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

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in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26**

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)007

(Question Serial No. 1278)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the regulation of animal trading and dog breeding activities, would the Government advise this Committee of the following information over the past 3 years:

- (a) the manpower and expenditure involved each year;
- (b) the number of licences issued each year;
- (c) the number of dogs bred locally each year; and the breeds of the dogs;
- (d) the number of cats and dogs permitted to be imported and exported; the number of imported cats and dogs subject to quarantine and the average quarantine period; the number of smuggled animals each year;
- (e) the number of cats and dogs traded each year by animal traders who were required to provide the relevant transaction records upon request from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department;
- (f) the numbers of complaints received and substantiated cases each year; the respective number of prosecutions and the penalties imposed;
- (g) the number of regular inspections, surprise inspections and decoy operations conducted each year; and
- (h) the details regarding the requirement that licensed cat traders have to maintain records of the source of all the cats for sale and implant a microchip in all the cats for sale, etc, starting from 1 April 2024, the number of cats that have been implanted with microchips and the percentage in the total number of local cats?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a) Animal trading and dog breeding activities are regulated by the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations (Cap. 139B). The manpower and expenditure involved in the relevant work by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	20.0	30
2023-24	21.4	30
2024-25 (revised estimate)	24.8	30

- (b) The numbers of Animal Trader Licences (ATLs), Dog Breeder Licences (DBLs) and one-off permits issued by AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of licences issued			
	ATL	DBL (category A)	DBL (category B)	One-off permit
2022	340	12	22	0
2023	343	9	18	0
2024	285	5	22	0

- (c) The number of dogs bred by local licensed dog breeding establishments over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of dogs bred by licensed dog breeding establishments
2022	2 536
2023	2 245
2024	1 663

The breeds of dogs were mainly Poodle, Shiba Inu, Bichon Frise, Pomeranian and Corgi.

- (d) The import of live animals is regulated by the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance (Cap. 139) and the Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421). The importers must obtain permits from AFCD prior to importation of live animals. The number of cats and dogs imported with permits issued by AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of cats and dogs imported
2022	3 229
2023	4 465
2024	4 447

Export of animals does not require AFCD's approval in general. However, AFCD will issue animal health certificates as necessary. The number of animal health certificates issued by AFCD for export of cats and dogs over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of animal health certificates issued[#] (Cats and dogs)
2022	11 939
2023	8 624
2024	6 828

[#] An animal health certificate may cover more than one animal. AFCD does not have a breakdown on the number of cats and dogs exported.

For importation of cats and dogs, AFCD classifies places into different groups according to different risks of rabies, with reference to information about the surveillance of animal diseases from the World Organisation for Animal Health. Since 1 December 2024, AFCD has introduced Group IIIA for exporting countries/places, thereby increasing the number of groups from 3 to 4. Cats and dogs imported from Groups I and II places are exempt from quarantine, provided that relevant requirements can be fulfilled. For cats and dogs imported from Group IIIA countries/places, their quarantine period has been significantly shortened from 120 days to 30 days upon their arrival in Hong Kong, provided that they meet the relevant quarantine requirements. The original Group III has been renamed as Group IIIB. Since the incubation period of rabies can be up to several months, the quarantine period for importing cats and dogs from Group IIIB countries/places remains no less than 120 days.

The numbers of cats and dogs imported from Group III countries/places over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Cats	Dogs
2022	37	30
2023	52	56
2024	52	51

The quarantine period for all the cats and dogs above was 120 days.

The numbers of illegally imported live animals seized by AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Cats/ Dogs	Other mammals	Birds	Pet reptiles	Food poultry	Food reptiles
2022	0	3	0	1 096	0	0
2023	15	5	757	803	5	6
2024	11	5	416	188	0	4

- (e) The numbers of cats and dogs sold by animal traders and breeders over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of dogs sold	Number of cats sold
2022	4 469	4 225
2023	3 598	4 231
2024	2 530	1 436

- (f) The number of complaints received by AFCD in relation to animal trading and breeding activities, the number of prosecutions instituted, as well as the penalties imposed over the past 3 years are as follows:

Year	Complaints received (cases)	Successful prosecutions for breach of licensing conditions		Successful prosecutions for trading animals without a valid licence or permit	
		Number of cases	Fine (\$)	Number of cases	Fine (\$)
2022	340	10	1,800 to 2,000	21	2,500 to 10,000
2023	385	20	1,500 to 5,000	34	1,000 to 20,000
2024	360	19	2,500 to 5,000	37	1,000 to 8,000

- (g) The number of inspections (including routine ones, surprise checks and decoy operations) conducted on animal trading and dog breeding activities over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of inspections
2022	4 261
2023	4 964
2024	4 048

- (h) To safeguard animal welfare and public health, AFCD has implemented the code of practice and licensing conditions applicable to licensed animal traders selling cats to require licensees to maintain records of the source of all the cats for sale or offered for sale and implant a microchip in all these cats, and raised the facility requirements for licensed trading premises, such as specifying the minimum area and size of each enclosure in the premises to provide cats with appropriate space to move around. Between April and December 2024, a total of 767 cats implanted with microchips were sold by licensed animal traders. AFCD does not keep statistics of local cats, thus unable to estimate the percentage of cats implanted with microchips in the total number of local cats.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)008

(Question Serial No. 1765)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In the past year, many serious incidents of cruelty to animals happened in Hong Kong. Over the past 3 years, regarding the handling of animal cruelty in Hong Kong, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the manpower, expenditure and specific details of the work;
- (b) the total number of reported cases of suspected animal cruelty received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD);
- (c) the number of successful prosecutions instituted under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (the Ordinance) and the penalty imposed on each case;
- (d) the number of applications for review of cases under the Ordinance lodged by the Department of Justice (DoJ) on the grounds that the penalties imposed were too lenient and the results of these appeals;
- (e) the number of cases in which DoJ decided not to institute prosecution under the Ordinance and the details; and
- (f) the manpower and preparatory work of AFCD in reviewing the Ordinance and the legislative timetable?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

- (a) Upon receipt of reports on suspected animal cruelty cases, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and/or the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) will undertake investigations and initiate prosecutions subject to sufficient evidence. AFCD will also conduct relevant inspections as necessary. The manpower and expenditure involved in handling animal cruelty cases by AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (Number of staff)
2022-23	2.3	17
2023-24	3.0	17
2024-25 (revised estimate)	3.6	17

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

Year	Number of reports on suspected animal cruelty received*	Number of successful prosecutions	Penalties imposed	
			Fine (\$)	Range of imprisonment
2022	263	20	1,000 to 3,000	8 days to 10 months
2023	441	23	5,000 to 6,000	10 days to 1 year
2024	494	16 [#]	500 to 4,500 [#]	14 days to 6 months [#]

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

[#] Prosecution-related figure as at September 2024.

- (d) Over the past 3 years, there was no application for review of sentence for offence cases under the Ordinance lodged by the Department of Justice (DoJ) on the grounds that the penalties imposed were too lenient.
- (e) Over the past 3 years, there were 18 cases in relation to the Ordinance in which DoJ decided not to institute prosecution. Relevant details were not available in the records of DoJ.
- (f) The Government has been studying amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169). In preparing the Bill, it is necessary to consult the relevant stakeholders again on some of the proposals, and after collating the views, we will finalise the proposals and complete the law drafting work promptly. Once the work is completed, we will introduce the proposed legislative amendments into the Legislative Council.

When finalising the proposed legislative amendments, AFCD will assess the work involved in public education and enforcement of the legislation in order to arrange suitable manpower and resources for handling the work.

