rafts out of the fish culture zones (FCZs). Regarding this matter, please advise of the number of applications and the permits concerned that were issued by AFCD over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23). Please set out the numbers with a breakdown by the fish raft in various FCZs.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 42)Reply:

The number of applications for temporary relocation of fish rafts and permits issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, as well as the fish culture zones (FCZs) involved over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Permits for temporary relocation of fish rafts		
	Number of applications	Number of permits issued	FCZ involved
2020-21	4	4	Sok Kwu Wan FCZ
2021-22	3	3	Kau Sai FCZ
2022-23 (as at end of Feb 2023)	6	6	Kau Sai FCZ

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)041

(Question Serial No. 3083)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the waters in Hong Kong in which the entry of fishing vessels and fishing are permitted, please advise of the following:

- (a) by indicating on a map, the areas in which the entry of fishing vessels and different types of fishing operation are permitted; and
- (b) other than restricted areas of the airport, principal fairways, waters subject to the traffic separation scheme (except the dividing strips), various typhoon shelters, the areas stipulated in section 14 of Cap. 548F of the Laws of Hong Kong, the core areas of marine parks, the marine reserve, fish culture zones, public bathing beaches, waters undergoing reclamation and the Kwai Chung Control Station, whether there are any other waters in Hong Kong in which fishing and entry of fishing vessels are not permitted; as well as the respective sizes of the waters in Hong Kong in which entry of fishing vessels and fishing are and are not permitted.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 49)

Reply:

Hong Kong waters are generally available for fishing with the use of fishing vessels, except in certain areas such as the core areas of marine parks, marine reserve, fish culture zones (FCZs), restricted areas, typhoon shelters, principal fairways, restricted areas of the airport, public bathing beaches and works areas of reclamation projects. These areas are under the purview of a number of different departments such as the Marine Department for principal fairways, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department for public bathing beaches, various works departments for reclamation projects, and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) for marine parks, the marine reserve, FCZs and restricted areas. As the respective waters are under the purview of different departments, AFCD does not have comprehensive information on waters in Hong Kong where entry of fishing vessels and fishing activities are permitted.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)042

(Question Serial No. 3005)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding animals received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number and type of animals received by AFCD over the past 3 years (from 2020-21 to 2022-23), with a breakdown in tabular form by channel of reception (including but not limited to stray animals caught, animals surrendered by original owners);
2. the number and type of animals handled by AFCD after reception over the past 3 years (from 2020-21 to 2022-23), with a breakdown in tabular form by way of handling (including but not limited to reclaimed by owners, rehomed and humanely dispatched);
3. the number of suspected cases of animal cruelty received and handled by the Government over the past 3 years (from 2020-21 to 2022-23), the number of successful convictions and prosecutions, the penalties finally imposed and details of the penalties; and
4. in view of the practices adopted by countries and regions like Germany, Singapore and Macau which explicitly require persons abandoning their animals to pay a fixed penalty (or fine) and allocate the relevant amount of money to animal welfare organisations to subsidise the cost of caring for and rehoming abandoned animals, whether the Government will explore the feasibility of implementing similar measures in Hong Kong; and if yes, the details and estimated expenditure to be involved?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1. and 2. The number and type of animals received and handled by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years are tabulated at **Annex**.
3. The number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received and details of successful prosecutions instituted by the Hong Kong Police Force and AFCD under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received*	Number of persons convicted	Penalties imposed	
			Fine (\$)	Range of imprisonment
2020	285	14	N/A	14 days to 8 months
2021	256	16	2,000 to 2,500	1 month and 12 days to 5 months
2022 (as at Sep)	179	18	1,000 to 3,000	14 days to 10 months

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

4. The problem of pet abandonment could be alleviated more effectively through education and support for pet owners. 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. AFCD also encourages the public to adopt abandoned animals through 17 partner Animal Welfare Organisations, giving the animals a second chance of being a pet again.

At present, when people who intend to surrender their pets seek the assistance from AFCD, AFCD will find out the difficulties faced by pet owners through questionnaires, with a view to offering advice and suggestions as appropriate to assist them in handling their pets and strengthen their education. Such measures aim to remind pet owners that they should honour their commitment to keep their pets for life and duly consider other options for their pets, such as reconsidering keeping their pets or giving them to relatives or friends.

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*
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 [#]
2022	326	129	724	370	56	322	205	194	409	174	71	3	348	151	159	280	54	496 [^]

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

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

^ Excluding 2 512 small mammals seized by AFCD for humane dispatch in order to minimise the risks of COVID-19 infection.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)043

(Question Serial No. 3006)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding animal welfare organisations (AWOs) in Hong Kong, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. whether the Government has received applications for subventions from AWOs over the past 3 years; if so, please provide the total number of applications submitted, the amount of subvention sought, the projects of successful applications and the amount of subvention granted in tabular form;
2. the total number of non-profit-making AWOs operating in Hong Kong as at 2023 and among which the number of partner AWOs collaborating with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD);
3. whether AFCD has monitored the AWOs that have been granted subventions and its partner AWOs and requested them to give an account of and report the use of the subventions granted on a regular basis; if so, the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
4. the respective numbers of animals handed by AFCD to AWOs for rehoming as well as the number of animals successfully rehomed over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) (please set out the percentages of animals successfully rehomed among animals pending rehoming)?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

1. The information of applications for subvention received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) from animal welfare organisations (AWOs) over the past 3 years is tabulated at **Annex**.
2. AFCD does not keep statistics on local non-profit-making organisations established for the purpose of animal welfare. AFCD is currently collaborating with 17 partner AWOs.

3. AFCD will verify the receipts submitted by AWOs and partner AWOs to confirm that the expenditure is spent in compliance with the purposes of subvention applications, and will visit the facilities of the relevant AWOs.
4. AFCD will hand all animals suitable for rehoming to AWOs for rehoming. AFCD does not have figures on the successful rehoming rate in relation to AWOs. The number of animals handed by AFCD to AWOs for rehoming in each of the past 3 years is tabulated below:

Year	Number of animals received by AFCD through different channels [^]			Number of animals handed by AFCD to AWOs for rehoming (rehoming rate ⁺)		
	Dogs	Cats	Other animals [*]	Dogs	Cats	Other animals [*]
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%)
2022	901	379	1 455	348 (47.9%)	151 (49.0%)	159 (11.0%)

[^] Including stray animals captured, animals handed over by owners and received through other channels.

⁺ 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 and birds.

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

(i) Subvention from Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to animal welfare organisations (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 programme	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.

(ii) 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 programme	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

(iii) Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2021-22 and released in 2022-23)

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount granted (\$)
1	Cheung Chau Animal Care	Management of stray animals in Cheung Chau and promotion of animal welfare	80,000	40,000
2	Hong Kong Animal Adoption Centre	To provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	408,000	100,000
3	Hong Kong Cats	To resolve the overpopulation problem of cats in Hong Kong and minimise diseases	102,500	0*
4	Hong Kong Dog Rescue	Adult dog rehome scheme – to provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	690,480	158,549
5	Hong Kong Society of Herpetology Foundation	Animal rehome, rescue and education programme	220,000	125,972
6	Hong Kong Rabbit Society	To produce educational materials and provide medical treatment for sick rabbits	235,000	74,084
7	Hong Kong Saving Cat and Dog Association	To provide preventive care and food for animals rescued and pending adoption	9,226,200	150,792
8	Kirsten's Zoo	Ongoing rescue of animals and animal rehome scheme	372,000	130,000
9	Lifelong Animal Protection (LAP)	Community e-learning platform for promoting animal care and compassion	500,000	150,000
10	Paws United Charity	Medical cost for an animal rehome scheme and promotion of the rehome scheme through social media	431,400	204,229
11	Sai Kung Stray Friends	To provide preventive care and food for animals rescued and pending adoption	1,000,000	136,173
12	Team for Animals in Lantau South (TAILS)	Animal rehome scheme 2022	400,000	98,306
Total			13,665,580	1,368,105

* Not eligible for application for subvention for AWOs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)044

(Question Serial No. 3007)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Government proposed submitting a bill to review the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance in 2022. Nevertheless, the Bureau only submitted a brief on the proposed amendments to the Legislative Council in May 2022. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the legislative timetable and roadmap of the aforesaid bill;
2. the effectiveness of the Animal Watch Scheme (AWS) introduced by the Hong Kong Police Force in 2011 with the support from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, veterinary associations and animal concern groups, as well as the programmes and activities held under AWS and the expenditures involved over the past 3 financial years;
3. the number of cases of successful uncovering and curbing of acts of animal cruelty due to assistance and reports by members of the public on their own initiative over the past 3 financial years; and
4. the Government's expenditure on publicity and education programmes for promoting proper pet ownership and curbing acts of animal cruelty over the past 3 financial years, as well as the estimated expenditure for 2023-24?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

1. The Government is preparing for the legislative amendments of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) (the Ordinance) to further safeguard animal welfare. Proposed amendments include introducing a positive "duty of care" on persons responsible for animals, increasing the penalties for acts of animal cruelty offences and enhancing enforcement powers. We are pressing ahead with the preparatory work and aim to introduce the legislative amendments to the Legislative Council for scrutiny as soon as possible.
2. In 2011, the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) introduced the Animal Watch Scheme (AWS) with the support from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

(AFCD), the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong), veterinary associations and animal concern groups to combat acts of animal cruelty through a four-pronged approach of education and training, publicity, intelligence gathering and investigation. AWS aims at consolidating co-operation among various stakeholders and enhancing the efficacy of the Police's efforts in the investigation of such cases. In 2017, the College of Veterinary Medicine and Life Sciences of City University of Hong Kong was also invited to join AWS. 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.

To enlist stronger public support and participation in fighting against cruelty to animals, the Police further implemented the Animal Watchers Programme (AWP) in 2021 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. 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 issues of animal cruelty and animal welfare, so that the message of prevention of cruelty to animals can effectively reach out to the public.

Major events organised by the Police in 2021 included AWP Fight Poisoning Campaign, a video competition of AWP Plank Challenge and a public education event of AWP Community Mobile Classroom. In 2022, the Police launched a series of "AWP x 25A" education and publicity events, including the "AWP Colours in 25A" Coloring and Drawing Contest, the "Animal Care Corner" promotion at schools and "Bring Your Own Pet (BYOP) Treasure Hunt". In 2021-22, the number of physical participants exceeded 73 000, while the number of reach online (such as posts on social media) came close to 6.2 million.

The Police will continue raising public awareness on prevention of cruelty to animals through AWP and evaluate its effectiveness through different indicators, including the number of reports, the number of persons arrested and the overall public participation rate. The majority of the cases of cruelty to animals are now reported by members of the public, who provide information for investigation on their own initiative. This reflects that AWP has prominent results in strengthening police-community co-operation and raising public awareness of combating cruelty to animals.

The expenditure involved falls under the Programme of "Maintenance of Law and Order in the Community". No specific breakdown is available.

3. The number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received and details of successful prosecutions instituted by the Police and AFCD under the Ordinance over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received*	Number of persons convicted
2020	285	14
2021	256	16
2022 (as at Sep)	179	18

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

4. 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, AFCD produced and broadcast educational videos and Announcements in the Public Interest on animal welfare through various platforms; published and distributed leaflets, posters and pamphlets on animal welfare through various channels; disseminated the latest information on animal welfare through a thematic website; placed advertisements on various platforms (e.g. public transport); organised roving exhibitions, “virtual reality games” exhibitions, dog obedience training courses and pet adoption activities in the 18 districts; and held talks at schools and housing estates on a regular basis. The expenditure involved in the above work over the past 3 years and the estimated expenditure for 2023-24 are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on education and promotion of animal welfare (\$ million)
2020-21	25.9
2021-22	23.8
2022-23 (revised estimate)	21.5
2023-24 (estimate)	18.8

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)045

(Question Serial No. 1802)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the inclusion of the programme on Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Market in the policy area, the estimated financial provision will be decreased by 14.3% from \$601.9 million in 2022-23 to \$515.9 million in 2023-24, representing a reduction of \$86 million, or a cut of 18.4% from the original estimate for 2022-23. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The provision covers a number of areas under the New Agriculture Policy and consultancy studies, as well as the formulation of a blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries to promote the upgrading and transformation of the local agriculture and fisheries industries. Please set out in detail the areas of work to be reduced in the estimate and the reasons for that; and
- (b) The relevant provisions will be used to provide vocational training for local farmers and fishermen. Please set out the details of the training provided and the number of participants, as well as the target groups, manpower and expenditure involved in the various measures taken in this regard over the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

- (a) The estimated provision for 2023-24 under Programme (1) is 14.3% (or \$86 million) and 18.4% (or \$116.6 million) lower than the revised estimate for 2022-23 and the original estimate for 2022-23 respectively. This is mainly due to the reduced estimated cash flow requirement for 2023-24 on the item of one-off assistance package to trawler vessel owners, local deckhands and fish collector owners affected by the trawl ban, for which the work was generally completed in 2022-23. The reduction in provision is partially offset by the increased cash flow requirement of the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) and the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF).
- (b) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been all along providing vocational training for farmers and fishermen to help them move towards modernisation and sustainable development. Regarding the fisheries industry, AFCD

continues to provide free training to local capture fishermen and fish farmers, equipping them with the relevant skills and knowledge to switch to sustainable fisheries or other related operations. The training generally includes training courses, seminars and visits, covering different areas such as local coxswain training, maritime safety knowledge and practical skills, aquaculture technologies and development of recreational fisheries.

Regarding the agricultural industry, AFCD has organised technical seminars, workshops and training programmes to promote to local farmers the advanced production technologies, including organic farming, horticulture techniques, soil management, integrated pest and disease control management, controlled-environment hydroponic farming, multi-layer farming, greenhouse production and application of modern farm machinery, and introduced new crop varieties for local propagation, with a view to assisting them in enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of their farms.

The number of participants who have participated in the relevant training over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of participants
2020-21	619
2021-22	550
2022-23 (as at end Feb 2023)	823

The expenditure and manpower involved in the provision of vocational training for farmers and fishermen over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	14.2	19
2021-22	12.5	19
2022-23 (revised estimate)	10.9	18

Besides, AFCD administers 2 sustainable development funds (SFDF and SADF) for eligible applicants (i.e. companies or body corporates incorporated in Hong Kong with a close connection with the local agriculture and fisheries industries, including local registered agricultural and fisheries co-operative societies, non-profit-making agricultural and fisheries organisations, non-governmental organisations, as well as academic and research institutions in Hong Kong) to apply for grants to carry out projects that are conducive to the sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries in Hong Kong. Details of the approved projects funded by the 2 Funds over the past 3 years involving the provision of vocational training to farmers and fishermen as well as people who intend to join the agriculture and fisheries industries are tabulated as follows:

Title of approved projects	Amount of grant approved (\$ million)	Expected number of beneficiaries upon project completion
Hong Kong Pearl Farm Centre	5.3	400
Modernised Production and Research Plan for Sustainable Mariculture Development	6.8	100
Lobster Culture Farming Proposal	5.1	90
Development of Recreational Fisheries in Southern District and Fishermen Training Programme	6.3	100
Version 3.0 of Hong Kong Agriculture: A Sustainable Development Project of Vegetable Supply Chain	5.9	4 300
Hong Kong Seed Technology and Education Center	6.5	4 500
Field Trials to Compare Common Melon/Fruits Flies Control Methods in Hong Kong	1.0	2 000

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)046

(Question Serial No. 0981)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention that the Department will strengthen the control of trade in endangered species and combat their illegal trade and smuggling. Regarding the trading of smuggled cats and dogs for consumption purpose, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) the number of prosecutions instituted and the penalties imposed under the Dogs and Cats Ordinance;
- (b) the number of reports received from the public; and
- (c) the number of successful prosecutions against all such illegal trade?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- (a)-(c) According to the Dogs and Cats Regulations (Cap. 167A) (the Regulations), it is against the law to eat, sell or possess dog or cat flesh for food. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$5,000 and 6 months' imprisonment. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has all along been taking stringent enforcement actions. To further curb such illegal acts, AFCD has stepped up surveillance, inspections and blitz operations, including enhancing online surveillance. It will also strengthen publicity and education through different channels.