One of the directions being explored in the legislative amendment exercise is to impose a positive “Duty of Care” on persons responsible for animals, requiring

them to take proper care of the welfare of animals. In this connection, AFCD has launched a series of promotional campaigns for “Duty of Care” for public education through various channels such as thematic website, social media and roving exhibitions, including preparing a series of posts on social media to share the message of “how to take proper care of animals” in order to foster public understanding of “Duty of Care” and its importance.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)009

(Question Serial No. 1766)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the provision of subventions to local animal welfare organisations (AWOs) as well as animal welfare, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the number of successful applications for subventions, including the projects of successful applications, the amounts of subvention sought by the AWOs and the amount of subvention that they have been granted over the past 3 years in tabular form;
- (b) the expenditure involved in public education and publicity activities to promote animal welfare in each of the past 3 years;
- (c) the number and details of collaboration with AWOs in each of the past 3 years and the plans for collaboration in the coming year;
- (d) the number of animals handed to AWOs by AFCD each year as well as the successful rate and number of rehoming;
- (e) how AFCD monitors the operation of and use of subvention by the AWOs;
- (f) whether consideration will be given to extending the scope of subvention to cover rent payment; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;
- (g) the number of non-profit-making AWOs currently operating rehoming centres on government sites (please set out the specific locations and size of the sites); and
- (h) the number of "animal boarding establishments" granted with planning permission in Hong Kong at present and their locations as well as whether the Government has conducted inspections at these establishments?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

- (a) The relevant information on applications for subventions received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) from animal welfare organisations (AWOs) over the past 3 years is set out at **Annex**.
- (b) The expenditure of AFCD on public education and publicity programmes to promote animal welfare over the past 3 years is tabulated below:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	21.3
2023-24	22.3
2024-25 (revised estimate)	19.3

- (c) Over the past 3 years, AFCD and AWOs jointly organised a total of 12 events (3 in 2022, 2 in 2023 and 7 in 2024), such as pet adoption days and carnivals, to promote animal welfare and rehoming. In 2025, AFCD will continue to organise different events with AWOs for promoting animal welfare and rehoming.
- (d) The number of animals handed by AFCD to AWOs for rehoming and the rehoming rate in each of the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Number of animals handed by AFCD to AWOs for rehoming (rehoming rate⁺)		
	Dogs	Cats	Other animals[*]
2022	348 (47.9%)	151 (49.0%)	159 (11.0%)
2023	319 (38.3%)	174 (50.0%)	123 (2.1%)
2024	328 (41.0%)	155 (39.9%)	96 (5.4%)

⁺ 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 etc.

- (e) AFCD will verify the payment receipts submitted by AWOs and partner AWOs to confirm that the expenditures are spent in compliance with the purposes of subvention applications. Besides, AFCD will visit the relevant facilities of AWOs during the assessment of applications as partnering AWOs and visit them regularly afterwards.
- (f) At present, AFCD accepts subvention applications from AWOs for various animal welfare related project, which do not cover recurrent expenditures such as rentals and staff remuneration. Many AWOs mainly rely on foster homes to take care of animals to be adopted so as to provide more opportunities for the animals to interact with people thereby increasing their chance of adoption. AWOs in need of premises running rehoming centres may apply for use of vacant government sites (including vacant school premises) under the management of the Lands Department that are available for leasing by non-governmental organisations for community purposes on a short-term basis. Non-profit making AWOs may also apply for subsidies from a funding scheme run by the Development Bureau (DEVB) to set up rehoming centres on suitable government sites.
- (g) Currently, subsidies have been provided to 3 AWOs by DEVB for building rehoming centres on 2 government sites in Ko Po San Tsuen, Kam Tin and 1 government site in San Ping Circuit, Tuen Mun respectively. One of the rehoming centres with a capacity of about 50 animals has commenced service in late 2021; another rehoming centre with a capacity of about 150 animals has commenced service in early 2024; and the

construction works of another rehoming centre with a capacity of about 125 animals is expected to complete by the end of this year or early next year. The areas of these 3 sites are 1 050 m², 1 370 m² and 4 200 m² respectively.

- (h) As at February 2024, a total of 107 premises were holding valid animal boarding establishment licences issued by AFCD under the Public Health (Animals) (Boarding Establishment) Regulations (Cap. 139I), of which 16, 36 and 55 were located on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and the New Territories respectively. AFCD deploys staff to conduct regular and surprise inspections of licensed animal boarding establishments to ensure that such premises are in compliance with the licensing requirements.

(i) Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2021-22 and released in 2022-23[#])

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount released (\$)
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.

Due to a cheque processing problem, \$246,205 of the amount granted in 2020-21 was successfully released in 2022-23.

(ii) Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2022-23 and released in 2023-24[^])

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount released (\$)
1	Cheung Chau Animal Care	Management of stray animals in Cheung Chau and promotion of animal welfare	82,000	35,000
2	Hong Kong Animal Adoption Centre	To provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	376,000	80,000
3	Hong Kong Dog Rescue	Adult dog rehome and long-term dog care scheme	940,035	180,000
4	Hong Kong Society of Herpetology Foundation	Animal rehome, rescue and education programme 2023	150,000	79,728
5	Hong Kong Rabbit Society	Rabbit education, welfare and medical scheme	265,000	60,000
6	Kirsten's Zoo	Ongoing rescue of animals, animal rehome scheme and catteries improvement scheme	330,000	112,610
7	Lifelong Animal Protection (LAP)	LAP Companion Animal Rescue and Education Centre (CARES)	375,000	100,000
8	Nursing Centre for Rescue of Abandoned Pets Limited (NCAP)	Talks on comprehensive health care for animals	72,000	0*
9	Paws United Charity	Medical cost for an animal rehome scheme and publicity expenditure on rehoming activities	483,600	241,894
10	Sai Kung Stray Friends	To provide preventive care for animals rescued and pending adoption	244,400	128,073
11	Society for Abandoned Animals	Refurbishment works for ward No. 2 and outdoor playground	578,000	300,000
12	Team for Animals in Lantau South (TAILS)	Animal rehome scheme	625,000	0 [#]
Total			4,521,035	1,317,305

* Not eligible for application for subvention for AWOs.

No subvention was released due to failure to submit a work report and proof of expenditure in accordance with the requirements.

[^] Due to a cheque processing problem, \$178,174 of the amount granted in 2021-22 was successfully released in 2023-24.

(iii) Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2023-24 and released in 2024-25)

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount released (\$)
1	Animals Asia Foundation	Professor Paws Programme, including the production of educational leaflets	872,298	0 [#]
2	Cheung Chau Animal Care	Management of stray animals in Cheung Chau and promotion of animal welfare	82,000	35,000
3	Hong Kong Animal Adoption Centre	To provide preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	284,000	80,000
4	Hong Kong Dog Rescue	Adult dog rehome and long-term dog care scheme	998,020	208,170
5	Hong Kong Rabbit Society	Rabbit medical scheme	280,000	60,000
6	Hong Kong Saving Cat and Dog Association	Homebound Animals - Forever Families- to provide medical care, preventive care and food for animals pending adoption	1,370,000	64,379
7	Hong Kong Society of Herpetology Foundation	Animal rehome, rescue and education programme 2024	130,000	122,493
8	Kirsten's Zoo	Ongoing rescue of animals, animal rehome scheme	434,000	99,194
9	Paws United Charity	Medical cost for an animal rehome scheme and publicity expenditure on rehoming activities	830,000	350,000
10	Sai Kung Stray Friends	To provide preventive care for animals rescued and pending adoption	244,400	135,000
11	Society for Abandoned Animals	To create 2D graphic animation for animal welfare education	230,000	120,000
12	Team for Animals in Lantau South (TAILS)	Animal rehome scheme	350,000	63,017
13	Animals Volunteer Charity Limited	Give Pets A Home and Love Rehoming Programme	225,500	0 [^]
14	Hong Kong Bunny Rescue Limited	Regular workshops and talks on rabbit keeping	300,000	0 [*]
15	Cats' Zone Animals Charity Limited	Take Care of My Pet and Others' Pets – cat rescue, medical care and neuter-return programme	500,000	0 [*]
Total			7,130,218	1,337,253

- * Not eligible for application for subvention for AWOs.
- # No subvention was released due to failure to complete the project before the deadline and provide a half-year/full-year report and proof of expenditure.
- ^ The application was not accepted due to failure to submit a detailed plan and information.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)010

(Question Serial No. 1767)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the animal management work of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department over the past 3 years, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) in tabular form, the number of animals received and their respective types (including animals confiscated, caught and surrendered by owners) each year, as well as the ways of handling them (including animals reclaimed by owners, rehomed and euthanised);
- (b) the number of animals received by each animal management centre each year; the average detention period for animals;
- (c) the number of animals neutered by animal type;
- (d) the manpower and turnover rates of each animal management centre;
- (e) the operational expenditure of each animal management centre;
- (f) the number of inspections conducted as well as enforcement actions and prosecutions taken each year;
- (g) the number of dog training courses organised for dog owners, and the details and number of participants; whether it will introduce relevant courses for other animals such as cats, tortoises and rabbits; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (a) The number and respective types of animals received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years as well as the ways they were handled are tabulated at **Annex**.
- (b) The number of animals in various animal management centres (AMCs) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

AMC	The number of animals received								
	2022			2023			2024		
	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*
Hong Kong Animal Management Centre (AMC/HK)	70	65	34	105	76	2 208 [#]	112	70	35
Kowloon Animal Management Centre (AMC/K)	160	90	33	164	109	69	130	117	78
New Territories South Animal Management Centre (AMC/NTS)	199	69	211	265	105	67	223	130	122
New Territories North Animal Management Centre (AMC/NTN)	472	155	1 100 [@]	517	134	3 389 [#]	547	148	1 507 [@]
Total	901	379	1 378	1 051	424	5 733	1 012	465	1 742

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

Most of them are illegally imported animals.