The information on the number of complaints and referred cases received by AFCD in relation to suspected contravention of the Regulations, prosecutions instituted, successful prosecutions and the penalty imposed over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of complaints/ referred cases	Number of prosecutions instituted	Number of successful prosecutions	Penalty imposed
2020	1	1	1	A fine of \$750
2021	0	0	0*	N/A
2022	1	0	0	N/A

* The Hong Kong Police Force successfully prosecuted a case in 2021. The penalty imposed was 5 days' imprisonment suspended for 12 months.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)047

(Question Serial No. 0991)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned under the Matters Requiring Special Attention that the Government will strengthen measures for stray animals management and promotion of animal welfare. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the specific work with regard to strengthening promotion of animal welfare;
- (b) the specific progress of legislative amendments; whether a specific timetable for legislative amendments has been set, if yes, the details; and
- (c) the manpower and expenditure involved in the preparation work for the aforesaid measures.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) implements the following measures to safeguard and promote animal welfare:
 - (i) enhancing public education and publicity programme to promote “responsible pet ownership” and proper care of animals, advise against the abandonment and surrendering of pets without reasonable justification(s), emphasising the need for dog licensing and rabies vaccination as well as the benefits of neutering, etc.;
 - (ii) implementing the licensing regime under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations (Cap. 139B) to regulate pet trading and breeding of dogs for sale;
 - (iii) devising codes of practices for the proper trading, breeding and keeping of pets and other animals;
 - (iv) enhancing enforcement against persons and traders in contravention of relevant legislation;

- (v) improving the handling of reports or complaints on animal cruelty through collaboration with relevant departments and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong);
 - (vi) strengthening collaboration with, and providing technical and financial support to animal welfare organisations (AWOs) in rehoming animals and carrying out activities relating to animal welfare and management;
 - (vii) implementing the long-term strategy for the management of stray cattle in collaboration with the relevant AWOs and local communities; and
 - (viii) liaising with different AWOs to carry out preventive management measures for stray animals and proactively promote animal rehoming in new development areas.
- (b) The Government is preparing for the legislative amendments of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) to further safeguard animal welfare. Proposed amendments include introducing a positive “duty of care” on persons responsible for animals, increasing the penalties on animal cruelty offences and enhancing enforcement powers. We are pressing ahead with the preparation work and aim to introduce the legislative amendments to the Legislative Council for scrutiny as soon as possible.
- (c) In 2022-23, the number of staff and expenditure involved in the work mentioned above were 22 staff members and \$81.3 million respectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)048

(Question Serial No. 2799)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

With regard to supporting the development of local agriculture,

- (a) in the estimate for 2023-24, the estimated provision for agriculture, fisheries and fresh food wholesale markets is \$515.9 million. Please advise this Committee how the provision would be used and allocated in detail.
- (b) the provision has decreased by 14.3% year-on-year, and is lower than the original estimate by 18.4%. Please advise this Committee of the details regarding the year-on-year decrease in provision, as well as the factors and details that contributed to the decrease from the original estimate.
- (c) the Government mentioned that the above provision aims to provide infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen. Please advise this Committee of the expenditure and manpower related to the above work in detail.
- (d) the Government has been conducting adaptive and technical studies, as well as introducing modern technology and practices to local farmers and fishermen to enhance efficiency of production and quality of products over the past 3 years. What were the details and how effective were these measures?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 53)

Reply:

(a) and (b) Under the programme on Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) aims to facilitate agricultural and fisheries production and improve productivity. AFCD's work in pursuit of its aim involves:

- (i) the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen;

- (ii) the conduct of adaptive and technical studies, as well as introduction of modern technology and practices to local farmers and fishermen to enhance efficiency of production and quality of products;
- (iii) the planning and implementation of effective management activities and services for promoting sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries;
- (iv) the provision of administrative and technical support to the operation of the Vegetable Marketing Organization and the Fish Marketing Organization; and
- (v) the management of government fresh food wholesale markets.

The estimated provision for 2023-24 under this programme is 14.3% (or \$86 million) and 18.4% (or \$116.6 million) lower than the revised estimate for 2022-23 and the original estimate for 2022-23 respectively. This is mainly due to the reduced estimated cash flow requirement for 2023-24 on the item of one-off assistance package to trawler vessel owners, local deckhands and fish collector owners affected by the trawl ban, for which the work was generally completed in 2022-23. The reduction in provision is partially offset by the increased cash flow requirement of the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) and the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF).

- (c) and (d) In 2023-24, AFCD has earmarked 227 staff members and \$249 million (including the estimate for SFDF and SADF) for the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen.

AFCD has all along encouraged and supported the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries. At present, AFCD administers 2 sustainable development funds (SFDF and SADF) for eligible applicants (i.e. companies or body corporates incorporated in Hong Kong with a close connection with the local agriculture and fisheries industries, including local registered agricultural and fisheries co-operative societies, non-profit-making agricultural and fisheries organisations, non-governmental organisations, as well as academic and research institutions in Hong Kong) to apply for grants to carry out projects that are conducive to the sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries in Hong Kong.

AFCD has been conducting adaptive and technical studies, as well as introducing modern technology and practices to local farmers and fishermen. Regarding the agriculture industry, the work includes promotion of organic farming, development and promotion of new farming techniques (e.g. controlled-environment hydroponic farming, multi-layer farming and greenhouse production) to raise productivity, introduction of new or improved crop varieties to enhance the quality and competitiveness of local fruits and vegetables, promotion of an integrated pest and disease control management system to reduce chances of crop failure and achieve ecological protection, as well as introduction and promotion of the use of various modern farm machinery to raise productivity.

Regarding the fisheries industry, AFCD has been assisting fishermen in switching to and developing sustainable operations, which include aquaculture, offshore fishing, recreational fisheries and ecotourism. To assist the industry in developing sustainable aquaculture, AFCD has implemented various measures such as promoting good aquaculture practices (e.g. enhancing biosecurity, feed management and the aquaculture system), applying new technologies in the monitoring of aquaculture environment, exploring and introducing new deep sea mariculture technology and facilities, as well as introducing new high-value culture species such as pearl oysters and lobsters in addition to new fish species. In recent years, some fishermen have applied new aquaculture technologies such as wave resistant cage systems and high-efficiency re-circulation system, and have gradually cultured some new species on a trial basis.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)049****(Question Serial No. 2801)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expensesProgramme: (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 Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the recent occurrences of abandoned animals, would the Government inform this Committee of the following information concerning the operation of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department over the past 3 years:

- (a) the number of animals caught with a breakdown by type each year;
- (b) the number of animals with a microchip implanted with a breakdown by type;
- (c) the geographical distribution of abandoned animals by animal type;
- (d) the number of animals euthanised after being caught by the animal management centre with a breakdown by type;
- (e) the number of animals rehomed at each animal management centre with a breakdown by type;
- (f) the details of expenditure involved in the publicity of the message of “Adopt. Don’t abandon”?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 62)Reply:

- (a) At present, stray animals caught are mainly sent to the 4 animal management centres (AMCs) under the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in the New Territories North (NTN), New Territories South (NTS), Kowloon (K) and Hong Kong Island (HK) respectively. The number of stray animals caught over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Stray animals caught			
	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals*	Total
2020	603	209	997	1 809
2021	430	165	895	1 490
2022	326	129	724	1 179

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

- (b) Under the Rabies Regulation (Cap. 421A), only dogs aged over 5 months are required to be microchipped. Therefore, AFCD only keeps records on the number of dogs microchipped. Among the dogs caught, 121, 123 and 110 of them were microchipped in 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively.
- (c) The number of animals, with a breakdown by type, surrendered by owners to AMCs over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

AMC	Number of animals surrendered by owners								
	2020			2021			2022		
	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals*	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals*	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals*
AMC/HK	61	4	11	31	2	26	26	3	30
AMC/K	74	24	21	66	5	10	55	14	23
AMC/NTS	68	2	11	63	6	22	68	12	187
AMC/NTN	328	30	22	255	32	12	221	27	82
Total	531	60	65	415	45	70	370	56	322

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

AFCD does not keep the statistics by geographical areas.

- (d) The numbers of stray animals caught and euthanised by the 4 AMCs under AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of stray animals caught and euthanised		
	Dogs	Cats	Other animals [#]
2020	264	78	394
2021	78	34	298
2022	82	24	235

[#] Including small mammals (rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rats), reptiles, pigs and poultry/birds.

- (e) The number of animals, with a breakdown by type, at the 4 AMCs under AFCD that were rehomed over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

AMC	Number of animals rehomed								
	2020			2021			2022		
	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals*	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals*	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals*
AMC/HK	76	10	23	50	4	21	21	10	13
AMC/K	89	30	24	61	18	18	70	39	18
AMC/NTS	69	7	363	89	12	41	108	28	46
AMC/NTN	193	33	2	148	38	130	149	74	82
Total	427	80	412	348	72	210	348	151	159

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

- (f) 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, AFCD produced and broadcast educational videos and Announcements in the Public Interest on animal welfare through various platforms; published and distributed leaflets, posters and pamphlets on animal welfare through various channels; disseminated the latest information on animal welfare through a thematic website; placed advertisements on various platforms (e.g. public transport); organised roving exhibitions, “virtual reality games” exhibitions, dog obedience training courses and pet adoption activities in the 18 districts; and held talks at schools and housing estates on a regular basis. The expenditure involved is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on education and promotion of animal welfare (\$ million)
2020-21	25.9
2021-22	23.8
2022-23 (revised estimate)	21.5

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)050

(Question Serial No. 2804)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

- (a) Please set out the Government's expenditure, as well as the breakdown of such expenditure, on detecting unlicensed animal breeding and trading in Hong Kong over the past 5 years and that for the financial year of 2022-23.
- (b) Please set out, according to the declarations submitted to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) by licence holders, the species and number of animals involved in animal breeding and trading over the past 5 years.
- (c) Please set out the number of persons convicted, the conditions breached and the penalties imposed for contravention of the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations (the Regulations) over the past 5 years.
- (d) Apart from reminding licence holders in writing of the need to comply with the Regulations and the Animal Trader Licence, does AFCD have any measures to ensure that the requirements of the Regulations will be observed in animal breeding and trading? If yes, what are the details of work and expenditure involved? If not, will consideration be given to stepping up the monitoring of unlicensed animal breeding and trading facilities (such as surprise checks) so that the legislation will not exist in name only?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 64)

Reply:

- (a) and (d) Regarding all premises for carrying on animal trading business, including those for dog breeding purpose and selling those breeding female dogs or their offspring, a valid animal trader licence (ATL) or a dog breeder licence (DBL) must be issued in advance under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations (Cap. 139B) (the Regulations). All holders of ATL and DBL issued under the Regulations must comply strictly with the requirements under the Regulations concerning accommodation, living conditions, provision of food and water, pest control, etc. for animals as well as the relevant licensing conditions. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) conducts surprise inspections to the licensed animal trading premises from time to time

proactively or upon reports from members of the public to ensure compliance with the licensing requirements by animal traders. The staff will also pay attention to the health conditions and welfare of the pets when conducting inspections. AFCD will consider instituting prosecution against any person who is found breaching the licensing requirements.

Besides, AFCD has set up a dedicated investigation unit to conduct surveillance on advertisements for animal trading on the Internet, taking appropriate follow-up actions on suspicious cases and handling complaints.

The expenditure involved in the regulatory work of AFCD under the Regulations over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2018-19	17.2
2019-20	18.7
2020-21	17.3
2021-22	17.4
2022-23 (revised estimate)	20.4

AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the expenditure involved in detecting unlicensed animal trading and breeding activities.

- (b) As licensing conditions stipulated in the Regulations do not require animal traders to provide figures related to the sale of animals, AFCD does not have statistics on the relevant categories.
- (c) Information on successful prosecutions initiated by AFCD against breaches of licensing conditions stipulated in the Regulations and trading animals without a valid licence or permit, as well as the relevant penalties over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Successful prosecutions against breach of licensing conditions		Successful prosecutions against trading animals without a valid licence or permit	
	Number of cases	Fines (\$)	Number of cases	Fines (\$)
2018	0	N/A	34 [^]	2,000 to 10,000
2019	2	2,000	34 [^]	600 to 20,000
2020	3	2,000	28	800 to 15,000
2021	21	2,000	31	1,000 to 20,000
2022	10	1,800 to 2,000	21	2,500 to 10,000

[^] 2 cases occurring in 2018 involved 2 defendants. The sentences in relation to the cases were handed down in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Therefore, the case was recorded in the prosecution record of both 2018 and 2019.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)051

(Question Serial No. 2805)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the prevention of the introduction and spread of animal and plant diseases, safeguarding animal welfare, regulation of drug use in livestock farms, provision of services to facilitate export of plants, animals and plant/animal by-products, prevention of rabies, and enforcement of regulations pertaining to animal welfare and import requirements, fisheries protection and marine fish culture, please advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) the measures implemented by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to strengthen stray animals management and promotion of animal welfare and the actual expenditure incurred during 2022-23; and
- 2) the details of the expenditure and manpower involved over the past 3 years and details of the estimate for 2022-23 regarding strengthening promotion of animal welfare.

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 65)

Reply:

- 1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) implements various measures to strengthen the management of stray animals and promotion of animal welfare, which include:
 - i) enhancing public education and publicity programme to promote “responsible pet ownership” and proper care of animals, advise against the abandonment and surrendering of pets without reasonable justification(s), emphasising the need for dog licensing and rabies vaccination as well as the benefits of neutering, etc.;
 - ii) implementing the licensing regime under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations (Cap. 139B) to regulate pet trading and breeding of dogs for sale;
 - iii) devising codes of practices for the proper trading, breeding and keeping of pets and other animals;

- iv) enhancing enforcement against persons and traders in contravention of relevant legislation;
- v) improving the handling of reports or complaints on animal cruelty through collaboration with relevant departments and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong);
- vi) strengthening collaboration with, and providing technical and financial support to animal welfare organisations (AWOs) in rehoming animals and carrying out activities relating to animal welfare and management;
- vii) implementing the long-term strategy for the management of stray cattle in collaboration with the relevant AWOs and local communities; and
- viii) liaising with different AWOs to carry out preventive management measures for stray animals and proactively promote animal rehoming in new development areas.

2) The manpower and expenditure involved in promotion of animal welfare by AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	85.9	220
2021-22	83.7	220
2022-23 (revised estimate)	81.3	220

A breakdown of the expenditure (revised estimate) on promotion of animal welfare in 2022-23 is tabulated as follows:

Purpose	Expenditure (\$ million)
Management of stray animals (including management of stray cattle and animal rehoming services)	43.8
Education and publicity	21.5
Regulation of animal trading and breeding	11.7
Others (including subvention for AWOs and work related to the amending of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169))	4.3

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)052

(Question Serial No. 2564)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Environment and Ecology Bureau will work hand in hand with the industries to formulate a blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries within this year, with a view to raising the quality of local produces, productivity and production value in the long run through an array of measures covering finance, infrastructure, land and technical support, etc. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) the current estimated total expenditures in relation to the blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries; and
- 2) the estimated work schedule for the blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries?