@ Most of them were seized during law enforcement operations.

The average numbers of days for which animals were kept at AMCs are tabulated as follows:

Year	2022			2023			2024		
Animal type	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*
Average number of days [^]	43.4	85.6	70.0	40.7	65.2	66.8	45.2	86.4	116.6

[^] Including stray animals, animals surrendered by owners and exhibits.

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

- (c) The number of rehomed animals neutered by veterinary clinics engaged by AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of rehomed animals neutered		
	Dogs	Cats	Rabbits
2022	91	37	2
2023	100	70	4
2024	72	60	10

- (d) The staff establishment and turnover rate of AMCs over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Total establishment of the 4 AMCs [#]		Turnover rate	
	Veterinary Officer	Technical/ Frontline staff	Veterinary Officer	Technical/ Frontline staff
2022-23	4	187	0%	3.2%
2023-24	4	187	0%	4.8%
2024-25	4	184	0%	6.5%

[#] The 4 AMCs were overseen by 1 Senior Veterinary Officer.

- (e) The operational expenditure of the 4 AMCs over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Operational expenditure (\$ million)			
	AMC/NTN	AMC/NTS	AMC/K	AMC/HK
2022-23	28.7	19.9	23.8	20.4
2023-24	29.5	20.5	24.4	21.0
2024-25 (revised estimate)	33.4	23.5	29.4	24.1

- (f) The number of inspections conducted relating to licensed animal trading, dog breeding, boarding, riding, exhibition establishments and temporary exhibition establishments and successful prosecutions against owners/operators of these premises over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of inspections	Number of successful prosecutions
2022	5 195	11
2023	6 206	20
2024	5 338	20

- (g) The number of sessions and participants of the Dog Obedience Training Course held by AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of sessions held	Number of participants
2022	5 [@]	103 [@]
2023	9	253
2024	6	164

[@] The number of sessions and participants of the Dog Obedience Training Course was lower than those in previous years due to the COVID-19 and the need to avoid crowd gathering.

The Dog Obedience Training Course consists of two parts, namely the theoretical and practical sessions. In theoretical sessions, learners gain knowledge of the theory of basic dog obedience training, including dog behaviours and mentality, positive reinforcement training methods as well as various training tools and techniques, etc. For practical sessions, learners shall attend with their dogs in order to learn the skills and relevant actions of giving orders and treats to dogs.

For the time being, AFCD has no plan to introduce related training courses for other animals (e.g. cats, tortoises, rabbits, etc.). The main reasons for this are that the demand for training of the above pets in the community is relatively low and there are no recognised or qualified trainers in the market to train the above pets. AFCD will continue to promote animal welfare through various platforms, including organising roving exhibitions in the 18 districts and pet adoption activities, as well as holding talks at schools and housing estates on a regular basis. AFCD will also provide information on taking caring of different kinds of pets such as cats, tortoises and rabbits on its thematic website so as to enable the public to learn about how to take proper care of animals while promoting the message of “Be a Responsible Pet Owner”.

The number of animals received by AFCD, with a breakdown by type, over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Stray animals caught			Animals surrendered by owners			Animals received through other channels		
	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*
2022	326	129	724	370	56	322	205	194	409
2023	463	184	995	446	122	129	142	118	4 673 [#]
2024	425	157	1 206	408	163	170	179	145	435

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

Mainly including animals illegally imported.

The number of animals received and handled by AFCD, with a breakdown by type, over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Animals reclaimed by owners			Animals rehomed			Animals humanely dispatched		
	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*	Dogs	Cats	Others*
2022	174	71	3	348	151	159	280	54	496
2023	219	76	12	319	174	123	372	90	821
2024	212	77	19	328	155	96	436	145	403

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)011

(Question Serial No. 1768)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the capturing of animals over the past 3 years, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the type and number of animal traps currently used by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD);
2. the manpower and expenditure involved in capturing animals each year;
3. the number of complaints and help-seeking cases received from members of the public in relation to animals (set out by wild pigs, cattle, cats, dogs, etc.) each year;
4. further to the above question, the number of animals captured and euthanised, and the number of animals which had died before the arrival of the AFCD staff;
5. regarding the purchase of facilities for preventing wild pigs through the Farm Improvement Scheme under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund, the number of applications and expenditure involved and the effectiveness;
6. the number of illegal animal traps seized each year and the enforcement actions taken;
7. given that the Government amended the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance to expand the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong and changed to use refuse collection facilities that can prevent wild animal nuisances, whether these measures effectively reduced nuisance caused by wild animals to the public and the details;
8. the results of installing nearly 100 infrared cameras by the AFCD at locations with wild pig nuisance; and
9. whether there was any Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programme for animals in the community such as wild pigs, cattle, cats, dogs, etc.; if so, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. The number and type of animal traps currently used by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) are tabulated with a breakdown by animal type as follows:

Animal type	Type of animal traps	Number
Wild pigs	Cage traps	29
	New netting traps	12
Cats	Cage traps	71
Dogs	Cage traps	45
	Snares	67

2. The expenditures and manpower involved in the management work (including capture) for wild pigs and stray animals in each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Management work (including capture) for wild pigs		Management work (including capture) for stray animals	
	Manpower (Number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (Number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	34	22.3	139	43.7
2023-24	33	21.8	139	44.2
2024-25 (revised estimate)	33	22.8	135	46.3

3. The numbers of nuisance complaints and reports for assistance related to animals received by the AFCD in each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of complaints and reports for assistance			
	Wild pigs	Cattle	Stray cats	Stray dogs
2022	1 133	51	325	1 142
2023	1 128	75	397	1 230
2024	1 098	73	428	1 554

4. The number of animals captured and the number of animals euthanised by the AFCD in each of the past 3 years with a breakdown by animal type are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of animals captured			
	Wild pigs	Cattle	Stray cats	Stray dogs
2022	292	77	129	326
2023	489	64	184	463
2024	672	68	157	425

Year	Number of animals euthanised			
	Wild pigs	Cattle	Stray cats	Stray dogs
2022	292	10	24	175
2023	487	19	68	117
2024	657	10	59	160

The AFCD does not keep statistics on the number of animals which had died before the arrival of its staff.

5. Over the past 3 years, there were 72 applications for purchasing facilities for preventing wild pigs through the Farm Improvement Scheme under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund, with a total amount of about \$2.09 million. The AFCD would also regularly hold technical seminars to explain the methods for preventing wild pigs on farmland and offer on-site technical support to farmers. Some farmers said that the installation of preventive facilities on the farmland could help prevent the wild pigs from damaging their crops.
6. The AFCD is committed to combatting illegal hunting activities with a view to protecting wild animals. Upon receipt of public reports on any suspected illegal hunting of wild animals, the AFCD will investigate and follow up the case as soon as possible, including deploying staff to the scene to inspect, collect evidence and carry out law enforcement actions. If there is sufficient evidence, the AFCD will institute prosecution against the offenders. In addition, the AFCD deploys staff to patrol the countryside areas from time to time, especially locations where animal traps or illegal hunting of wild animals had been detected. If any animal trap is found, the AFCD staff will remove it immediately, and display notices at conspicuous locations of the scene to remind the public that using animal traps is unlawful, and they shall not commit such offence. The number of illegal animal traps seized by the AFCD in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of illegal animal traps
2022	152
2023	137
2024	133