Asked by: Hon LAM So-wai (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- 1) & 2) The Environment and Ecology Bureau and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department have commenced the work on formulating the blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries (the Blueprint) in the first quarter of 2023, which includes consultation and thematic seminars, etc. with various agriculture and fisheries organisations to gauge stakeholders' views on the sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries. We will later consolidate and examine the views raised by stakeholders and draft the Blueprint, and will strive to brief the relevant Panel of the Legislative Council on the content of the Blueprint within 2023. As the formulation of the blueprint is still in progress, no specific estimated expenditure is available at this stage.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)053****(Question Serial No. 2565)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expensesProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

The Environment and Ecology Bureau has proposed a number of enhancements to suitably expand the coverage of the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) and further streamline the application procedures taking into account the views of the industry. With regard to promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry, please advise of the following:

- 1) the expenditure and staff establishment involved in SFDF over the past 3 years;
- 2) since the introduction of SFDF, the number of project applications received, approved, rejected and being examined in total by type (e.g. capture, culture, recreational fishing or others).

Asked by: Hon LAM So-wai (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)Reply:

- 1) The expenditure and manpower involved in the administration of the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	3.6	8
2021-22	4.5	9
2022-23 (revised estimate)	5.3	11

- 2) Since the inception of SFDF, 64 applications in total have been received under SFDF and its Equipment Improvement Project (EIP). The details are tabulated as follows:

Number of applications (as at Feb 2023)	Type					
	Aquaculture	Capture fisheries	Recreational fisheries	EIP	Others	Total
Received	34	2	7	15	6	64
Approved	15	2	3	11	1	32
Rejected	12	0	2	0	4	18
Withdrawn by the applicant	6	0	2	1	1	10
Under processing	1	0	0	3	0	4

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)054****(Question Serial No. 1439)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Among the indicators for fisheries, both the production volume of capture and culture fisheries in 2022 dropped significantly as compared to 2021, and the throughput at Fish Marketing Organization markets also saw a year-on-year drop, and the number of new loans decreased, too. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) the relevant figures of the fisheries sector over the past 5 years in tabular form;
- b) the reasons for the decline in multiple indicators at the same time; and
- c) the countermeasures to reverse the downward trend?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)Reply:

- a) The relevant figures of the fisheries industry over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Indicator	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Production of capture fisheries (tonnes)	124 000	123 000	116 000	112 000	77 200
Production of culture fisheries (tonnes)	3 527	3 284	3 322	3 381	2 764
Throughput at Fish Marketing Organization markets (tonnes)	43 825	42 710	39 520	39 850	35 672
Number of new loans (cases)	610	570	602	249	229

- b) Owing to the COVID-19 epidemic and implementation of the corresponding anti-epidemic measures, operations of local fishing vessels in both Hong Kong and

Mainland waters as well as the operation of local fish farms were affected to different extents (such as replenishment of fishery supplies, manpower arrangement, transportation of fish catches and supply of fish fry). As a result, the production of the local capture and culture fisheries in 2022 decreased by 31.1% (or about 34 800 tonnes) and 18.2% (or about 600 tonnes) respectively as compared to 2021.

The reduction in the throughput at Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) markets over the past 3 years was mainly due to decreased economic activities and lower overall demand for marine produce during the epidemic. The decline in the throughput of marine fish was particularly significant during the fifth wave of the epidemic in 2022. Nonetheless, the throughput at FMO markets is expected to rebound progressively in 2023 following the subsided epidemic situation.

The drop in the number of new loan cases since 2021 was mainly due to the enhanced arrangements for the Fishing Moratorium Loan Scheme that have been made since 2021. In July 2020, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved raising the loan ceiling of each application for loan under FMO's Fishing Moratorium Loan Scheme, and each eligible applicant could apply for a loan of higher amount to tide over the fishing moratorium of that year without the need to apply for additional loan in the same year, resulting in the decrease in new loan cases.

- c) In 2023, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) plans to designate 4 areas in local waters located in Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, outer Tap Mun, Po Toi (Southeast) and Mirs Bay respectively as new fish culture zones (FCZs), with a view to further promoting the sustainable development of aquaculture industry. The 4 new FCZs will provide the local aquaculture industry with additional area of some 590 hectares for development. Several deep sea cages with modern mariculture equipment will be provided in phases for renting to fish farmers to carry out deep sea mariculture to lower their start-up costs. We expect to issue the first batch of new FCZ licenses by the first quarter of 2024 the earliest, so that fish farmers can commence operation gradually. The production of local culture fisheries will increase accordingly. Regarding the capture fisheries, along with the subsided epidemic situation and resumption of normal travel between the Mainland and Hong Kong, local mobile fishing vessels can resume normal operations in Mainland waters progressively. The production of the capture fisheries is expected to pick up gradually.

Besides, in December 2022, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the injection of an additional \$500 million into the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF). At the same time, the coverage of SFDF has been expanded and a series of enhancement measures have been implemented, including increasing the Government's maximum funding ratio for commercial projects which are innovative and pilot in nature, introducing new subsidies for "application projects" and "support services projects", raising the grant ceiling and ratio for "Equipment Improvement Projects" and setting up a Task Force to assist potential applicants in refining their project proposals and preparing the necessary documents. We anticipate that the financial injection and enhanced measures will be conducive to the sustained enhancement in the overall competitiveness and productivity of the local fisheries industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)055

(Question Serial No. 0236)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is indicated in the Estimates that the approved commitment for Item 801 Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Item 808 Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund under subhead 700 of the Operating Account is \$1 billion each, and so far the accumulated expenditure amounted to \$110 million and \$132 million respectively. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the number of applications received by each of the two funds so far, the number of projects finally approved, among which the number of projects completed, and whether effectiveness assessments have been conducted; and
- (b) whether the figures on applications received and projects approved meet the expected target and whether measures on how to increase the relevant figures will be considered?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

- (a) The details of applications for the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) since inception are tabulated as follows:

Number of applications (as at Feb 2023)	SFDF			SADF		
	General application	Equipment Improvement Project (EIP)*	Total	General application	Farm Improvement Scheme (FIS)#	Total
Received	49	15	64	52	395	447
Approved	21	11	32	16	384	400
Completed projects	10	8	18	8	313	321

* Financial support is provided through EIP for fishermen/fish farmers to procure equipment that can enhance their productivity and facilitate sustainable development. In general, the applicants are fisheries organisations which conduct bulk procurement of equipment for fishermen/fish farmers.

Grants are provided under FIS for farmers to acquire small farm machinery, tools and materials to help them enhance their productivity and operation efficiency through using modernised farming tools and equipment.

The two Funds review from time to time the effectiveness of approved and completed projects in fostering sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries. The grantee should submit a final report and audited accounts upon project completion for assessment of the benefits brought to the industry by the approved project and its financial position. The report will be uploaded onto the website of the respective Funds for public inspection. Members of the Advisory Committees of the Funds will also scrutinise the relevant reports, and may carry out inspections or require the grantee to attend meetings where necessary, with a view to examining the effectiveness of the project.

An overview of the presently completed and ongoing projects shows that SFDF has supported the fisheries industry across various areas and promoted the sustainable development of aquaculture, capture and recreational fisheries. More than half of the approved projects are related to aquaculture fisheries. From introduction, optimisation, transfer of new technologies and related training to introduction of new aquaculture species, brand-building and marketing of fisheries produce, these projects are in line with the policy direction of promoting the sustainable development of aquaculture industry and the outcomes are conducive to the modernisation and intensification of production of local aquaculture industry. Other approved projects also provide solid support to the industry, such as the provision of professional veterinary consultation and drug prescription services at fish farms, and the development of quality pellet feed from food waste. Besides, some of the projects have mapped out a new direction of development for the industry and explore opportunities outside Hong Kong, such as supporting local fishermen to engage in deep sea mariculture in the waters of the Greater Bay Area and develop capture fisheries in countries along the Belt and Road.

Regarding SADF, the scope of completed and ongoing projects include the provision of veterinary consultation services to improve the health and production efficiency of livestock, organic crop certification system, training and promotion, branding of local agricultural products, development of all-natural organic liquid fertilisers, development of an electronic platform on common agricultural pests in Hong Kong and a seed bank.

These projects provide the industry with support in the areas of production technologies and marketing, enabling farmers to enhance their productivity and income.

Overall speaking, project milestones have been achieved since the establishment of the two Funds, benefitting more than 4 250 fishermen/farmers.

- (b) In December 2022, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the injection of an additional \$500 million each into the two Funds. At the same time, the coverage of the Funds has been expanded and a series of enhancement measures have been implemented, including increasing the Government's maximum funding ratio for commercial projects which are innovative and pilot in nature, introducing new subsidies for "application projects" and "support services projects", standardising the eligibility criteria and application procedures for EIP and FIS to allow fishermen/farmers to apply for grants in their personal capacity or through group applications, and raising the grant ceilings. To further strengthen the support for all potential applicants, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has set up Task Forces to provide targeted support before they submit their formal applications. The Task Forces will advise on how to refine their project proposals and prepare the necessary documents. AFCD will also expedite the financial assessment process and, without compromising the vetting requirements, minimise seeking information/documents from applicants as far as possible. Besides, the Funds have also conducted publicity and promotion work through various channels, including organising sharing sessions, seminars and workshops, distributing promotional leaflets, as well as disseminating information on social media platforms on a regular basis. We expect that the injections and enhancement measures will facilitate more individual fishermen/farmers and trade organisations to submit applications to the Funds for financial support, and hence the number of applications and approved projects, as well as the expenditure on the amount of funding will be increased. The projects under application will be more diversified and conducive to the sustained enhancement of the overall competitiveness of local agriculture and fisheries industries.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)001****(Question Serial No. 2604)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Please advise this Committee of the following over the past 5 years: (1) the manpower and expenditure involved in handling wild pigs each year; its proportion in the total expenditure of the Department; (2) the number of wild pig capture operations conducted each year and the details of each operation, including the date and location of operation; (3) the number of wild pigs handled under the pilot Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme; (4) the number of wild pigs captured for humane dispatch each year; (5) the details and expenditure of appealing to the public to stop feeding wild animals; its proportion in the total expenditure of the Department; and (6) the number of reports received regarding illegal feeding of wild animals and successful prosecutions; the number of persons arrested and convicted, and the penalties imposed.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)Reply:

- (1) The manpower and expenditure involved in the work in relation to wild pig management by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Percentage of total expenditure of the AFCD (%)
2018-19	14	9.9	0.6
2019-20	26	14.5	0.9
2020-21	32	17.8	0.9
2021-22	32	19.2	1.0
2022-23 (revised estimate)	34	21.0	1.1

- (2) The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to administer contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilise wild pigs captured and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. However, the AFCD's investigations revealed that the progress of contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food from people even after being relocated to the countryside. To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has implemented new measures since 12 November 2021 to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about wild pig sightings in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments. During the capture operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of drug.

The number of wild pig capture operations conducted by the AFCD over the past 5 years with a breakdown by month is tabulated as follows:

<div> <div>Year</div> <div>Month</div> </div>	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Apr	4	9	11	13	12
May	3	8	14	16	7
Jun	2	10	16	13	6
Jul	5	21	4	17	11
Aug	3	9	6	21	13
Sep	2	14	16	30	24
Oct	3	16	22	16	28
Nov	5	21	22	22	20
Dec	7	13	14	11	19
Jan	9	7	13	19	10
Feb	8	7	16	8	20
Mar	6	16	24	5	N/A
Total	57	151	178	191	170

The number of wild pig capture operations conducted by the AFCD over the past 5 years with a breakdown by district is tabulated as follows:

District \ Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Islands	0	0	0	1	0
Kwai Tsing	2	1	4	4	4
North	1	6	8	10	3
Sai Kung	1	21	27	23	25
Sha Tin	7	20	16	13	15
Tai Po	3	4	16	16	8
Tsuen Wan	2	9	4	7	6
Tuen Mun	3	4	2	1	3
Yuen Long	1	1	4	3	1
Kowloon City	0	1	2	0	0
Kwun Tong	0	1	1	0	6
Sham Shui Po	1	4	0	2	3
Wong Tai Sin	1	3	3	1	3
Yau Tsim Mong	0	0	0	1	0
Central and Western	9	12	19	26	20
Eastern	4	5	24	31	31
Southern	17	50	39	45	35
Wan Chai	5	9	9	7	7
Total	57	151	178	191	170

(3) and (4) The number of wild pigs involved in the CCRP and humanely dispatched over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pigs		
	Captured	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised	Humanely dispatched*
2018-19	192	64	2
2019-20	293	106	14
2020-21	344	165	26
2021-22	370	109	105
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	347	The CCRP has ceased.	330

* Including wild pigs humanely dispatched due to injury.

(5) The AFCD has all along been striving to educate the public and appeal to them not to feed wild animals. It has commissioned the Hong Kong Ocean Park

Conservation Foundation to provide eco-educational activities and guided tours at “the place at which the feeding of any wild animal is prohibited” (Feeding Ban Area) designated under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance) since 2018 and extended the publicity and educational activities to kindergartens, primary schools and communities near feeding black spots since 2019, with a view to educating public members of various age groups, especially students, on concepts about preventing wild animal nuisance and no-feeding of wild animals. Starting from November 2021, the AFCD has also rolled out a new round of public education and publicity campaign, which includes uploading promotional and educational information on social media, and putting up posters on public transport and at stations and stops. The AFCD will continue to strengthen public education on no-feeding of wild pigs and the risk behind feeding wild pigs through diverse channels. The expenditure on publicity and education to the public on no-feeding of wild animals by the AFCD over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Percentage of the total expenditure of AFCD (%)
2018-19	2.2	0.1
2019-20	2.1	0.1
2020-21	3.2	0.2
2021-22	5.0	0.3
2022-23 (revised estimate)	11.2	0.6

- (6) The numbers of reports received regarding illegal feeding of wild animals, prosecutions instituted, successful prosecutions and the penalties imposed over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports	Number of prosecutions instituted*#	Number of successful prosecutions#	Fine (\$)
2018-19	9	32	20	1,000
2019-20	6	26	28	1,500-2,000
2020-21	32	50	31	300-2,000
2021-22	48	120	90	200-1,500
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	74	101	79	300-1,500

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

Each prosecution involved 1 person.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)002

(Question Serial No. 1385)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

In recent years, many members of the public visited country parks for leisure since their travelling plan had been affected by the epidemic. For the past 2 years, the number of visitors to country parks reached 12 million every year. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department also estimated that there will be about 13 million visitors to country parks in 2023. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the expenditure involved in restoring the facilities and landscapes in country parks over the past 3 years;
- (2) the current manpower responsible for patrolling country parks and whether the Government will strengthen patrolling manpower in the light of the estimated increase in the number of visitors to country parks; if yes, the staffing establishment and expenditure to be involved; and
- (3) the reasons for the respective indicators of 230 000 and 220 000 for “seedlings produced” and “seedlings planted” in the Estimates for 2023 being smaller than the actual number in 2021 and 2022?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) provides various visitor facilities in country parks, such as hiking trails, picnic sites, barbecue areas, rain shelters, viewing points, etc., and will conduct regular inspections, maintenance and repair work to ensure that they are safe for members of the public to use. The expenditure involved in the construction and maintenance of country park facilities over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows. There is no breakdown of the expenditure involved in the maintenance of such facilities.

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21	80.7
2021-22	80.0
2022-23 (revised estimate)	79.3

- (2) In 2022-23, the manpower and expenditure involved in regular patrols and law enforcement work at country parks were 135 staff members and \$63 million respectively. The AFCD will flexibly deploy manpower to step up patrols and law enforcement at popular locations in country parks as necessary according to actual circumstances. Besides, the AFCD will continue to appeal to countryside visitors to keep country parks clean and care for the nature through various publicity channels.
- (3) Tree planting is one of the major duties of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in conserving the environment of country parks. The estimated figures on seedlings to be produced and planted every year by the AFCD are based on the actual needs. In the early stage of afforestation in country parks, the tree planting strategy was to plant a large quantity of trees to provide a vegetation cover quickly at barren hillsides for the improvement of landscape and prevention of soil erosion. After decades of extensive tree planting, most country park areas are now covered by vegetation. With the increasing public awareness towards hill fire prevention, reports of hill fires (especially those of a larger scale) in country parks have been kept at a low level in recent years and the demand for tree planting to rehabilitate areas affected by hill fires has also dropped. The current objective of tree planting in country parks focuses on improving the quality rather than the quantity of plantations, and shifts from soil erosion control to enhancement of the ecological value and biodiversity of woodlands. The AFCD enhances the quality, ecological value and biodiversity of woodlands in country parks through measures such as producing and planting more seedlings of native species that can provide better food and habitats for local wildlife, as well as enhancing plantations in country parks, including the implementation of Country Parks Plantation Enrichment Programme, the thinning of aging exotic tree species and planting of native tree seedlings.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2967)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

During 2023-24, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (the Department) will implement measures to enhance the education and recreation functions of country parks. In this connection, would the Department advise of the following:

- (1) whether there is any plan on public education and publicity this year to remind members of the public to protect the country parks and ecological environment; if yes, the details and estimated expenditure;
- (2) the work done over the past 3 years to combat irregularities in country parks to protect the natural environment, and the law enforcement situation; and
- (3) in view of the crowdedness of many country parks and hiking trails during holidays in recent years, whether the Government has conducted any study on the carrying capacity of the local country parks; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 44)

Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) attaches great importance to the education, promotion and publicity programmes of country parks. It continues to promote the messages of nature appreciation and care for nature to members of the public through various channels. In 2023-24, the AFCD will continue to organise publicity and educational activities, such as nature excursions, school visits, roving exhibitions, orienteering, volunteer services and country park hiking trail clean-up programmes, etc., with a view to engaging members of the public to participate in the conservation work of the country parks so as to foster an attitude of caring for the nature. The estimated expenditure of the relevant work is about \$22 million.
- (2) The AFCD is committed to combating illegal activities in country parks so as to protect the natural environment. The AFCD staff conduct patrols in various country parks and special areas to monitor the conditions of country parks and the use of related facilities by visitors. If irregularities such as littering, illegal camping or lighting of a fire, illegal plucking or damaging of plants are detected, the AFCD will take enforcement actions against persons involved under the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations

(Cap. 208A) (the Regulations) and other relevant legislation. Over the past 3 years, the number of successful prosecutions under the Regulations were 678 (in 2020), 1 183 (in 2021) and 1 043 (in 2022) respectively, and the fine imposed on the offenders ranged from \$100 to \$2,000.

- (3) The carrying capacity of hiking spots is affected by many factors, such as the visitor flow, activities and behaviour of visitors, and the actual environmental factors of different locations. In response to the public's growing demand for visits to country parks, the AFCD is diverting visitors with different needs to various country parks as far as possible to reduce the pressure arising from visits through improving the coverage of the hiking trail network and its linkage and implementing enhancement projects at country parks in different districts. The AFCD will continue to monitor closely the visitor flow and environment of popular hiking trails or attractions, and when necessary, carry out appropriate improvement work such as repair of damaged trails, control of soil erosion at the trails, enhancement of vegetation coverage, enhancement of cleansing services, enrichment of information for visitors and promotion of public awareness on protecting the environment of country parks, etc. In planning the enhancement projects, the AFCD will select suitable sites for detailed studies, including taking into account the geographical and environmental setting and the existing ancillary facilities of these sites, etc. with a view to implementing the enhancement proposals at locations already with provision of infrastructure nearby as far as practicable, thereby reducing the impact on the country park environment and other users.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)004****(Question Serial No. 2446)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

1. What was the number of local and overseas visitors to Hong Kong Geopark in each of the past 3 years?
2. Regarding the promotion of quality and sustainable tourism by Hong Kong Geopark, what were the expenditure and staff establishment involved in facilitating such work by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years?
3. It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24 that the AFCD will strengthen promotion, conservation and education of geological and cultural heritages of Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark. What are the details of the relevant activities and expenditure to be involved?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)Reply:

1. The number of visitors to Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark (Hong Kong Geopark) in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of visitors (million)
2020	1.2
2021	1.2
2022	1.5

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have a breakdown of the local and overseas visitors.

2. The expenditure and manpower involved in the promotion of Hong Kong Geopark (including conservation, publicity and education) by the AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	18.8	12
2021-22	22.6	12
2022-23 (revised estimate)	19.8	12

3. The AFCD has all along made dedicated efforts for the conservation, promotion and education of geological and cultural heritages of Hong Kong Geopark. Such efforts mainly include (1) production of multilingual promotion materials for local and overseas visitors; (2) overseas promotion through the internet and the international platform of the Global Geoparks Network; (3) upgrading of the skills of geopark guides through the Geopark Guide System in collaboration with non-governmental organisations; (4) provision of training for tour operators, local communities and other stakeholders of Hong Kong Geopark; (5) organisation of science popularisation programmes for students through the Geopark School Programme; and (6) collaboration with local communities in conserving and promoting the local history, tradition, culture and intangible cultural heritage through story rooms and other means.

In addition, special programmes planned for 2023-24 include: (1) supporting the Tourism Commission in the organisation of the Sai Kung Hoi Arts Festival to promote green tourism in the Sai Kung geopark community; (2) supporting and promoting the development of sustainable tourism at Ap Chau, Kat O, Lai Chi Wo, etc. to tie in with the Government's gradual opening up of the Sha Tau Kok Frontier Closed Area; and (3) introducing the first phase of the Hing Chun Alliance Heritage Trail (connecting Lai Chi Wo to Mui Tsz Lam and Kop Tong) and erecting interpretation panels along the route to introduce the village culture and history.

In 2023-24, the estimated expenditure of the AFCD on the aforesaid conservation, promotion and education work as well as the relevant special programmes is \$20 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)005

(Question Serial No. 0164)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding wild pigs, please advise of the following:

- (a) the projected population of wild pigs in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the number of help-seeking cases and complaints received and the total value of property losses as reported by the public in relation to wild pig sightings over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) the number of operations conducted; the number of wild pigs captured, among 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; the number of wild pigs euthanised, and the number of wild pigs hunted over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (d) the expenditure and manpower dedicated to the pilot programme on the contraception/relocation of wild pigs, hunting teams and the work in relation to the wild pigs over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (e) the number of arrests made and successful prosecutions instituted in relation to the illegal feeding of wild pigs over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) as well as the average, maximum and minimum penalties imposed respectively;
- (f) the number of wild pig carcasses found in Hong Kong and the number of wild pigs captured in each of the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), and whether the Government has conducted African Swine Fever testing on the said wild pigs; and
- (g) whether the Government will implement any new measures to strengthen the work on prevention of African Swine Fever.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched a study in 2019 to estimate the number of wild pigs in the countryside using infrared camera traps. In 2020, the scope of the study was extended to cover more sites and different seasons. It was estimated that there were about 2 500 wild pigs in the countryside all over Hong Kong based on the wild pig population density. The AFCD is collecting and analysing

the latest data to estimate the latest number of wild pigs throughout the territory. It is aimed that the result will be available in the latter half of this year.

- (b) The number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance received by the AFCD over the past 3 years is as follows:

Year	Number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance
2020-21	1 114
2021-22	1 351
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	1 108

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 suspended the hunting operations of civilian hunting teams in 2017 and formally ceased the hunting operation in 2019. The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to administer contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilise wild pigs captured and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. However, the AFCD's investigations revealed that the progress of contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food from people even after being relocated to the countryside. To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has ceased the CCRP and implemented new measures since 12 November 2021 to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about their sightings in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments. During the capture operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of drug.

The numbers of wild pigs captured, administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised, relocated to the countryside and humanely dispatched over the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Number of wild pigs			
	Captured	CCRP		Humanely dispatched [^]
		Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised*	Relocated to countryside*	
2020-21	344	165	270	26
2021-22	370	109	219	105
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	347	The CCRP has ceased		330

* 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 expenditure involved in the AFCD's work in relation to 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)
2020-21	32	17.8	9.4
2021-22	32	19.2	8.6
2022-23 (revised estimate)	34	21.0	(N/A)

- (e) Since 1999, 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 at which the feeding of any wild animal is prohibited (Feeding Ban Area) under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170). Any person feeding wild animals in the Feeding Ban Area shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$10,000. Since the main cause of festering nuisance of wild pigs in recent years is intentional feeding, to step up the efforts to curb wild pig feeding activities and resolve the wild pig nuisance at source, the Feeding Ban Area has been expanded to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022.

The AFCD will arrange patrols at wild animal feeding black spots from time to time and take prosecution actions against anyone who has contravened the prohibition of wild animal feeding, subject to sufficient evidence. The AFCD will also review from time to time the patrol and enforcement arrangements in accordance with the actual circumstances, including stepping up blitz and enforcement operations where necessary, as well as collaborating with relevant departments to strengthen combatting the relevant activities. The information on the prosecutions against illegal feeding of wild animals (including wild pigs) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Number of prosecutions instituted*	50	120	101
Number of successful prosecutions	31	90	79
Fine (\$)	300-2,000 (average: 559)	200-1,500 (average: 833)	300-1,500 (average: 601)

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

- (f) The number of wild pig carcasses collected by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pig carcasses*
2020-21	337
2021-22	547
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	485

* Including wild pigs captured and humanely dispatched by the AFCD.

With a view to strengthening the surveillance of African Swine Fever (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 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. For early detection of potential cases, the programme also collects samples from humanely dispatched wild pigs (the number of pigs is detailed in part (c) above) for ASF testing. The number of wild pigs captured in each year is detailed in part (c) above.

- (g) The AFCD has been closely monitoring the epidemic situation of ASF and taking corresponding measures in a timely manner. Major measures which have been implemented include:
- (i) devising a surveillance and contingency plan for detecting ASF, including stepping up inspections 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 purchase of 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, catering waste or other food wastes 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 spillage 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 representatives in a timely manner, and increasing local pig farmers' knowledge of preventing ASF through producing various publicity materials on information about ASF, including posters, videos and guidelines on the procedures of cleansing and disinfecting pig-carrying trucks, so as to provide local pig farmers with information about the disease, its infection as well as the prevention 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 for early detection of potential cases;
- (xi) providing financial assistance to the City University of Hong Kong through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund to provide free veterinary consultation service for local pig farms with a view to improving the overall animal health conditions of local pig farms; and
- (xii) 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

EEB(E)006

(Question Serial No. 3080)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding marine parks and marine reserves, please advise of the following:

- (a) the name, location, size and date of establishment of the marine parks and marine reserve currently established or to be established as well as the size of the core areas or restricted zones therein. Please also provide the boundary maps of these marine parks and marine reserve (including the core areas or restricted zones);
- (b) the number of fishing permits issued to various types of fishing vessels in each marine park and marine reserve, in the first year after the establishment of the marine parks and marine reserve and over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) the number of operations and the effectiveness of the enforcement operations against illegal fishing activities (including capture, angling as well as any other method) in marine parks over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), as well as the penalties and fines imposed;
- (d) the expenditure and staff establishment involved in the enforcement operations against illegal fishing activities in marine parks over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (e) the number of patrol vessels deployed by the Government to combat illegal fishing activities in marine parks, the waters patrolled, and the number of patrols conducted, over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

- (a) The information on the name, location, size, core area size and date of designation of the existing and proposed marine parks and marine reserve is at **Annex 1**. The relevant map is at **Annex 2**.
- (b) The number of fishing permits issued to various types of fishing vessels in each marine park and marine reserve is tabulated as follows:

Name of marine park/ marine reserve	Number of relevant permits			
	First year of establishment	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve ⁽ⁱ⁾	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP) ^{(ii) (iii)}	409	66	2	N/A
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park (YCTMP) ^{(ii) (iii)}	409	69	2	N/A
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (SCLKCMP) ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	208	22	1	N/A
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park (TPCMP) ^{(ii) (iii)}	280	56	1	N/A
The Brothers Marine Park ^(iv)	472	873	1 043	1 339
Southwest Lantau Marine Park (SWLMP) ^(iv)	742	742	1 002	1 332
South Lantau Marine Park (SLMP) ^{(iv) (v)}	1 329	N/A	N/A	1 329

- (i) There is no fishing permit issued to fishing vessels for the Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve as commercial fishing is banned in the marine reserve.
- (ii) Some fishing permits cover the TPCMP, YCTMP and/or HHWMP concurrently.
- (iii) Under the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks, commercial fishing in the 4 marine parks (namely the HHWMP, YCTMP, TPCMP and SCLKCMP) has been banned with effect from 1 April 2022. All permit holders have surrendered their fishing permits.
- (iv) Some fishing permits cover The Brothers Marine Park, SWLMP and/or SLMP concurrently.
- (v) As the SLMP was designated on 30 June 2022, the number of fishing permits issued in the first year of establishment was counted up to February 2023 only.

- (c) The number of prosecutions against illegal fishing activities in marine parks over the past 3 years and the penalties imposed are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of cases	Total amount of fine (\$)
2020-21	3	6,000
2021-22	5	5,600
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	10*	6,200*

* Including 3 cases of prosecution in progress.

To strengthen the curbing of illegal fishing and the related law enforcement work, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) consolidated its internal resources and set up a dedicated sea enforcement team in August 2020 with a view to enhancing the mobility and responsiveness of enforcement actions against illegal fishing. The AFCD will continue to exchange intelligence with relevant government

departments and Mainland authorities, as well as adjust its enforcement strategy from time to time in the light of circumstances to combat illegal fishing activities together.