7. For safeguarding public safety and public hygiene, the Government is committed to reducing nuisance caused by wild animals to the public through a multi-pronged approach, including expanding the wild animal feeding ban area to the entire territory of Hong Kong, increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding activities and introducing a fixed penalty by amending the legislation twice in 2022 and 2024; capturing and humanely dispatching wild pigs; adopting refuse collection facilities that can prevent wild animal nuisances; and organising various public education activities to enhance public understanding of the latest feeding ban requirements and the adverse impact of feeding. In recent years, the problem of wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong has been gradually improving. According to the AFCD's statistics, the overall population of wild pigs decreased from about 1 830 in 2022 to about 900 in 2024; the number of wild pig nuisance black spots was 15 in late 2024, reduced by about 64% from 42 in 2022; the number of human injury cases caused by wild pigs was 7 in 2024, significantly decreased by about 80% from 36 in 2022.
8. Since 2023, the AFCD has installed infrared cameras to monitor the occurrence of wild pigs coupled with new trapping devices, with a view to improving the efficiency of wild pig capture operations. In 2024, the AFCD conducted over 400 capture operations and successfully captured 672 wild pigs in total, representing an increase of about 130% as compared with 292 wild pigs captured in 2022. In addition, the AFCD has installed

infrared cameras at some black spots of illegal feeding to detect the occurrence of wild pigs and illegal feeding activities, facilitating collection of information and arrangements for enforcement actions.

9. The AFCD carried out the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) from late 2017 to November 2021, which involved over 350 operations and 458 wild pigs. However, the AFCD's investigation revealed that the effectiveness of the relevant operations was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, after wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food even after being relocated to the countryside. To step up control over the safety risks and public hygiene problems caused by wild pigs, the AFCD launched the wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations in November 2021 to replace the CCRP.

The Trap-Neuter-Return trial programme (the programme) for stray dogs was conducted by 2 animal welfare organisations (AWOs) at 2 trial sites in Cheung Chau and Tai Tong, Yuen Long between February 2015 and January 2018, while the AFCD was responsible for monitoring and handling related complaints and commissioning an independent consultant to conduct investigation and analysis. As the dogs under the programme in the trial site in Tai Tong, Yuen Long had all be rehomed, one of the AWOs terminated the programme in August 2022. As for trial site in Cheung Chau, the co-ordinating organisation of the programme agreed to continue managing and monitoring the dogs under the programme, and provide the AFCD with regular reports on the condition, average lifespan and changes in the number of the dogs concerned. As at January 2025, a total of 106 dogs have been neutered under the programme and returned to their original habitat. Although the programme has not achieved the performance target of reducing the number of stray dogs at the trial sites for the time being, the 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.

The AFCD will also continue to help the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to control the number of stray cats by means of trap, neuter and return under the Cat Colony Care Programme.

In addition, The AFCD will adopt a multi-pronged approach for managing stray cattle, including performing surgical sterilisation on stray cattle to stabilise the stray bovine population and minimise the nuisance caused by them to the public. Over the past 3 years, the AFCD officers sterilised 110 stray cattle in total. Those sterilised ones will be ear-tagged for identification. Upon recovery from the surgical wounds, they will be returned to suitable locations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)012****(Question Serial No. 1769)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Over the past 3 years, regarding the safety of pet food, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) the figure of imported pet food and the local demand each year;
- (b) the number and nature of complaints received each year, and the follow-up actions taken;
- (c) whether the Government has investigated into and tested the pet food available in the local market (including those ready-made and freshly made); if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;
- (d) the number of local operators engaging in manufacturing, processing or import of pet food and the market share of their products in the pet food market in Hong Kong; and
- (e) whether the Government will consider enacting legislation to regulate pet food on the market; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

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

- (a) According to the figures of the Census and Statistics Department, the quantity of pet food imported to Hong Kong in each of the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Quantity of pet food imported (tonnes)
2022	62 677
2023	57 883
2024	53 280

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have figures on local demand for pet food.

- (b) AFCD received 5, 7 and 10 complaints in 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively, which were mainly related to the quality of pet food and business practices. Upon receipt of a complaint, AFCD will contact the complainant and the manufacturer/importer/distributor of the pet food concerned to gather more information of the case, and may, depending on the nature of the complaint, take

appropriate follow-up actions, such as suggesting that the complainant make arrangement with the seller for return of the purchase or refund.

- (c) and (e) AFCD had earlier commissioned a consultancy study to collect 360 samples of different pet food products commonly available in the Hong Kong market, including dry and wet dog food products, dry and wet cat food products and food products for other pets, to test for the presence of any harmful substances and micro-organisms (such as Salmonella, *Escherichia coli* (including O157), *Listeria monocytogenes*, aflatoxin, melamine, malathion, lead and arsenic). The study was completed in February 2020. The report showed that the results of all samples tested were below the upper limits on the above harmful substances and micro-organisms generally set by major pet food producing countries/places.

AFCD is studying on the provision of guidelines on the safety standards and labelling information of pet food for the pet food industry, and will continue to keep in view the development of regulation of pet food in overseas countries. In addition, AFCD will also continue to step up the relevant public education work in order to remind the pet food industry and pet owners to handle and use pet food properly.

- (d) AFCD does not have figures related to local operators engaging in manufacturing, processing and/or import of pet food products.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)013

(Question Serial No. 1770)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding local veterinary services and related pet grooming services, would the Government advise this Committee of the following information over the past 3 years:

- (a) the number of local newly registered veterinary surgeons and the countries or regions in which they obtained their veterinary qualification;
- (b) the number of veterinary specialists by speciality;
- (c) the change in the ratio of pets to veterinary surgeons;
- (d) the number of existing veterinary clinics and the details of the Government's existing regulatory measures on veterinary clinics;
- (e) the number of complaints about veterinary surgeons received each year, reasons for the complaints, details of the cases accepted and the penalties imposed;
- (f) the average time taken by the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Hong Kong for processing each case, as well as the longest and shortest processing time taken on the cases;
- (g) the number of complaints received by the Government about pet grooming services which do not require any licences currently; whether the Government will step up regulation of the provision of such services; and
- (h) given that local veterinary assistants and veterinary assistant programmes are not subject to regulation currently, whether the Government has the relevant figures and whether a registration or enrolment system will be set up?

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

Reply:

- (a) According to the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Hong Kong (VSB), the number of local newly registered veterinary surgeons over the past 3 years, by the country/region where they acquired their accredited qualifications, is tabulated as follows:

Country/region where they acquired their accredited qualifications	Number of newly registered veterinary surgeons		
	2022	2023	2024
Australia	15	41	39
Brazil	0	1	0
Belgium	1	1	0
Canada	0	2	0
Chile	0	1	0
Europe	3	10	15
Hong Kong, China	0	11	11
Japan	1	0	0
New Zealand	3	3	6
South Africa	3	7	8
Taiwan, China	9	30	20
United Kingdom	13	32	37
United States	1	4	8
Total	49	143	144

- (b) According to VSB, there were 64, 73 and 100 registered veterinary surgeons who were granted authorisation to advertise as, or profess to be, specialists in Hong Kong in 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively. Some of these veterinary surgeons have more than one speciality. Details of the specialities (showing position as at December 2024) are tabulated as follows:

Speciality	Number of veterinary surgeons
Anesthesia and Analgesia	9
Avian Practice	2
Canine and Feline Practice	6
Companion Animals (Internal Medicine)	5
Dental Practice	5
Dermatology	3
Emergency and Critical Care	4
Equine Practice	1
Equine Surgery	1
Exotic Companion Mammal Practice	3
Feline Medicine	4
Internal Medicine (Cardiology)	6
Internal Medicine (Oncology)	6
Laboratory Animal Medicine	1
Large Animal Surgery	2
Neurology	4

Speciality	Number of veterinary surgeons
Ophthalmology	3
Poultry Practice	1
Reptile and Amphibian Practice	2
Small Animal Internal Medicine	8
Small Animal Surgery	10
Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging	3
Veterinary Pathology	5
Veterinary Preventive Medicine	2
Zoological Medicine	4

- (c) According to the Thematic Household Survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), there were about 221 100 dogs and 184 100 cats being kept by households in Hong Kong in 2018. According to VSB's data on the number of registered veterinary surgeons in 2018, the veterinary surgeon-to-pet (dogs and cats) ratio was about 1:410 that year, which is far above the ratios of other places at that time (e.g. Singapore (1:2 543), the United Kingdom (1:2 374) and the United States (1:3 072)). C&SD does not have the statistics of Hong Kong households keeping cats or dogs between 2019 and 2024, and the number of local registered veterinary surgeons has increased from 988 in 2018 to 1 317 in 2024, representing an increase rate of 33%.
- (d) According to VSB, there were 1 105, 1 208 and 1 317 local registered veterinary surgeons in 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively. While VSB does not keep the number of veterinary clinics in Hong Kong, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) provides on its website a list of local veterinary clinics which have voluntarily agreed to be listed for the reference of the public.