- (d) The expenditure and manpower involved in the daily management of marine parks and marine reserve (including law enforcement against illegal fishing) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	39.2	66
2021-22	47.1	77
2022-23 (revised estimate)	48.2	77

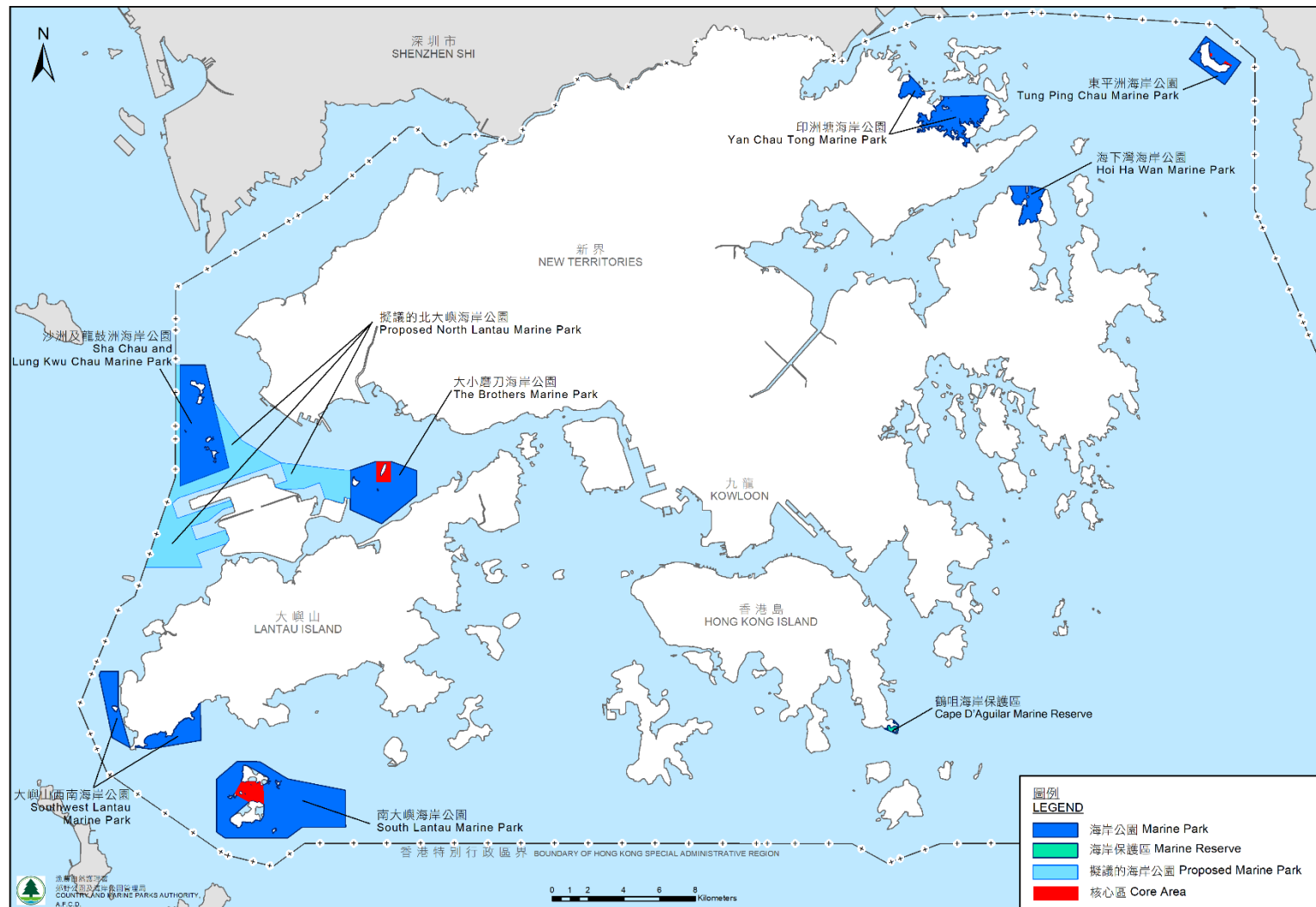
As combating illegal fishing is part of the daily management of marine parks and marine reserve, the AFCD does not have the relevant breakdown.

- (e) The AFCD will continue to conduct patrols and combat illegal fishing in marine parks, including flexibly deploying manpower dedicated to law enforcement at sea as well as providing additional patrol vessels and replacing some of the vessels. In early 2021, the Department provided additional patrol vessels and replaced some vessels deployed to marine parks, the marine reserve and the surrounding waters. The Marine Police and their patrol vessels also provide assistance in law enforcement within marine parks and marine reserve from time to time at the AFCD's request. The AFCD is also planning to procure 3 patrol vessels (including 2 new vessels and replacement of 1 existing patrol vessel) to further combat illegal fishing and other irregularities in marine parks.

The number of patrols conducted over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of patrols
2020-21	3 080
2021-22	3 285
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	3 125

Name of existing or proposed marine park/ marine reserve	Location	Size (hectares)		Designation date
		Total	Core area	
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve	Waters at the southeastern tip of Hong Kong Island	20	0	Jul 1996
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park	Sheltered bay located north of the Sai Kung West Country Park	260	0	Jul 1996
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park	Northeast coast of Plover Cove Country Park	680	0	Jul 1996
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park	Waters enclosing the islands of Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau on the western part of Hong Kong	1 200	0	Nov 1996
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park	Waters enclosing the small island Ping Chau in the northeastern waters of Hong Kong	270	7.4	Nov 2001
The Brothers Marine Park	Waters in the vicinity of The Brothers in northern Lantau	970	80	Dec 2016
Southwest Lantau Marine Park	Waters in the vicinity of Fan Lau in southwestern Lantau	650	0	Apr 2020
South Lantau Marine Park	Waters in the vicinity of Soko Islands in southern Lantau	2 067	145	Jun 2022
North Lantau Marine Park (the marine park for the Three-Runway System of the Hong Kong International Airport)	Waters enclosing the airport in northern Lantau	~2 400	0	2024 (Tentative)



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- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)007****(Question Serial No. 3081)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the nuisances caused by wild monkeys to nearby residents or visitors, please advise of the following:

- (a) the expenditure involved in public education and promotion of the feeding ban by the Department over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (b) the number of complaints received by the Department about nuisance of or attack caused by wild monkeys over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23);
- (c) the manpower and expenditure involved in the investigation and study on the control of wild monkeys, as well as the administration of contraceptive and neutering treatment to wild monkeys over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23); and
- (d) whether the management plan for monkeys has been updated; if yes, the progress, timetable and details involved; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 47)Reply:

- (a) The expenditure incurred by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in public education and publicity on the prohibition of feeding of monkeys over the past 3 year is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21	1.7
2021-22	1.8
2022-23 (revised estimate)	3.0

- (b) The number of complaints about monkey nuisance/attack received by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of complaints
2020-21	248
2021-22	207
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	257

- (c) The AFCD's expenditure and manpower involved in handling monkey nuisance over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	7.2	17
2021-22	8.6	17
2022-23 (revised estimate)	11.2	17

In addition, the AFCD's contractor (the Ocean Park Conservation Foundation) arranges regular sterilisation operations for monkeys in Kam Shan, Lion Rock and Shing Mun Country Parks, which involve about 10 staff members of the contractor in each operation.

- (d) The AFCD completed the review of the management plan which addresses monkey nuisances in 2020-21, and reported the result to the Nature Conservation Subcommittee (Subcommittee) under the Advisory Council on the Environment in October 2020. Members of the Subcommittee supported the AFCD's continuous implementation of the relevant management plan and commencement of new research projects. The AFCD is reviewing the existing monkey contraceptive programme and aims to complete the review in 2023-24.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)008

(Question Serial No. 3084)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the conservation and management of the wetland, please advise of the following:

- (a) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), the number of complaints received by the Government about alleged illegal bird prevention measures taken by fish farmers and farmers, the average and longest time taken to handle such cases, the number of prosecutions instituted against the contravention of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170), and the number of convictions thereof;
- (b) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), regarding farmers who have installed bird preventive netting or other measures, the number of applications for low-interest loans from loan funds and the Farm Improvement Scheme grants under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), and the amount so involved in the applications;
- (c) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), how the AFCD assisted farmers and fish farmers in reducing their loss due to bird predation in farmland and fish ponds;
- (d) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), the amount of subventions granted to the management agreement projects under the Environment and Conservation Fund and the number of participating fish farmers as well as the figure and percentage of the fish ponds taken up to the total area of the Ramsar Site; and
- (e) over the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), whether the Government has estimated the quantity of fish preyed on by birds in fish ponds and the production value involved; please list by fish ponds engaged and not engaged in the Nature Conservation Management Agreement Projects.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 50)

Reply:

- (a) According to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance), no person shall, except in accordance with a special permit, wilfully disturb or hunt any protected wild animal, including all wild birds. Over the past 3 years (as at February 2023), the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has prosecuted a total of 462 cases for contravening the Ordinance and a total of 366 cases were convicted. During the same period, the AFCD received 16 complaints about suspected

use of illegal bird prevention measures by farmers or fish farmers. It usually took 3 to 6 months to process these cases.

- (b) Over the past 3 years (as at February 2023), the AFCD has received 3 applications for the Farm Improvement Scheme (FIS) grants under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) related to installing bird preventive netting and bird repellents to protect their crops from birds. The amount requested was around \$5,000 in total. No applications for low-interest loans for installing bird preventive netting or other measures were received.
- (c) The AFCD understood the concern of farmers and fish farmers over their loss due to predation by wild birds in farmland and fish ponds. The AFCD aimed to strike a balance between supporting the agriculture and fisheries industries as well as conservation of wild birds, and assist farmers and fish farmers in taking appropriate measures to reduce predation by wild birds in farmland and fish ponds without causing harm to birds.

Regarding farmers, the AFCD regularly organised talks and farmland visits where technical advice on bird prevention was provided to assist farmers in taking appropriate measures to reduce bird predation in farmland. Farmers who were interested in installing bird preventive netting or other measures could apply for low-interest loans from loan funds administered by the AFCD, or purchase the necessary materials with the FIS grants under the SADF.

Regarding fish farmers, the AFCD regularly organised talks and workshops on good aquaculture practices and general fish farming guidelines, where methods on prevention of predation by wild birds were introduced, such as pond wiring, hanging of reflective materials, etc., to reduce loss of fish produce. Fish farmers could also apply for low-interest loans from fisheries loan funds administered by the AFCD should they need any financial assistance, or grants under the Equipment Improvement Project of the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund to purchase the necessary materials.

Besides, the AFCD published 2 pamphlets on the “Methods of Preventing Bird Predation in Farmland” and “Methods of Preventing Bird Predation in Fish Ponds” for the reference of farmers and fish farmers respectively. According to the AFCD’s observation, many farmers and fish farmers adopted the AFCD’s recommendations to reduce the risk of wild bird predation in farmland and fish ponds.

- (d) There were 2 Management Agreement projects with funding from the Environment and Conservation Fund and Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme conducted during the period from March 2019 to February 2023 in the Ramsar Site and Deep Bay Wetland outside the Ramsar Site respectively. Details of the projects are tabulated as follows:

Project period	Mar 2019 to Feb 2021	Mar 2021 to Feb 2023[#]
(1) Ramsar Site		
Total approved budget (\$)	7,456,636	9,706,158
Number of fish pond operators engaged	71	82
Area of fish ponds engaged (hectare)	265	268
Total area of eligible fish ponds (hectare)*	290	293
Percentage of area of fish ponds engaged in eligible fish ponds (%)	91	91
(2) Deep Bay Wetland outside Ramsar Site		
Total approved budget (\$)	7,246,276	9,347,368
Number of fish pond operators engaged	91	107
Area of fish ponds engaged (hectare)	330	309
Total area of eligible fish ponds (hectare)*	370	403
Percentage of area of fish ponds engaged in eligible fish ponds (%)	89	77

* Eligible fish ponds are those registered under the AFCD's Voluntary Registration Scheme.

Since operators of fish ponds can engage in/withdraw from the project during the project period, the relevant figures may subject to change.

- (e) The AFCD does not keep information on the quantity of fish preyed on by birds in fish ponds and the production value involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)009

(Question Serial No. 0645)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

In 2023-24, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will enhance the management of wild pigs. In this connection, would the Government advise of the following:

1. the details of the relevant work, staff establishment and expenditure to be involved; and
2. the total number of reports received on wild pig sightings and the number of wild pigs captured in each of the past 5 years?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

1. To exercise effective control over wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has implemented new measures since November 2021 to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about their sightings in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments. During the capture operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of drug.

Moreover, since the main cause of festering wild pig nuisance in recent years is intentional feeding, to step up the efforts to curb wild pig feeding activities and resolve the wild pig nuisance at source, the Government has expanded the area of “the place at which the feeding of any wild animal is prohibited” designated under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022. It is also considering amending the Ordinance to increase the maximum penalty and introduce fixed penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals with a view to strengthening the deterrent effect. The legislative amendments are aimed to be tabled to the Legislative Council for scrutiny within this year. In addition, the AFCD continues to strengthen its education and publicity through various channels to appeal to the public not to feed wild animals.

In 2022-23, a total of 34 staff members of the AFCD were involved in wild pig management and the expenditure (revised estimate) incurred was \$21 million. In 2023-24, the AFCD's staff establishment and expenditure on wild pig management are expected to be similar to those in 2022-23.

2. Over the past 5 years, the number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance received and the number of wild pigs captured by the AFCD are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance	Number of wild pigs captured
2018-19	1 008	192
2019-20	1 073	293
2020-21	1 114	344
2021-22	1 351	370
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	1 108	347

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)010

(Question Serial No. 3134)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will promote the “compatible” use of country parks and marine parks. Please advise of the following:

- 1) the Government’s definition of “compatible” and whether specific assessment indicators have been set;
- 2) the current performance of country parks and marine parks in environmental protection, such as waste disposal, the degree of impact of visitors on the natural environment, the pollution status of rivers and reservoirs, etc. and prioritised areas for enhancement; and
- 3) the staff establishment (including ranks, salary points, actual number of staff, etc.) on “public education and publicity” and “law enforcement under the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208) and the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476)”.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 50)

Reply:

- 1) and 2) Country parks and marine parks are set up mainly for the purposes of nature conservation, recreation and education. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) endeavours to adopt the low carbon and green principles in the management of country parks and marine parks so that the design of the relevant facilities integrates with the natural surroundings and meets the needs of different people. The AFCD sets up picnic sites and campsites away from ecologically sensitive areas to minimise the adverse impacts of human activities on nature, with a view to enabling the public to enjoy the countryside in a way compatible with the environment. In addition, the AFCD monitors the usage of country parks and marine parks through inspections and enforcement and enhances its management measures as necessary.

The AFCD continues to promote the messages of keeping the environment of country parks and marine parks clean and caring for the nature to countryside visitors through various channels. The AFCD has been implementing the “Take Your Litter Home” publicity and education programme with various groups since 2015 and has installed water filling stations in country parks to encourage public’s

participation in the protection of the countryside environment. The AFCD has also removed litter bins and recycling bins along the hiking trails in country parks since the end of 2017 while only keeping them at recreational sites (e.g. barbecue sites and campsites) for use by members of the public when needed. Subsequent to the implementation of the measures, the amount of refuse collected in country parks has showed a decreasing trend in recent years. Since 2021, the AFCD has organised an array of activities under the theme of “Hiking Etiquette” to promote good outdoor behaviour, and has employed green ambassadors to promote the messages of “Respect Nature”, “Prevent Hillfire”, “Reduce Waste” and “Take Your Litter Home”, etc. to the general public at popular hiking spots with a view to encouraging the public to care for the nature during their visits to the countryside. In 2022 and 2023, the AFCD launched country park hiking trail clean-up programmes targeted at the general public and organisations respectively to encourage the members of the public to develop the good habit of caring for the countryside, reducing waste and keeping the trails clean.

Moreover, in view of the increased usage of popular trails and the associated facilities, the AFCD has stepped up inspections to monitor and assess the impact of the increasing number of visitors on the environment and facilities of country parks. In respect of certain trails with increased wear and tear due to the effect of increasing number of visitors, the AFCD plans to restore the damaged trails through improvement works, and conduct vegetation maintenance and tree planting, as well as increase ancillary facilities at suitable locations in order to reduce the impact brought by the visitors to the countryside.

- 3) The manpower involved in the education, publicity, patrol and enforcement work for country parks and marine parks in 2022-23 as well as the respective ranks and salary points are tabulated as follows:

	Manpower (number of staff)	Rank (MPS point)
Education and publicity	38	Senior Forestry Officer (MPS 45-49) Senior Fisheries Officer (MPS 45-49)
Patrol and enforcement	172	Forestry Officer (MPS 27-44) Fisheries Officer (MPS 27-44) Senior Field Officer (MPS 29-33) Senior Fisheries Supervisor (MPS 29-33) Field Officer I (MPS 22-28) Fisheries Supervisor I (MPS 22-28) Field Officer II (MPS 8-21) Fisheries Supervisor II (MPS 8-21) Senior Field Assistant (MPS 12-15) Field Assistant (MPS 7-11) Artisan (MPS 5-8) Clerical Assistant (MPS 1-10)

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)011****(Question Serial No. 1753)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Under the Programme, the estimated financial provision allocated for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for 2023-24 will increase by 13.6%. This will be used to conserve flora, fauna and natural habitats; to designate and manage country parks, special areas, marine parks and marine reserves; and to control international trade in endangered species of animals and plants in Hong Kong. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) the details of the estimated distribution of seedlings to be planted and produced in the 18 districts of Hong Kong;
- b) the number of endangered species prosecutions has increased from 38 in 2021 to 50 in 2023; please provide the type of endangered species involved in these prosecutions and the respective numbers of prosecutions; and
- c) the number of operations conducted to combat illegal trade and smuggling of endangered species over the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)Reply:

- a) The estimated total number of seedlings to be produced and planted in 2023 is tabulated as follows:

	2023 (estimate)
Seedlings produced (number)	230 000
Seedlings planted (number) ^{Note 1}	220 000

Note 1: The seedlings produced will be mainly planted in country parks and about 10 000 seedlings will be provided to other departments for greening purpose.