VSB is established under the Veterinary Surgeons Registration Ordinance (Cap. 529) (the Ordinance) and charged with the responsibility for the regulation, registration and disciplinary control of the professional activities of veterinary surgeons to ensure that the veterinary care services of Hong Kong are maintained at a high standard. All registered veterinary surgeons have received professional training before practising in Hong Kong, and obtained the qualifications for registration specified under the Ordinance, and are required to comply with the Ordinance and the Code of Practice for the Guidance of Registered Veterinary Surgeons (CoP) promulgated by VSB. The CoP provides veterinary surgeons with guidelines on various aspects of conduct, including professional ethics, clinic premises and equipment, advertising and other operational details, etc. If a veterinary surgeon breaches the CoP, VSB may take disciplinary actions against the surgeon.

- (e) In handling a complaint received, VSB must conduct investigation and follow up on the case in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Ordinance and Rules of the Veterinary Surgeons Board (Disciplinary Proceedings). Every case should first be investigated by a Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) of VSB, to decide if it should be referred to an Inquiry Committee (IC) established under the Ordinance for disciplinary inquiries. Over the past 3 years, the number of complaint cases received

by VSB, cases referred to IC for disciplinary inquiry and complaint cases found substantiated upon inquiry are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of complaint cases received	Number of complaint cases received during the year that are not referred to IC after preliminary investigation[#]	Number of complaint cases received during the year that are still under preliminary investigation[#]	Number of cases received during the year that are referred to IC[#]	Number of inquiries completed during the year[*]	Number of cases found substantiated
2022	59	54	1	4	8	6
2023	52	37	15	0	14	12
2024	51	17	34	0	9	8

[#] Progress as at end 2024.

^{*} Including complaint cases previously received and referred for disciplinary inquiries that have been completed during the year.

Over the past 3 years, the nature of complaint cases received by VSB involving registered veterinary surgeons is as follows:

Nature of complaints	Percentage
Disregard of professional responsibility to animals	75 %
Communication with clients	8 %
Medical records	5 %
Charges	4 %
Others	8 %

Over the past 3 years, ICs completed 31 inquiry cases, 26 of which were found substantiated, involving 27 veterinary surgeons. Orders made by ICs in respect of these veterinary surgeons are tabulated as follows:

Relevant Order	Number of veterinary surgeons involved
Removal of names of relevant veterinary surgeons from the register for 3 months, reprimand in writing and compulsory participation in continuing professional development programme/professional seminar	1
Removal of names of relevant veterinary surgeons from the register for 6 months, reprimand in writing and compulsory participation in continuing professional development programme/professional seminar	2
Removal of names of relevant veterinary surgeons from the register for 6 months, suspended for 24 months, reprimand in writing and compulsory participation in continuing professional development programme/professional seminar	2
Reprimand in writing and compulsory participation in continuing professional development programme/professional seminar and/or other requirements for raising professional level	19
Reprimand in writing	3
Total	27

- (f) Amongst the cases received and processed over the past 3 years, the average processing time was around 7 months and the shortest and the longest processing time were about 2 and 28 months respectively. The investigation and collection of required information and supporting evidence often take time. Processing time of complaints also depends on a number of factors, including the time required by relevant parties (the complainant and the veterinary surgeon being complained of, etc.) to provide necessary information and the complexity of the cases (e.g. whether multiple veterinary surgeons or other law enforcement agencies are involved).
- (g) A licence from AFCD is currently not required for the operation of pet grooming business. To prevent any illegal animal trading or acts of cruelty to animals, AFCD will conduct inspections to relevant shops from time to time. Upon receipt of complaints or detection of the aforementioned situation during inspections, AFCD will conduct investigations and take corresponding actions. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be instituted. AFCD did not receive any relevant complaints over the past 3 years.
- (h) The Ordinance stipulates that persons who are not registered veterinary surgeons (hereafter referred to as veterinary assistants) are allowed to perform certain veterinary acts on the premises of the practice, and under the direction/supervision/direct and continuous supervision of registered veterinary surgeons, but these acts do not include diagnosing, prescribing medication or performing a surgical operation. The CoP also stipulates that veterinary surgeons should assess the capabilities of the person under their instruction or supervision, and ensure that the person performs the duties in an appropriate manner. The Ordinance currently does not require veterinary assistants to conduct registration or enrolment; the VSB does not maintain relevant figures.

In response to the community's concern about veterinary assistants, VSB has set up a working group to conduct a survey on the number of veterinary assistants in Hong Kong as well as the current situation of and demand for the relevant accredited courses in veterinary nursing. VSB will collect relevant information for further analysis, and make reference to the practices in different regions, in order to explore the feasibility of setting up a registration system for veterinary assistants (e.g. considering the setting up of a voluntary enrolment register before statutory requirements are in place). The preparatory work is currently under way and VSB plans to commence the information collection and survey in the first half of 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)014****(Question Serial No. 0459)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding assisting fishermen in switching to sustainable fisheries operations and fish farmers in developing sustainable aquaculture:

1. please list out the funds invested to support deep-sea mariculture, develop modernised pond fish culture and promote leisure fisheries, as well as any specific projects;
2. were there any statistics on the growth of economic benefits after assisting the fishermen in transforming and upgrading their production with the relevant funds over the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)Reply:

1. The Government has been actively promoting the sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries. The expenditure of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) on aquaculture, including supporting deep-sea mariculture and developing modernised pond fish culture over the past 3 years is as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	48.5
2023-24	46.6
2024-25 (revised estimate)	52.8

Note: As the financial expenditure on the promotion of leisure fisheries is absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD, no breakdown is available.

Specific projects of AFCD in support of deep-sea mariculture include provision of technical training, designation of new fish culture zones (FCZs) suitable for the development of deep-sea mariculture, and provision of financial support. Regarding the provision of technical training, AFCD operates a modernised mariculture demonstration farm equipped with a steel truss cage at the Tung Lung Chau FCZ to

provide mariculture demonstration and technical training for the industry and those who are interested in engaging in deep-sea mariculture. To further expand the scope for development of the mariculture industry, AFCD also designated 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Mirs Bay, Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast) in December 2023, providing an area of about 590 hectares for mariculture. The new FCZs are located in open waters with better currents, which facilitate the adoption of modern aquaculture facilities and technology such as steel truss cages or high-density polyethylene (HDPE) gravity-type cages with resistance to strong wind and wave, together with automated feeding and real-time monitoring systems. The establishment of the new FCZs facilitates fishermen to operate aquaculture in an intensification mode, and promotes and assists fishermen in switching to a modernised and sustainable mode of operation, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the local fisheries industry. Marine fish culture licences for operation in the FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were open for application in the fourth quarter of 2024, and the first batch of licenses is expected to be issued by mid-2025 at the earliest. To lower the start-up costs for developing deep-sea mariculture, the industry may apply to the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) for setting up and operating new deep-sea cages to facilitate sustainable development in terms of intensification of production. AFCD will also set up modernised steel truss cages and other types of deep-sea cages with Government funding in the new FCZs for renting to fishermen associations/organisations. It is expected that the relevant facilities will be set up in batches in the new FCZs from 2025 onwards.