All seedlings are produced in the Tai Tong Nursery of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. The total number of seedlings to be planted in country park areas in the various districts is tabulated as follows:

District <small>Note 2</small>	2023 (estimate) (number)
Eastern	300
Islands	39 000
North	35 000
Sai Kung	4 000
Sha Tin	66 000
Southern	400
Tai Po	30 000
Tsuen Wan	5 000
Tuen Mun	27 000
Wan Chai	300
Yuen Long	13 000

Note 2: There is no country park in Kowloon City, Kwun Tong, Sham Shui Po, Yau Tsim Mong and Kwai Tsing Districts. In addition, no planting of seedlings will be carried out in the country parks in Wong Tai Sin (in which there is only a small area of Ma On Shan Country Park) and the Central and Western Districts in 2023.

- b) The type of endangered species involved in prosecution cases for contravention of the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) (the Ordinance) and the respective numbers of prosecutions in 2021 and 2022 are tabulated as follows:

Type of endangered species	Year	Number of prosecution cases	
		2021	2022
Live reptile		5	5
Live bird		1	7
Live plant		18	11
Ivory		2	19
Rhino horn		1	0
Dried seahorse		4	1
Parts or derivatives of plant		3	0
Others (such as proprietary Chinese medicine and turtle plastron)		4	7
Total*		38	48

* Since some cases involve more than 1 type of species, the total number of prosecution cases every year may be less than the sum of prosecution cases by type of species.

It is expected that the overall number of prosecutions and the type of endangered species to be involved in 2023 would be similar to those in 2022.

- c) The numbers of cases involving illegal imports and exports in contravention of the Ordinance over the past 3 years (i.e. 2020, 2021 and 2022) were 276, 306 and 291, respectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)012****(Question Serial No. 1754)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

The work of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in pursuit of its aim involves the promotion of public awareness of nature conservation. In 2023-24, the AFCD will focus on the promotion of public education and publicity on nature conservation and compatible use of country parks and marine parks. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) the expenditure of the AFCD on the organisation of educational activities over the past 3 years;
- b) further to the above, the number of educational activities organised and the number of participants over the past 3 years; and
- c) given that the number of participants in educational activities reached 200 000 last year, whether online platforms were used in conducting the educational activities; if so, please provide the proportion of online participants.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)Reply:

- a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) attaches great importance to public education and publicity on nature conservation and the promotion of compatible use of country parks and marine parks. The expenditure involved in education and publicity on country parks and marine parks over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (revised estimate)
Expenditure (\$ million)	22.7	24.6	23.8

- b) The number of educational activities in relation to country parks and marine parks organised by the AFCD and the number of participants over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	2020	2021	2022
Number of educational activities	1 377	1 431	2 333
Number of participants	130 000	150 000	200 000

- c) In 2022, the AFCD organised different types of publicity and educational activities, such as nature excursions, school visits, roving exhibitions, volunteer services and hiking challenges, etc. to enrich the public's knowledge and experience about the natural environment and foster the attitude of caring for the nature. The AFCD also used online platforms such as social media and online talks to support the above publicity and educational activities. The number of participants who took part in the educational activities through online platforms accounted for about 3% of the total number of participants.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)013

(Question Serial No. 0982)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned under the Matters Requiring Special Attention that the Government will implement measures for enhanced management of wild pigs, including the legislative amendment to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170). In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the specific progress of raising the level of maximum penalty and introducing a fixed penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals; whether a specific timetable for legislative amendments has been set; if yes, the details;
- (b) the details of complaints against nuisance caused by wild pigs over the past 3 years; the details of specific measures implemented by the Government in handling the aforesaid cases and the work concerned;
- (c) the manpower and expenditure involved in enhancing the management of wild pigs over the past 3 years; and the effectiveness of such management measures?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

- (a) Since the main cause of festering wild pig nuisance in recent years is intentional feeding, to step up efforts to curb wild pig feeding activities and resolve the wild pig nuisance at source, the area of “the place at which the feeding of any wild animals is prohibited” (Feeding Ban Area) designated under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance) has been expanded to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022. Any person feeding any wild animal (including wild pigs, monkeys and wild birds) without permission may be prosecuted and is liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000. The Government is considering amending the Ordinance to increase the maximum penalty and introduce fixed penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals with a view to strengthening the deterrent effect. The legislative amendments are aimed to be tabled to the Legislative Council for scrutiny within this year.

- (b) The number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance received by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance
2020-21	1 114
2021-22	1 351
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	1 108

To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has implemented new measures since 12 November 2021 to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about their sightings in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments. During the capture operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of drug. In addition, the AFCD continues to strengthen its education and publicity through various channels to appeal to the public not to feed wild animals.

- (c) The manpower and expenditure involved in the AFCD's work in relation to wild pig management over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21	32	17.8
2021-22	32	19.2
2022-23 (revised estimate)	34	21.0

To monitor the effectiveness of the wild pig management measures in an effective approach, the AFCD has set "key performance indicators (KPI)", which aims to reduce half of the wild pig nuisance black spots each year, and updates the black spot list on a yearly basis. According to the records of the AFCD, the management measures have shown positive results.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)014****(Question Serial No. 0990)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

The Matters Requiring Special Attention mentions the licensing control of international trade in endangered species and curbing of illegal trade in endangered species in Hong Kong. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) the total number of seizure operations conducted over the past 3 years;
- (b) the quantity of wild fauna and flora seized over the past 3 years; and
- (c) the manpower and expenditures involved?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)Reply:

- (a) and (b) The number of seizure operations conducted against the contravention of the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance and the quantity seized over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	2020	2021	2022
Number of seizure operations	359	330	343
Quantity seized (kg)	279 000	408 000	22 300

- (c) The expenditure and manpower of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department involved in the work related to the licensing control of international trade in endangered species and curbing of illegal trade in endangered species in Hong Kong over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (revised estimate)
Expenditure (\$ million)	51.8	51.0	48.2
Manpower (number)	61	57	56

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)015

(Question Serial No. 1162)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department announced in November 2021 that wild pigs in the urban area would be regularly captured for humane dispatch with a view to reducing their number and nuisance. Please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the total number of operations conducted by the Department, the total number of wild pigs humanely dispatched as well as the expenditure involved so far;
- (2) the locations where capture operations and humane dispatch of wild pigs were performed by the Department in the aforesaid period as well as the manpower and tools involved in detail;
- (3) the number of reports on injury cases caused by wild pigs received by the Department so far; and
- (4) the number of reports on injury cases caused by wild pigs received by the Department in each of the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (1) and (2) To effectively control wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, over 170 wild pig capture operations have been conducted, with over 400 wild pigs humanely dispatched, as at 9 March 2023 since the announcement of conducting wild pig capture operations by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) on 12 November 2021. The date and location of the operations and the number of wild pigs dispatched in each operation have been uploaded to the AFCD website https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/conservation/con_fau/con_fau_nui/con_fau_nui_pig/con_fau_nui_pig.html. The capture operations involve veterinary officers using dart guns and drugs on wild pigs. Where necessary, the AFCD will use tools like fences and shields to assist the operation, and the Police will also maintain order and control traffic on the scene.

The AFCD's manpower and expenditure on wild pig management were 32 staff members and \$19.2 million in 2021-22 and 34 staff members and \$21 million

(revised estimate) in 2022-23 respectively. As the capture operations are part of the regular work in wild pig management, there is no separate breakdown of the expenditure involved in these operations.

- (3) Between November 2021 and February 2023, the AFCD received a total of 47 reports on injuries caused by wild pigs.
- (4) The number of reports on injuries caused by wild pigs received by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Reports on injuries caused by wild pigs (number of cases)
2020-21	4
2021-22	33
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	23

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)016

(Question Serial No. 2800)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
(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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding strengthening the control of trade in endangered species:

- (a) With the passage of the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Bill 2017 (the Amendment Bill) earlier, the import and re-export of pre-Convention (i.e. the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) ivory (except antique ivory) have been banned and the possession of pre-Convention ivory (except antique ivory) for commercial purposes in the local market is subject to licensing control.
Please advise this Committee of the enforcement efforts of the Government since the passage and implementation of the Ordinance, including the relevant law enforcement data, the amount of imported and exported pre-Convention and post-Convention worked ivory seized, as well as the number of licences issued for the commercial possession of pre-Convention ivory since the Ordinance came into force.
- (b) Regarding the licensing control of international trade in endangered species and curbing of illegal trade in endangered species in Hong Kong, please give details of the expenditure and manpower involved over the past 3 years and in the forthcoming year.
- (c) What are the details of the expenditure and manpower involved in the Government's efforts to protect endangered species and combat wildlife smuggling over the past 3 years? Apart from ivory, what are the manpower and expenditure involved in relation to the increase in penalties under the Ordinance by virtue of the Amendment Bill?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 61)

Reply:

- (a) The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 (the Amendment Ordinance) came into effect on 1 May 2018 to enhance protection of endangered elephants. With the implementation of the Amendment Ordinance, all imports and exports of ivory (except antique ivory) for commercial purposes have been banned starting from 1 August 2018. A

possession licence is required for possessing pre-Convention (i.e. the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)) ivory for commercial purposes. With the full implementation of the Amendment Ordinance on 31 December 2021, the import, re-export and possession of ivory for commercial purposes have been fully banned, except for antique ivory.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been implementing a series of measures against ivory smuggling, including stepping up joint operations and intelligence exchange with the Customs and Excise Department and overseas law enforcement agencies (e.g. Interpol), and deploying sniffer dogs to assist in the detection of ivory at import and export control points. The AFCD has also strengthened control of the local ivory trade, including stepping up market inspections, surveillance of online trading platforms and intelligence collection, as well as using hi-tech radiocarbon dating analysis to determine the age and legality of ivory.

On the other hand, the AFCD has carried out a series of activities to publicise the phase-out plan of the local ivory trade and the new penalties to the general public, travellers and traders. The relevant measures include issuing letters, press releases and posting messages on the Facebook; displaying posters at various import and export control points; broadcasting Announcements of Public Interest on YouTube Channel; publicising regulatory measures and sharing information on cases and penalties through the AFCD Facebook page; placing advertisements on means of transport such as buses, trams and MTR; as well as conducting visits to licensed ivory shops and other art and craft shops for education and promotion. Internationally, the AFCD has also notified the World Trade Organization and all Parties to the CITES of the relevant details.

Statistics on law enforcement related to ivory since the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance are tabulated as follows:

Year	2018 (May to Dec)	2019	2020	2021	2022
Quantity of ivory seized (kg)	336	2 058	0.07	1.13	6.93
Number of persons convicted	24	18	1	0	19
Maximum term of imprisonment	4 months	6 weeks	24 months	N/A	6 weeks (suspended sentence of 18 months)
Maximum amount of fine	\$8,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Starting from 31 December 2021, all Licences to Possess for ivory have become invalid. The AFCD has also ceased issuing Licences to Possess for ivory.

(b) and (c) The efforts of the AFCD in protecting endangered species and combating wildlife smuggling include carrying out licensing control of international trade in endangered species, as well as curbing the illegal trade in endangered species in Hong Kong. The expenditure and manpower involved in the above work over the past 3 years and the forthcoming year are tabulated as follows:

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (revised estimate)	2023-24 (estimate)
Expenditure (\$ million)	51.8	51.0	48.2	48.2
Manpower (number of staff)	61	57	56	56

No additional manpower or expenditure was involved in relation to the imposition of heavier penalties under the Amendment Ordinance.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)017

(Question Serial No. 0249)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is proposed in the Budget Speech that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will gradually enhance facilities in country parks and explore ideas such as providing treetop adventure, repairing wartime relics and turning them into open museums. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the details of the various projects for enhancing facilities in country parks, providing treetop adventure and repairing wartime relics, and the selected sites, design, estimated expenditure and manpower of the projects;
2. the details and timetable of the feasibility studies and consultation exercises required for providing treetop adventure, repairing wartime relics and turning them into open museums;
3. in view of the crowdedness of many country parks and hiking trails during holidays in recent years, whether the Government has conducted any study on the carrying capacity of the local scenic attractions; if yes, the details; if not, whether the Government will conduct the relevant study;
4. further to the above, whether the Government has reviewed the traffic planning and arrangement for those exceptionally popular scenic attractions; if yes, the details; if not, whether the Government will conduct the relevant study; and
5. whether the Government has evaluated the socio-economic benefits to be brought about by the enhancement of country parks?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. and 2. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is progressively implementing a series of short and medium-term enhancement projects for country park facilities based on the recommendations of the consultancy study on "Enhancing the Recreation and Education Potential of Country Parks", including the enhancement of 10 hiking trails with the improvement or addition of about 20 viewing points at popular tourist spots such as High West, Dragon's Back and Sunset Peak; the launch of the advance booking system pilot scheme for the Twisk Campsite to facilitate advance booking of camping space and facilities by the

public; and the installation of a total of 34 water filling stations in country parks across the territory to encourage the public to bring their own bottles and reduce utilisation of single-use plastic bottles.

As for long-term projects, the AFCD is working with departments including the Architectural Services Department and Civil Engineering and Development Department to implement the projects in phases. Projects in the first phase include enhancement of public toilets at Bride's Pool (Pat Sin Leng Country Park), Tai Tam Tuk (Tai Tam Country Park) and Pak Kung Au on Lantau Island (Lantau South Country Park), as well as the setting up of a viewing platform overlooking Po Pin Chau in Sai Kung East Country Park. Projects in the second phase include reconstruction of a public toilet and a refreshment kiosk at the Aberdeen Physically Handicapped and Able-bodied (P.H.A.B.) Barbecue Area, and provision of a viewing platform overlooking Aberdeen Upper Reservoir and associated P.H.A.B. recreation facilities (Aberdeen Country Park); provision of a new public toilet at Long Ke Wan Campsite (Sai Kung East Country Park); provision of a new public toilet at Twisk Campsite (Tai Lam Country Park); revitalisation of Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave; and provision of an outdoor free exploration field at the Lions Nature Education Centre.

In addition, the AFCD progressively commenced feasibility studies on the provision of glamping sites and treetop adventures, and the revitalisation of some wartime relics by converting them into open museums in the second half of last year, with a view to determining the potential site, design, mode of operation, fee level and operation requirements, etc. of these facilities. The AFCD will conduct activities to gather views of the public during the course of the studies. The AFCD anticipates that the aforementioned feasibility studies will be completed in 2024, and the recommendations in the study reports will be taken into account in the implementation of the relevant projects.

The Government has earmarked \$500 million in the 2021-22 Budget to support the implementation of the above projects. In the 2021-22 financial year, the AFCD created 2 time-limited posts lasting for a period of 5 years and took forward the related work through deployment of internal resources.

3. In response to the public's growing demand for visits to country parks, the AFCD is diverting visitors with different needs to various country parks as far as possible through improving the coverage of the hiking trail network and its linkage and implementing enhancement projects at country parks in different districts. In addition, the AFCD will also continue to monitor closely the visitor flow and environment of popular hiking trails or attractions, and when necessary, carry out appropriate improvement work such as repair of damaged trails, control of soil erosion at the trails, enhancement of vegetation coverage, enhancement of cleansing services, enrichment of information for visitors and promotion of public awareness on protecting the environment of country parks, etc. In planning the enhancement projects, the AFCD will select suitable sites for detailed studies, including taking into account the geographical and environmental setting and the existing ancillary facilities of these sites, etc. with a view to implementing the enhancement proposals at locations already with provision of infrastructure nearby

as far as practicable, thereby reducing the impact on the country park environment and other users.

4. For particularly popular countryside attractions, the AFCD has been communicating and co-ordinating closely with the relevant departments such as the Transport Department (TD), the Hong Kong Police Force and the Home Affairs Department regarding relevant transportation planning and arrangements, and has made corresponding improvement measures according to actual circumstances, such as the implementation of special transport arrangement at Tai Tong (Tai Lam Country Park) and Lau Shui Heung Reservoir (Pat Sin Leng Country Park) during the red leaves season every year. In addition, the TD has been closely monitoring public transport services to country parks and will work with public transport operators to strengthen existing services or introduce new services when necessary to meet passenger demand.
5. Country parks attracts about 12 million visitors every year. Through enhancing the recreational facilities in country parks, the Government aims to provide more quality outdoor recreational and educational facilities for the public, promote the message of caring for nature, improve the quality of life of the public, and at the same time promote green tourism. Although the Government has not assessed the socio-economic benefits to be brought about by the enhancement projects, the AFCD engaged a local university to conduct a consultancy study on ecosystem services during the period between 2020 and 2022, and the result indicated that country parks are of high value regarding recreation and tourism.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)018

(Question Serial No. 2563)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that in the next 2 to 3 years, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will gradually enhance facilities in country parks such as the provision of treetop adventure training. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. at present, whether assessment has been made on the structural condition of the trees, impact on the natural environment and commercial effectiveness; if yes, the progress made;
2. whether additional publicity resources will be allocated for taking forward the proposal to enhance public understanding of the nature; and
3. further to the above, with reference to the popular treetop adventure training overseas which mainly focuses on activities such as treetop walkways, tree-climbing, zip-lining and grass skiing, whether the Government will allocate additional education resources for examining the incorporation of elements of 5 senses training for children to stimulate their brain development through adventure games and courses?

Asked by: Hon LAM So-wai (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. and 3. In July last year, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) commissioned a consultancy to conduct a feasibility study on the provision of treetop adventure facilities in country parks with a view to determining the potential sites, design, mode of operation, fee level and operation requirements, etc. of those facilities. The consultant will carry out a detailed study on the potential sites, including Pak Tam Chung (Sai Kung West Country Park), Shing Mun (Shing Mun Country Park) and Shek Pik (Lantau South Country Park), so as to ensure that the operation of the relevant facilities will not pose adverse impacts on the environment of country parks. During the course of the study, the AFCD will gather views of the public in order to ensure that the new facilities can offer diversified adventure experiences to people of different age groups as appropriate. The aforesaid feasibility study is anticipated to be completed in 2024, and the

AFCD will further finalise the relevant design and construction work by taking into account the recommendations of the study report.

Besides, the AFCD and the Architectural Services Department are planning to provide an outdoor free exploration field at the Lions Nature Education Centre situated at Tsiu Hang Special Area, Sai Kung for children to explore and play freely through diversified play equipment in the natural environment. An array of children's play equipment, such as tree house, wood logs, climbing frame, dynamic balancing frame, balance rope, rope course and sound exploration devices, will be provided at the outdoor free exploration field to enrich the learning experience of children.

2. The AFCD attaches great importance to the publicity and education programmes of country parks. It continues to promote to the public the messages of nature appreciation and conservation, as well as the proper use of country park facilities through various channels. After the completion of the treetop adventure and other enhancement works on facilities, the AFCD will also promote the new recreational facilities to the public through suitable channels (e.g. social media).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)019

(Question Serial No. 0624)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

To enhance wild pig management, the Government introduced amendments to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) to increase the level of maximum penalty and introduce a fixed penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1 the latest projected population of wild pigs in each district of Hong Kong;
- 2 the manpower and expenditure involved in handling wild pigs over the past 3 years;
- 3 the advertising expenditure, promotional approaches and expenditure involved in public education and publicity on the prohibition of feeding wild pigs over the past 3 years in tabular form;
- 4 over the past 3 years, the number of (i) patrols conducted and (ii) prosecutions instituted by the Government in relation to the prohibition of feeding wild pigs, as well as the number of successful prosecutions and average penalties imposed;
- 5 the number of wild pig sightings or nuisance and injury to people caused by wild pigs over the past 3 years;
- 6 the number of wild pigs captured, injected with contraceptive vaccines, surgically sterilised and relocated to the countryside under the Pilot Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme launched by the Government over the past 3 years and the expenditure involved;
- 7 the number of wild pigs euthanised by the Government over the past 3 years and the expenditure involved; and
- 8 the most effective measure to control wild pigs in the Government's opinion.

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched a study in 2019 to estimate the number of wild pigs in the countryside using infrared camera traps. In 2020, the scope of the study was extended to cover more sites and different seasons. It was estimated that there were about 2 500 wild pigs in the countryside all over Hong Kong based on the wild pig population density. The AFCD is collecting and analysing

the latest data to estimate the latest number of wild pigs throughout the territory. It is aimed that the result will be available in the latter half of this year.

2. The manpower and expenditure involved in the work in relation to wild pig management by the AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21	32	17.8
2021-22	32	19.2
2022-23 (revised estimate)	34	21.0

3. The AFCD has all along been striving to educate the public and appeal to them not to feed wild animals. Over the past 3 years, in addition to commission the Hong Kong Ocean Park Conservation Foundation to provide eco-educational activities and guided tours at “the place at which the feeding of any wild animal is prohibited” (Feeding Ban Area) designated under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance) and carry out publicity and educational activities in kindergartens, primary schools and communities near feeding black spots with a view to educating public members of various age groups, especially students, on concepts about preventing wild animal nuisance and no-feeding of wild animals, the AFCD has also rolled out a new round of public education and publicity campaign in November 2021, which includes uploading promotional and educational information on social media, putting up posters at public transport and at stations. The AFCD will continue to strengthen public education on no-feeding of wild pigs and the risk behind feeding wild pigs through diverse channels. The expenditures on advertisements and other publicity and education programmes in relation to wild pigs by the AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on advertisements (\$ million)	Other expenditure on publicity and education (\$ million)
2020-21	0.3	1.2
2021-22	0.4	2.8
2022-23 (revised estimate)	5.6	1.6

4. Since 1999, 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 have been specified as the Feeding Ban Area under the Ordinance. Any person feeding wild animals in the Feeding Ban Area shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$10,000. Since the main cause of festering nuisance of wild pigs in recent years is intentional feeding, to step up the efforts to curb wild pig feeding activities and resolve the wild pig nuisance at source, the Feeding Ban Area has been expanded to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022. The AFCD will arrange patrols at wild animal feeding black spots from time to time and take prosecution actions against anyone who has contravened the prohibition of wild animal feeding, subject to sufficient evidence. The

AFCD will also review from time to time the patrol and enforcement arrangements in accordance with the actual circumstances, including stepping up blitz and enforcement operations where necessary, as well as collaborating with relevant departments to strengthen combatting the relevant activities. The information on patrols and prosecutions against illegal feeding of wild animals (including wild pigs) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Number of patrols conducted	572	577	702
Number of prosecutions instituted*	50	120	101
Number of successful prosecutions	31	90	79
Fine (\$)	300-2,000 (average: 559)	200-1,500 (average: 833)	300-1,500 (average: 601)

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

- The number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance and injury caused by wild pigs received by the AFCD over the past 3 years with a breakdown by district is tabulated as follows:

District	Year/Number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance (Number of reports on injury)		
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Central and Western	98 (0)	161 (6)	101 (0)
Eastern	136 (1)	150 (17)	81 (6)
Islands	10 (0)	10 (0)	9 (0)
Kowloon City	14 (0)	9 (0)	6 (0)
Kwai Tsing	30 (0)	33 (0)	26 (0)
Kwun Tong	9 (0)	17 (0)	29 (0)
North	49 (0)	35 (0)	39 (0)
Sai Kung	142 (0)	202 (0)	197 (5)
Sha Tin	107 (0)	119 (0)	121 (6)
Sham Shui Po	5 (0)	9 (0)	23 (0)
Southern	211 (3)	281 (8)	154 (3)
Tai Po	90 (0)	99 (0)	106 (1)
Tsuen Wan	43 (0)	22 (1)	67 (2)
Tuen Mun	52 (0)	48 (0)	53 (0)
Wan Chai	51 (0)	84 (1)	52 (0)
Wong Tai Sin	27 (0)	17 (0)	17 (0)
Yau Tsim Mong	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)
Yuen Long	39 (0)	54 (0)	26 (0)
Total	1 114 (4)	1 351 (33)	1 108 (23)

6. The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to administer contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilise wild pigs caught and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. However, the AFCD's investigations revealed that the progress of contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food from people even after being relocated to the countryside. To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has implemented new measures since 12 November 2021 to conduct regular wild pig capture operations, during which veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of drug. At the same time, the CCRP was ceased. Figures and expenditure in relation to the implementation of the CCRP in 2020-21 and 2021-22 during which the Programme was in effect are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pigs			Expenditure (\$ million)
	Captured	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised*	Relocated to countryside*	
2020-21	344	165	270	9.4
2021-22	370	109	219	8.6

* 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.

7. The number of wild pigs humanely dispatched by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pigs humanely dispatched^
2020-21	26
2021-22	105
2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)	330

^ Including wild pigs humanely dispatched due to injury.

As the capture and humane dispatch of wild pigs are part of the regular work in wild pig management, the AFCD does not have the breakdown of the relevant expenditure.

8. Wild pigs are native to Hong Kong. They are by nature wary of humans. However, once wild pigs get accustomed to being fed by humans which leads to a change in their behaviour, not only will they cause nuisance by proactively seeking food from humans, they will even develop aggressive behaviour, posing threats to public safety. To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, apart from educating the public and appealing to them not to feed wild animals, the AFCD will also take actions in two major directions. First of all, the AFCD will continue to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about wild pig sightings

in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments, and will humanely dispatch the wild pigs. In addition, to step up the efforts to curb wild pig feeding activities and resolve the wild pig nuisance at source, apart from expanding the Feeding Ban Area designated under the Ordinance to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022, the Government is considering further amending the Ordinance to increase the maximum penalty and introduce fixed penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals with a view to strengthening the deterrent effect. The relevant legislative amendments are aimed to be tabled to the Legislative Council for scrutiny within this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)020

(Question Serial No. 2259)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

In recent years, wild pigs have caused nuisance in Hong Kong. They wander into residential areas, pushed over litter containers for food, and even dashed out onto the road and injured passers-by. The Government tried to control the number of wild pigs through different means, including capture and contraception/relocation and humane dispatch. This year, the Government even expanded the Feeding Ban Area for wild animals to the entire territory of Hong Kong with the aim of alleviating wild pig nuisance. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. the number of complaints received in relation to wild pig sightings in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts respectively over the past 5 years;
2. the number of operations and wild pigs handled by capture and contraception, relocation and humane dispatch in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts respectively over the past 5 years;
3. before the implementation of the expansion of the Feeding Ban Area for wild animals, the number of complaints received in relation to the feeding of wild pigs in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts respectively;
4. after the implementation of the expansion of the Feeding Ban Area for wild animals, the number of enforcement actions taken in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts respectively;
5. specific actions taken in the past year to prevent wild pigs from wandering into housing estates and specific actions to be taken in the future; and
6. the staff establishment involved in handling wild pigs in the 18 districts across the territory.

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. The number of wild pig sightings or nuisance cases received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts over the past 5 year is tabulated as follows:

District	Number of wild pig sightings or nuisance cases				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Sha Tin	87	111	107	119	121
Tai Po	75	82	90	99	106

2. The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to administer contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilise wild pigs captured and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. However, the AFCD's investigations revealed that the progress of contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food from people even after being relocated to the countryside. To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has implemented new measures since 12 November 2021 to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about wild pig sightings in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments. During the capture operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of drug.

The number of operations conducted under the CCRP in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts and the number of wild pigs involved between 2018-19 and 2021-22 (as at November 2021) are tabulated as follows:

District	Number of operations (number of wild pigs involved)				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Sha Tin	7 (22)	20 (51)	16 (40)	10 (12)	N/A
Tai Po	3 (5)	4 (7)	16 (50)	12 (41)	N/A

The number of wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations conducted in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts and the number of wild pigs involved between November 2021 and February 2023 are tabulated as follows:

District	Number of wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations (number of wild pigs involved)	
	2021-22	2022-23
Sha Tin	3 (3)	15 (35)
Tai Po	4 (9)	8 (19)

3. With effect from 31 December 2022, the area of “the place at which the feeding of any wild animal is prohibited” (Feeding Ban Area) under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance) has been expanded to the entire territory of Hong Kong with a view to stepping up the efforts to curb the feeding activities of wild animals such as wild pigs. Prior to the expansion of the Feeding Ban Area, the AFCD received

42 and 12 complaints about wild animal feeding (including wild pigs) in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts respectively in 2022-23.

4. Since the expansion of the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong, as at February 2023, the AFCD has instituted 47 prosecutions for illegal feeding of wild animals (including wild pigs) in Sha Tin District and no relevant prosecutions have been instituted in Tai Po District.
5. In addition to continuing to conduct wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations by the AFCD, to step up the efforts to curb feeding of wild animals such as wild pigs, the Government is considering amending the Ordinance to increase the maximum penalty and introduce fixed penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals to strengthen the deterrent effect. Relevant legislative amendments are aimed to be tabled to the Legislative Council for scrutiny within this year. Besides, the AFCD continues to strengthen its education and publicity through various channels to appeal to the public not to feed wild animals.
6. At present, there are 34 staff members of the AFCD responsible for wild pig management work in all districts of Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)021****(Question Serial No. 1446)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

The indicators for seedlings produced and seedlings planted have decreased for consecutive years. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- the statistics on seedlings produced and planted over the past 5 years in tabular form;
- the reasons for the sustained decrease in both indicators; and
- whether the Department has drawn up any specific measures to increase both figures?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)Reply:

- The statistics on seedlings produced and planted over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Seedlings produced (number)	396 700	312 300	228 600	270 200	259 000
Seedlings planted (number) ^{Note}	396 700	298 100	220 100	261 300	249 000

Note: The seedlings produced were mainly planted in country parks. Since 2019, about 10 000 seedlings were provided to other departments for greening purpose.

- and c) Tree planting is one of the major duties of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in conserving the environment of country parks. The estimated figures on seedlings to be produced and planted every year by the AFCD are based on the actual needs. In the early stage of afforestation in country parks, the tree planting strategy was to plant a large quantity of trees to provide a vegetation cover quickly at barren hillsides for the improvement of landscape and prevention of soil erosion. After decades of extensive tree planting, most country park areas are now covered by vegetation. With the increasing public awareness towards hill fire prevention, reports of hill fires

(especially those of a larger scale) in country parks have been kept at a low level in recent years and the demand for tree planting to rehabilitate areas affected by hill fires has dropped. The current objective of tree planting in country parks focuses on improving the quality rather than the quantity of plantations, and shifts from soil erosion control to enhancement of the ecological value and biodiversity of woodlands. The AFCD enhances the quality, ecological value and biodiversity of woodlands in country parks through measures such as producing and planting more seedlings of native species that can provide better food and habitats for local wildlife, as well as enhancing plantations in country parks, including the implementation of Country Parks Plantation Enrichment Programme, the thinning of aging exotic tree species and planting of native tree seedlings.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0501)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Hong Kong, what were the specific initiatives, manpower and expenditure involved over the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) implemented in Hong Kong since late 2016 aims to conserve Hong Kong's biodiversity and support sustainable development. Apart from short and medium-term measures, the BSAP also includes some long-term and on-going tasks.