Regarding the development of modernised pond fish culture, AFCD encourages fish farmers to gradually enhance the use of modern technologies that can complement the operation of traditional fish ponds, such as remote real-time monitoring systems, smart control facilities and renewable energy systems. AFCD also explores with fish farmers the development of eco-friendly pond fish culture with a view to maintaining the ecosystems while ensuring the economic benefits of fisheries production to achieve a balance between aquaculture and conservation. AFCD will use the Au Tau Fisheries Office (Fisheries Office) in Yuen Long as a demonstration farm to introduce modernised aquaculture equipment and a smart aquaculture management platform so as to promote the use of relevant technologies and provide support to the industry. In this regard, AFCD will try out the container eco-culture system in the fish ponds at the Fisheries Office. It is expected that the system will be established by the third quarter of 2025 for promoting the use of technology and providing support to the industry. In addition, a small number of inland aquaculture farms in Hong Kong are now using indoor recirculating aquaculture systems in fish production to increase aquaculture production volume and efficiency. AFCD will provide technical support to further promote similar high-density, high-tech and high-yield culture operations. Looking ahead, AFCD will develop modernised aquaculture in the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park by providing suitable land and infrastructure. We plan to establish “ecologically enhanced fishponds” of some 200 hectares to serve the dual functions of nature conservation and pond fish culture, as well as a “fisheries enhancement area” of about 40 hectares to pursue high-density, high-tech and high-yield aquaculture operations.

In addition, to promote leisure fisheries, AFCD has funded projects through SFDF to establish and develop leisure fisheries, such as the “Recreational Fishing Development and Fishermen Training Programme (Southern District)” and the “Fishery & Eco,

Conservation Program (Cheung Chau Waters/Northeastern Waters)” projects, which aim to plan for and take forward brand activities on leisure fisheries in the communities, support the industry in developing “community-based leisure fisheries” projects centred around the communities and establish an operation mode for leisure fisheries, while helping fishermen enhance their skills in operating leisure fisheries activities; as well as the “Hong Kong Pearl Farm Centre” project, which aim to assist fish farmers in switching to the high value-added pearl cultivation industry and develop pearl eco-tours.

To help marine fish farmers develop diversify their business, AFCD has launched a scheme allowing holders of marine fish culture licences to operate leisure fishing businesses on their fish rafts. As at February 2025, a total of about 50 licensees in 11 FCZs have been permitted to operate the relevant businesses. In January 2025, AFCD implemented enhancement measures, allowing fish farmers to provide simple food and beverages, including pre-packaged pre-cooked dim-sum, cup noodles, pre-packaged snacks, pre-packaged or bottled non-alcoholic beverages, to visitors participating in leisure fishing on the premise of not affecting the fish culture operations or the culture environment within the FCZs, so as to further promote the diversified development of leisure fisheries and open up new sources of income for fish farmers.

Moreover, AFCD is actively exploring the development of inland leisure fisheries. The initial plan is to make reference to the “Agri enJoy” Scheme and facilitate the provision of leisure activities in fish ponds engaged in commercial food fish culture as their ancillary businesses, so as to promote development of inland leisure fish farms. AFCD is also exploring the possibility of allowing fishermen to use their vessels for both fishing and leisure activities (i.e. dual uses of vessels), which can help fishermen transform their business.

AFCD is also progressively establishing a platform for publicity to enhance promotion of local leisure fisheries, such as setting up a search engine for leisure fisheries information to provide the public with information on leisure farming and fisheries activities in a more convenient manner. AFCD will continue to promote and introduce various leisure fisheries activities through different channels such as social media platforms and by organising large-scale events to enhance public awareness and participation, thereby creating opportunities for the fisheries industry to attract the industry to transform their business.

AFCD also continues to provide training and technical support for fishermen to help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to develop leisure fisheries. AFCD will continue to explore the enhancement of existing measures and lifting of restrictions, so as to assist the fisheries industry in developing leisure fisheries projects with Hong Kong characteristics and offer the public rich and diversified leisure experiences.

2. Since the Government is actively working with the industry to implement the measures set out in the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, the economic effectiveness of each measure cannot be evaluated at this stage.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)015

(Question Serial No. 0279)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the development of local agriculture and fisheries industries,

1. what kinds of technical assistance and vocational training were provided by the Department to local farmers and fishermen over the past 3 years? What were the respective details, numbers of beneficiaries, and expenditures involved (please set out by item)?
2. what were the efforts made by the Department over the past 3 years to promote the development of urban farming, as well as the relevant work and estimated expenditure in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been providing technical support and introducing modern technology and practices to local fishermen and farmers with a view to promoting the modernisation and sustainable development of the local agricultural and fisheries industries. The work in relation to the fisheries industry includes: (i) implementing the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme to promote good aquaculture practices such as enhancing biosecurity, feed management and the aquaculture system; (ii) applying new technologies in the monitoring of aquaculture environment; (iii) exploring and introducing new culture technology and facilities; and (iv) introducing new high-value culture species such as pearl oysters and lobsters in addition to new fish species. The work in relation to the agricultural industry includes: (i) promotion of organic farming; (ii) implementation of the Accredited Farm Scheme, such as providing guidance to farmers on the adoption of good horticultural practices and the proper use of pesticides to improve the quality of vegetables; (iii) development and promotion of new farming techniques, such as multi-layer farming and smart greenhouse, to raise productivity; (iv) demonstration of controlled environment hydroponic farming and showcasing the related equipment through the Controlled Environment Hydroponic Research and Development Centre; (v) introduction of new or improved crop varieties for local propagation; (vi) promotion of an integrated pest and disease control management system; and (vii) introduction and promotion of the use

of various modern farm machinery through the farm machinery and equipment lending services to raise productivity. AFCD has also organised technical seminars, workshops and training programmes to promote the above advanced production technologies to local fishermen and farmers, with a view to assisting them in enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of their fish farms and farms. In addition, AFCD and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) also co-organise aquaculture-related programmes covering mariculture and pond fish culture, aquatic product processing, marketing and promotion, etc. IVE will launch the “Diploma in Modernised Aquaculture” programme in the second quarter of 2025.

The above technical support and vocational training can benefit about 1 300 fish farms and about 5 000 fishing vessels, as well as about 2 400 crop farms in Hong Kong. The expenditure involved in the above work over the past 3 years is as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	78.3
2023-24	75.4
2024-25 (revised estimate)	80.0

Besides, AFCD provides financial support through 2 sustainable development funds (the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) to assist the industries in carrying 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 technical assistance and vocational training to farmers and fishermen as well as those 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
SFDF		
Recreational Fishing Development and Fishermen Training Programme (Southern District)	6.3	100
Fish Pump Sharing Project	1.2	170
Aquaculture Practices Enhancement and Support Services in Hong Kong	11.7	300
Fishermen Enhancement Training Course — Subsidy for local fishermen holding Mainland Marine Fisheries Officer Certificates to upgrade their local certificates of competency	1.2	125
Promoting proper design of bright light apparatus for fishing	1.0	250

Title of approved projects	Amount of grant approved (\$ million)	Expected number of beneficiaries upon project completion
SADF		
Field trials to compare common melon/fruits flies control methods in Hong Kong	1.0	2 000
Pilot Scheme on Marketing and Branding of Graded Local Vegetables	14.9	150
Application of advanced health management to enhance the productivity of chicken flocks, as well as the food safety and quality of chicken meat	14.4	29 chicken farms in Hong Kong
Introduction of technology and health management tools to enhance production efficiency, product safety and quality of pig farming industry in Hong Kong	15.0	43 pig farms in Hong Kong
Architectural Design Guidelines for Multilayer Livestock Farms	2.0	72 livestock farms in Hong Kong
Comprehensive Agricultural Support and Promotion Scheme 2.0	14.2	300
Hong Kong Seed Technology and Education Center 2.0	14.9	About 2 400 crop farms in Hong Kong
Research and Development of Bio-Fortification Technology for Precision Hydroponics	3.6	About 50 local hydroponic enterprises
Management, Operation and Support for an Organic Certification System, and Publicity and Education of Organic Certification	14.9	400
Study of New Catalytic Oxidation Technology for Controlling Odor Emission and Bacterial Growth in Pig Farms	2.0	43 pig farms in Hong Kong

2. The Government is actively promoting urban farming. The whole concept is to integrate agriculture into urban lives and to provide urban dwellers with high-quality and fresh low-carbon food, green landscapes and modernised farming experience while improving the quality and liveability of urban life.

The Government has allocated a suitable site at Ma On Shan Sai Sha Road Garden for the first pilot project on urban farming. AFCD is carrying out the relevant preparatory work, and will lease out the site to trade members engaging in modernised agricultural production for operation. It strives for commencement of operation this year, which will serve as a feasible model for reference in developing urban farms.

In addition, to facilitate the development of urban farming by the trade, the Government has obtained consent from the Town Planning Board (TPB) in 2024 to revise the Definition of Terms used in statutory plan for “Open Space” to include “urban farm”,

so as to allow the setting up of urban farms to be operated on a commercial basis in suitable “Open Space” areas (such as parks and outdoor public open space in urban areas and NDAs), thereby making good use of precious land resources and contributing to the integrated development of agriculture and urban areas; and introducing urban farming elements into the planning stage of NDAs. In addition, the Government has also planned to set up modernised hydroponic farms-cum-stalls on suitable rooftops of government buildings and public markets, including the Tin Shui Wai Public Market under construction and the Kwu Tung North NDA Market which has obtained funding for its construction, for operation by the trade upon application, with a view to promoting the concept of “harvest-to-sale”. AFCD is actively discussing the design specifications and technical requirements with the relevant departments. Moreover, AFCD is working with a relevant organisation to explore setting urban farming as one of the indicators of green buildings, such as incorporating into the assessment scheme of the Building Environment Assessment Method Plus, so as to encourage commercial development projects to integrate elements of urban farming, thereby blending farming into urban life and at the same time promoting the development and standard of sustainable buildings in Hong Kong.

Promoting urban farming is part of the regular work of AFCD in promoting the sustainable development of the agricultural industry. AFCD does not have the breakdown of the expenditure on the work in relation to urban farming.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)016****(Question Serial No. 0280)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the management of fresh food wholesale markets,

1. please set out the operational expenditures and the throughput of food of fresh food wholesale markets under the purview of the Department in each of the past 3 years;
2. given that some fresh food wholesale markets have been in use for many years, how does the Department ensure that the operation and facilities of the wholesale markets meet the actual needs? Does the Department have any plan to overhaul or relocate individual wholesale markets; if yes, the details and the estimate for expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is responsible for the management of the 4 fresh food wholesale markets. The throughputs of the wholesale markets over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market (tonnes)	Western Wholesale Food Market (tonnes)	Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market (tonnes)	North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products (tonnes)
2022-23	210 376	134 422	7 639	42 946
2023-24	206 035	135 877	7 933	42 553
2024-25 (as at 31 Jan 2025)	167 333	113 121	6 556	29 135

The operational expenditures of the wholesale markets over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market (\$ million)	Western Wholesale Food Market (\$ million)	Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market (\$ million)	North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products (\$ million)
2022-23	56.9	54.4	22.0	10.1
2023-24	52.1	51.2	23.1	8.5
2024-25 (revised estimate)	51.9	51.1	25.1	10.2

2. AFCD has been maintaining close liaison with operators of the wholesale markets and holds regular meetings with representatives of the operators through Market Management Advisory Committees to understand their daily operation at the wholesale markets, with a view to making appropriate and feasible arrangements. The Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) will also carry out renovation works for individual wholesale markets in a timely manner in the light of the use of the facilities in each of the wholesale markets, so as to ensure the smooth market operation. For instance, AFCD is carrying out renovation works for the toilets at the Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market and the Western Wholesale Food Market in phases in 2024-25 and 2025-26. ArchSD is responsible for the estimates and expenditures for the related works, while AFCD does not have the estimates of expenditure involved for the time being.

Besides, the Government is conducting the relevant technical feasibility studies on the relocation of some of the wholesale markets in the urban area, and will contemplate a suitable relocation plan in the light of the outcomes of the studies and other factors.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)017****(Question Serial No. 1726)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding new grants for the fisheries industry,

1. what are the number of applications for grants received, the number of grants approved, as well as the average, lowest and highest amounts granted by the Department over the past 3 years (please set out by the type of grants);
2. what are the reasons for the significant increase in the number of new grants for the fisheries industry under the Programme to nearly 700 last year, and the main reasons for the decrease rather than increase in the amount of grants approved despite the significant increase in the number of grants?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 45)Reply:

- 1 and 2. Details of the applications (including general applications and Equipment Improvement Project (EIP) applications) under the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) received by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

General Application:

Year	Number of approved application(s)	Amount of grant for each approved application (\$ million)		
		Average	Lowest	Highest
2022	1	6.33	6.33	6.33
2023	1	1.16	1.16	1.16
2024	3	4.65	1.07	11.73

EIP (Group Application):

Year	Number of approved application(s)	Amount of grant for each approved application (\$ million)		
		Average	Lowest	Highest
2022	1	5.83	5.83	5.83
2023	0	0	0	0
2024	2	12.61	11.27	13.98

EIP (Individual Application)*:

Year	Number of approved applications	Amount of grant for each approved application (\$'000)#		
		Average	Lowest	Highest
2023	168	40	20	100
2024	689	50	20	100

* Opens for application from February 2023

Starting from February 2023, the grant ceiling for each production unit has been raised from \$30,000 to \$50,000. Fishermen/fish farmers who have been funded before the grant ceiling was raised may apply for another grant with a ceiling of \$20,000 for their funded production unit; in addition, eligible applicants who own more than one production unit may apply for a total of 2 grants with a ceiling of \$50,000 each, i.e. a total grant ceiling of \$100,000.

In the past, only group applications (each application involved about 60 to 250 fishermen/fish farmers) for EIP grants under SFDF were approved. Following the expansion in the coverage of SFDF and the implementation of enhancement measures from February 2023 onwards, EIP applications submitted by fishermen/fish farmers in their personal capacity are accepted to provide them with funding support to improve their production or promote sustainable development by upgrading their fishery equipment or materials. Also, as the industry has gradually become more familiar with the application procedures, the number of new grants increased significantly last year. After an EIP (Individual Application) is approved, fish farmers can purchase the relevant fishery equipment/materials within 1 year and claim reimbursement from AFCD on the production of a receipt. Therefore, there will be a slight deferral in the disbursement of grants for EIP (Individual Application) cases. We expect that the grants for new cases in 2024 will be reflected in 2025 or later.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)018****(Question Serial No. 0396)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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.: 22)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, and prosecution will be instituted 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 departmental expenditure (%)
2020-21	2.9	0.2
2021-22	2.6	0.1
2022-23	2.3	0.1
2023-24	3.0	0.2
2024-25 (revised estimate)	3.6	0.2

- (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 consider 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 in the 18 districts; “virtual reality games” exhibitions; dog obedience training courses; pet adoption activities and held talks at schools and housing estates on a regular basis, etc. The expenditure involved is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on education and promotion of animal welfare (\$ million)	Percentage of the overall departmental expenditure (%)
2020-21	25.9	1.4
2021-22	23.8	1.3
2022-23	21.3	1.1
2023-24	22.3	1.1
2024-25 (revised estimate)	19.3	0.9

- (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
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 month and 12 days to 5 months
2022	263	21	32	20	24	1,000 to 3,000	8 days to 10 months
2023	441	25	43	23	23	5,000 to 6,000	10 days to 1 year
2024	494	22	59	16	17	500 to 4,500	14 days to 6 months

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

Figures related to prosecutions in 2024 are as at September 2024.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)019

(Question Serial No. 0177)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the promotion of leisure farming and fisheries and the provision of food processing and beverage facilities at the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market, please provide details, including specific strategies and measures, objectives, the implementation schedule, as well as the manpower and expenditure required.

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Government has been actively promoting the sustainable development of the local agriculture and fisheries industries, and released the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries at the end of 2023, which proposed to create favourable conditions, including providing supporting measures conducive to the development of the agriculture and fisheries industries; offering training, financial and technical support for fishermen and farmers; enhancing publicity and promotion; relaxing restrictions imposed by laws and regulations, etc., with a view to fostering the diversified development of the agriculture and fisheries industries.

On the promotion of leisure farming, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched the “Agri enJoy” Scheme in June 2024 to assist farms mainly engaged in commercial crop production in providing leisure activities as their ancillary business, so as to facilitate farmers to market their agricultural products and enhance visitors’ experience. To facilitate the organisation of such leisure activities by “Agri enJoy” farms, the Government has reviewed the relevant laws and regulations and relaxed restrictions to allow room for the development of the industry, including the inclusion of ancillary activities directly related to commercial crop production as endorsed by the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation in the definition of “Agricultural Use” in statutory plans, and to provide assistance to “Agri enJoy” farms in applying for food business licences to sell light meals with self-grown crops and non-flame cooking. As at February 2025, a total of 83 farms have been granted approval to join the “Agri enJoy” Scheme.