Key measures implemented by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) under the BSAP in 2020-21 to 2022-23 include:

- (i) enhancing the existing conservation measures, which include enhancing habitat management in protected areas, implementing species action plans for Incense Tree and Chinese Pangolin, improving identification and control of invasive alien species, and the full banning of local ivory trade to enhance the protection of endangered species;
- (ii) mainstreaming biodiversity to prompt the public and private sectors to take biodiversity into consideration in relevant policies, programmes, works and projects;
- (iii) improving knowledge on biodiversity, such as monitoring and studying important habitats and species, developing a habitat map and a biodiversity information hub, as well as commissioning a study on ecosystem services; and
- (iv) enhancing public awareness and participation in biodiversity through publicity and education activities to encourage the public to practise conservation.

The number of staff and expenditure involved in the implementation of the BSAP are tabulated as follows:

Year	Total expenditure (\$ million)	Number of staff (persons)
2020-21	40.1	29
2021-22	38.9	26
2022-23 (revised estimate)	32.6	26

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)023****(Question Serial No. 0502)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will introduce policies to enhance the facilities in country parks in the coming 2 to 3 years. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of inspections conducted at country parks by the AFCD over the past 3 years;
2. the number of warnings and summonses issued to those visitors who violated the rules and caused damage to the country parks respectively;
3. the amount of litter collected in country park areas over the past 3 years; and
4. the education and publicity work that has been done to call on countryside visitors to care for the nature?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)Reply:

1. The number of patrols conducted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in country parks and special areas throughout the territory over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of patrols
2020	13 362
2021	14 137
2022	13 024

2. Over the past 3 years, the AFCD instituted 3 117 prosecutions and issued 717 written warnings under the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations (Cap. 208A), which mainly involved unauthorised possession or driving of bicycles or vehicles in country parks or special areas, entry of closed sites and illegal camping, etc. The number of prosecutions instituted and written warnings issued over the past 3 years are tabulated respectively as follows:

Year	Number of prosecutions	Number of written warnings
2020	833	123
2021	1 140	309
2022	1 144	285

3. The total volume of litter collected by the AFCD in country park areas over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Total volume of litter (tonnes)
2020	2 316
2021	1 808
2022	2 054

4. The AFCD continues to promote the messages of keeping the environment of country parks clean and conserving the nature to countryside visitors through various channels, including displaying promotional banners and posters at suitable locations in country parks, promoting through social media as well as placing advertisements on public transport. In addition, the AFCD has been implementing the “Take Your Litter Home” publicity and education programme together with green and hiking groups since 2015 and has installed water filling stations in country parks to encourage the public to bring their own water bottles. Since 2021, the AFCD has also organised an array of activities under the theme of “Hiking Etiquette” to promote good outdoor practice, culture and etiquette, and employed green ambassadors to promote the various aspects of “Hiking Etiquette”, including “Respect Nature”, “Prevent Hillfire” and “Take Your Litter Home”, to the general public at popular hiking spots.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)024****(Question Serial No. 0506)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Since the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 was fully implemented, the import, re-export and commercial possession of ivory have been banned. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. 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 over the past 3 years (please set out cases of ivory smuggling separately); and
2. the quantity of ivory forfeited over the past 3 years; 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.: 15)Reply:

1. The statistics on cases involving illegal imports and exports in contravention of the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	2020	2021	2022
Number of cases	276	306	291
Number of persons arrested [#]	128	151	149
Number of persons prosecuted [#]	25	34	24
Number of persons convicted [#]	45	29	28
Maximum penalty (imprisonment)	27 months	6 months	6 weeks (suspended sentence of 18 months)
Maximum penalty (fine/\$)	300,000	60,000	3,000

[#] As prosecution takes time, persons arrested might not be prosecuted and convicted within the same year.

Among which the statistics involving illegal imports and exports of ivory is tabulated as follows:

Year	2020	2021	2022
Number of cases	2	1	21
Number of persons arrested [#]	1	0	19
Number of persons prosecuted [#]	0	0	19
Number of persons convicted [#]	1	0	19
Maximum penalty (imprisonment)	24 months	Not applicable	6 weeks (suspended sentence of 18 months)
Maximum penalty (fine/\$)	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

[#] As prosecution takes time, persons arrested might not be prosecuted and convicted within the same year.

2. In 2020, 2021 and 2022, 0.07, 1.13 and 6.93 kg of ivory were seized respectively. Since 2014, a total of 29.5 tonnes of confiscated ivory have been disposed of by incineration. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have information on the estimated value of the ivory involved. The existing ivory stockpile under government custody is about 11.8 tonnes. Apart from saving some ivory for scientific, education, enforcement or identification purposes, the remaining ivory will be incinerated in batches after completion of the necessary legal procedures. The estimated expenditure for ivory incineration is \$80,000 and the manpower required will be absorbed by the existing resources 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 antique ivory, the Government has fully banned the import, re-export, and commercial possession of ivory. Traders possessing antique ivory for commercial purposes must provide evidence, such as the certifying document issued under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, a qualified appraisal or scientifically approved aging methods for determining the origin and age of the article, so as to prove that the concerned ivory meets the definition of antique ivory. Since the implementation of the Amendment Ordinance, the AFCD has strengthened its efforts in market inspections, monitoring of online trading platforms and intelligence collection. In case of doubt on whether an ivory article is antique ivory, the AFCD will carry out scientific assessment, such as 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

EEB(E)025

(Question Serial No. 0530)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Last December, the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 agreed on a set of global targets for reversing biodiversity loss by 2030. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the relevant expenditure involved in conserving biodiversity? Are sufficient resources reserved for achieving the aforesaid targets?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2021 (BSAP) implemented since late 2016 has made substantial achievements so far, including designation of new marine parks, establishment of the Countryside Conservation Office to co-ordinate the conservation and sustainable development of the countryside, complete ban on local ivory trade, development of the Long Valley Nature Park, launch of the online Hong Kong Biodiversity Information Hub, and promotion of biodiversity mainstreaming. The Government will continue to carry out the long-term and ongoing initiatives under the BSAP, including compiling information, funding research projects, conducting public education and promotion, with a view to conserving Hong Kong's biodiversity and supporting sustainable development. From 2016-17 to 2022-23, the expenditure (including the revised estimate for 2022-23) involved in the implementation of the BSAP by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department was about \$290 million.

The 15th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the "Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework" (Framework) in December 2022, which included a set of targets to be achieved from 2022 through 2030. The targets laid down in the Framework are global in nature. Each Party would contribute to attaining the global targets in accordance with its national circumstances, priorities and capabilities. The Government is reviewing the implementation of the BSAP, and will during the process, draw reference from the latest national and international measures in relation to biodiversity including the targets laid down in the Framework, and consider factors such as the actual local situation and resource allocation. The Government will, subject to the actual needs, devote resources appropriately to the implementation of various measures under the BSAP. The

Government also plans to report the implementation situation and the way forward of the BSAP to the Panel on Environmental Affairs of the Legislative Council later this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)026

(Question Serial No. 0237)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

A vast amount of seedlings are planted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department every year to enhance the landscape of Hong Kong and rehabilitate areas damaged by hill fires and soil erosion. In this connection, please advise on the following:

- (a) the reasons for the Government's estimate for production and planting of 230 000 and 220 000 seedlings respectively in 2023-24 being smaller than the actual number in 2021 and 2022, and the cost to be involved; and
- (b) the factors that determine the number of seedlings to be planted every year.

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

- (a) and (b) Tree planting is one of the major duties of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in conserving the environment of country parks. The estimated figures on seedlings to be produced and planted every year by the AFCD are based on the actual needs. In the early stage of afforestation in country parks, the strategy was to plant a large quantity of trees to provide a vegetation cover quickly at barren hillsides for the improvement of landscape and prevention of soil erosion. After decades of extensive tree planting, most country park areas are now covered by vegetation. With the increasing public awareness towards hill fire prevention, reports of hill fires (especially those of a larger scale) in country parks have been kept at a low level in recent years and the demand for tree planting to rehabilitate areas affected by hill fires has dropped. The current objective of tree planting in country parks focuses on improving the quality rather than the quantity of plantations, and shifts from soil erosion control to enhancement of the ecological value and biodiversity of woodlands. The AFCD enhances the quality, ecological value and biodiversity of woodlands in country park through measures such as producing and planting more seedlings of native species that can provide better food and habitats for local wildlife, as well as enhancing plantations in country parks, including the implementation of Country

Parks Plantation Enrichment Programme, the thinning of aging exotic tree species and planting of native tree seedlings. In 2023-24, the cost involved in the production and planting of seedlings is about \$12.2 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)027

(Question Serial No. 0956)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

In recent months, the media has reported that members of the public in many districts are feeding rodents and pigeons, which may worsen the problem of rodents and pigeons. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) over the past 3 financial years, the total number of crime reports received in relation to illegal feeding of wild animals; among them, the number of prosecutions instituted, cases where law enforcement was not carried out, and the respective year-on-year changes;
- (2) the current manpower and resources for investigating and prosecuting the said cases; whether assessment has been made to ascertain if the current staff establishment is sufficient to cope with the increasing number of cases of illegal feeding of wild animals; and
- (3) the measures that the Government has been taken to prohibit and eradicate illegal feeding behaviours so as to prevent hygiene problems in all the districts from worsening?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

- (1) Since 1999, 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 at which the feeding of wild animals is prohibited (Feeding Ban Area) under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance). The Feeding Ban Area has been expanded to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022. Any person feeding wild animals in the Feeding Ban Area will be liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000 upon conviction. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) arranges patrols at wild animal feeding black spots from time to time and takes prosecution actions against anyone who has contravened the prohibition of wild animal feeding, subject to sufficient evidence.

Over the past 3 years, the information on the number of reports, prosecutions instituted and successful prosecutions against illegal feeding of wild animals is tabulated as follows:

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as at Feb 2023)
Number of reports	32	48	74
Number of prosecutions instituted*	50	120	101
Number of successful prosecutions	31	90	79

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

- (2) & (3) In 2022-23, the number of staff and expenditure involved in fauna conservation work of the AFCD were 64 staff members and about \$60 million (revised estimate) respectively. As the investigation and law enforcement work in relation to illegal feeding of wild animals forms part of the fauna conservation work, the AFCD does not have the relevant breakdown. The AFCD will cope with the enforcement work through internal redeployment of resources.

To strengthen combatting illegal feeding of wild animals, the AFCD will review from time to time the patrol and enforcement arrangements in accordance with the actual circumstances, including stepping up blitz operations and enforcement where necessary, as well as enhancing the collaboration with relevant departments. The Government is considering amending the Ordinance to increase the maximum penalty and introduce fixed penalty for illegal feeding of wild animals with a view to strengthening the deterrent effect. Since feral pigeons are not wild animals defined under the Ordinance, the Government will also consider regulating the feeding of feral pigeons through amending the Ordinance. The relevant legislative amendments are aimed to be tabled to the Legislative Council for scrutiny within this year. In addition, the AFCD will also educate the public about the message of no-feeding of wild animals and feral pigeons through various publicity channels, such as organising roving exhibitions, setting up promotional street counters at congregating spots of feral pigeons, displaying banners and setting up a dedicated website, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)192

(Question Serial No. 3550)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding Mr. B, the mascot of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the expenditure on design, publicity and promotion of the said mascot and the operating expenses involved;
- (2) the number of publicity materials produced and publicity and promotional activities organised using the image of the mascot over the past 5 years; and
- (3) whether assessment has been made on the public awareness of the said mascot; if so, the criteria, methods, cycle and result of the assessment; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) commissioned a contractor to assist in the promotion of the 3-month campaign of the Hong Kong Biodiversity Festival (HKBF) in 2016. The contract expenditure totalled about \$900,000, covering services such as recommending and operating the promotion strategies (including the design of Mr. B as the mascot), designing pamphlets and the website for the HKBF, as well as launching a publicity campaign on Facebook. Since the creation of Mr. B as the mascot to enhance the promotional effect is only one of the promotional strategies, the AFCD does not have a breakdown of the expenditure in this regard.
- (2) Over the past 5 years, the AFCD generally published 2 to 3 posts on the Facebook page of Mr. B Nature Classroom every week. In the posts, the mascot Mr. B introduced biodiversity knowledge and promoted relevant activities in the capacity of an education ambassador. Every year, there were about 3 occasions on which Mr. B was employed to produce promotional materials or attend promotional events.

- (3) Mr. B, the AFCD's mascot, mainly appears on the Facebook page of Mr. B Nature Classroom, which has accumulated around 26 000 "likes". The AFCD has not made any separate assessment on the public awareness of Mr. B.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)193****(Question Serial No. 3521)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Natural Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the sustainable development of Lantau, please provide in tabular form the timetable (indicating quarter and year) drawn up by the Government for implementing the North Lantau Marine Park project. If the timetable for the project is not yet available, please provide the reason.

	Commencement and completion dates of consultancy study expected to be/ already commenced	Anticipated date of the Government's announcement to the public and the Legislative Council	Anticipated timetable of the Government for provision of funding and completion of statutory procedures
Implementation of the North Lantau Marine Park project			

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)Reply:

The Government's timetable for designating the proposed North Lantau Marine Park (NLMP) is set out as follows:

Commencement and completion dates of consultancy study expected to be/already commenced	Anticipated date of the Government's announcement to the public and the Legislative Council	Anticipated timetable of the Government for provision of funding and completion of statutory procedures
The proposed NLMP serves as a mitigation measure for the Hong Kong International Airport Three-Runway System Project, as stipulated in the related environmental impact assessment report. The Airport Authority Hong Kong has completed the relevant consultancy study for the establishment of NLMP.	The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department gazetted a draft map of the proposed NLMP in accordance with the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476) on 3 March this year. The map is available for public inspection within 60 days from the gazettal date.	The statutory procedures for designating the proposed NLMP are planned for completion next year. The Government will deploy resources to handle the relevant work as required.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**CSTB167****(Question Serial No. 1059)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and TourismQuestion:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24 under Head 132: Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau that the Government will strengthen the appeal of green tourism in Hong Kong through upgrading the facilities in the Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP). In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) the Government's recurrent expenditures and staff establishment involved in the HKWP over the past 3 years respectively;
- 2) the Government's expenditures involved in the repair and maintenance of the HKWP over the past 3 years; and
- 3) whether the Government will plan to update or upgrade the facilities in the HKWP in order to enhance its competitiveness; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)Reply:

- 1) The recurrent expenditures and staff establishment of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) on the Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Recurrent Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2020-21	69.5	54
2021-22	70.9	54
2022-23 (Revised estimate)	66.9	54

- 2) The expenditures for repair and maintenance of HKWP by AFCD in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Repair and Maintenance Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21	11.5
2021-22	12.8
2022-23 (Revised estimate)	13.3

- 3) To enhance the appeal of HKWP as an eco-tourism attraction and offer better visitors' experience in the wetland, the Tourism Commission and AFCD have obtained the approval of the Finance Committee of Legislative Council for a funding of \$135 million in 2021 for taking forward the plan of upgrading the exhibition and visitor facilities in HKWP. To implement the plan, AFCD has commissioned a consultancy to carry out detailed design of the thematic exhibitions on wetland animals and plants and their habitats as well as related visitor facilities by making reference to standards of international museums and modes of exhibition. AFCD has completed the aforementioned detailed design work, and is conducting an open tender exercise for the selection of a suitable contractor for the provision of exhibit fabrication and installation services to progressively renew the thematic exhibition galleries and upgrade other visitor facilities in the park. In parallel, AFCD is also developing and designing new educational activities and teaching resources for HKWP to tie in with the upgraded exhibition and visitor facilities.

- End -