To promote leisure fisheries, AFCD has funded projects through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund to establish and develop leisure fisheries, such as the “Recreational Fishing Development and Fishermen Training Programme” (Southern District) and the “Fishery & Eco, Conservation Program (Cheung Chau Waters/Northeastern Waters)” projects, which aim to plan for and take forward brand activities on leisure fisheries in the communities, with a view to supporting the industry in developing “community-based leisure fisheries” projects centred around the communities and establishing an operation mode for leisure fisheries, while helping fishermen enhance their skills in operating leisure fisheries activities; as well as the “Hong Kong Pearl Farm Centre” project, which aims to assist fish farmers in switching to the high value-added pearl cultivation industry and develop pearl eco-tours.

In addition, to help marine fish farmers diversify their business, AFCD has launched a scheme allowing holders of marine fish culture licences to operate leisure fishing business on their fish rafts. As at February 2025, a total of about 50 licensees in 11 fish culture zones (FCZs) have been permitted to operate the relevant business. In January 2025, AFCD implemented enhancement measures, allowing fish farmers to provide simple food and beverages, including pre-packaged pre-cooked dim-sum, cup noodles, pre-packaged snacks, pre-packaged or bottled non-alcoholic beverages, to visitors participating in leisure fishing activities on the premise of not affecting fish culture operations or the culture environment within the FCZs, so as to further promote the diversified development of leisure fisheries and open up new sources of income for fish farmers.

Moreover, AFCD is actively exploring the development of inland leisure fisheries. The initial plan is to make reference to the “Agri enJoy” Scheme and facilitate the provision of leisure activities in fish ponds engaged in commercial food fish culture as their ancillary businesses, so as to promote the development of inland leisure fish farms. AFCD is also exploring the possibility of allowing fishermen to use their vessels for both fishing and leisure activities (i.e. dual uses of vessels), which can help fishermen transform their business.

AFCD is also progressively establishing a platform for publicity to enhance promotion of local leisure farming and fisheries, such as setting up a dedicated website for the “Agri enJoy” Scheme to step up promotion and introduce the participating farms, as well as setting up a search engine for leisure fisheries information to provide the public with information on leisure farming and fisheries activities in a more convenient manner. In addition, AFCD will continue to promote and introduce various leisure farming and fisheries activities through different channels such as social media platforms and by organising large-scale events to enhance public awareness and participation, thereby creating opportunities for the agriculture and fisheries industries to attract the industries to transform their business.

AFCD also continues to provide training and technical support for fishermen and farmers to help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to develop leisure farming and fisheries. AFCD will continue to explore the enhancement of existing measures and relaxing restrictions, so as to assist the industries in developing leisure farming and fisheries projects with Hong Kong characteristics and offer the public rich and diversified leisure experiences.

Under the efforts of the Invigorating Island South Office (IISO) of the Development Bureau, the Environment and Ecology Bureau and AFCD, along with the Fish Marketing Organization and other relevant government departments, are studying the feasibility of constructing a new

food and beverage (F&B) building to provide F&B, retail, fisheries product processing facilities, etc. in the vicinity of Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market. We will review the implementation arrangements in a timely manner upon completion of the above study.

As the manpower and financial expenditure for the promotion of leisure farming and fisheries and the study on providing F&B facilities at the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market are absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD, no breakdown is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)020

(Question Serial No. 2699)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In recent years, it was reported that there are many illegal breeding facilities in the market with extremely poor conditions and some of them even involve cruelty to animals. The Government mentioned that work such as preparation for legislative amendment was being done to promote animal welfare. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the timetable for the relevant legislative amendments and the scope of the proposed amendments;
- (2) the number of cases convicted under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance over the past 2 years;
- (3) the number and types of animals transferred through co-operation schemes between the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and animal welfare organisations (AWOs) over the past 2 years?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

- (1) The Government has been studying the amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169). In preparing the Bill, it is necessary to consult the relevant stakeholders again on some of the proposals, and after collating the views, we will finalise the proposals and complete the law drafting work promptly. Once the work is completed, we will introduce the proposed legislative amendments into the Legislative Council. The directions being explored in the amendments include introducing a positive "duty of care" on persons responsible for the specified animals, increasing the penalties on animal cruelty offences and enhancing enforcement powers.
- (2) The number of successful prosecutions instituted by the Hong Kong Police Force and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) under the Ordinance over the past 2 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of successful prosecutions
2023	23
2024 (as at Sep)	16

- (3) The number of animals handed by AFCD to AWOs for rehoming in each of the past 2 years is tabulated below:

Year	Number of animals handed by AFCD to AWOs for rehoming		
	Dogs	Cats	Other animals*
2023	319	174	123
2024	328	155	96

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)021

(Question Serial No. 1896)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Government is implementing the “urban farming” strategy to support the modernisation of the local agriculture and fisheries industries. Regarding the details stated under Programme (1), please inform this Committee of the following:

1. the specific plans to assist with the upgrading and transformation of the local agriculture and fisheries industries, whether an action timetable has been drawn up for such work, and the arrangements for manpower resources;
2. as pointed out in a Director of Audit's report, the operation of Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) Phase 1 has been unsatisfactory due to the problem of construction works, please give an account of the operation of Agri-Park Phase 1 since its commissioning, including its specific performance in terms of the occupancy rate, the operation practices of various farms, production output, sales, etc., and whether the Government has proposed improvement measures in the light of the current situation, so as to further assist with the development of the agriculture and fisheries industries in Hong Kong;
3. please give an account of the progress of the preparation work for Agri-Park Phase 2, including the expenditure on equipment for the application of modern agricultural technology, the current status of the public-private partnerships entered into, and whether it can commence full operation as scheduled?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. The Government released the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries (the Blueprint) in December 2023, which was formulated in collaboration with the agriculture and fisheries industries. The Blueprint set out specific work targets to raise the quantity, quality and value of local agricultural and fisheries products. To assist with the upgrading and transformation of the local agriculture and fisheries industries, the Government will implement a series of measures:

Regarding the agricultural industry, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is developing “urban farming” through a multi-pronged approach, including obtaining consent from the Town Planning Board in 2024 to revise the

Definition of Terms used in the statutory plan for “Open Space”, so as to allow the setting up of urban farms to be operated on a commercial basis in suitable “Open Space” areas, as well as preparing for the first pilot project on urban farming in Ma On Shan Sai Sha Road Garden, which is expected to commence operation this year. On the promotion of leisure farming, AFCD launched the “Agri enJoy” Scheme in June 2024 to facilitate farms mainly engaged in commercial crop production in providing leisure activities as their ancillary business, so as to increase farmers’ income. As at February 2025, 83 farms have joined the scheme. Regarding livestock farming, the Government is carrying out formation works on a site, which is targeted to be completed by 2026, for the setting up of the first modernised and environmentally-friendly multi-storey livestock farm for the livestock farming industry. In addition, Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) Phase 1 has progressively commenced operation since late 2022, while Phase 2 is under planning. Meanwhile, the Government has facilitated the establishment of a “Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park” through the public-private partnership approach, and completed the open application process for letting the first phase of the farmland in late 2024 as scheduled.

Regarding the fisheries industry, to support deep-sea mariculture, the Government designated 4 new fish culture zones (FCZs) in December 2023. Marine fish culture licences for operation in the FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay are open for applications from the fourth quarter of 2024, and the first batch of licences is expected to be issued by mid-2025 at the earliest. AFCD will also set up modernised steel truss cages and other types of deep-sea cages with Government funding in the new FCZs for renting to fishermen associations/organisations. It is expected that the relevant facilities will be set up in batches from 2025 onwards. Regarding the development of modernised pond fish culture, AFCD will use the Au Tau Fisheries Office (Fisheries Office) in Yuen Long as a demonstration farm to introduce modernised aquaculture equipment and a smart aquaculture management platform. AFCD will also try out the container eco-culture system in the fish ponds at the Fisheries Office. It is expected that the system will be established by the third quarter of 2025. In addition, to further promote the diversified development of leisure fisheries and open up new sources of income for fish farmers, AFCD implemented enhancement measures in January 2025, allowing fish farmers to provide simple and specific food and beverages to visitors participating in leisure fishing activities on the premise of not affecting fish culture operations or the culture environment within the FCZs. AFCD is also progressively establishing a publicity platform to step up publicity of local leisure farming and fisheries, while continuing to provide training and technical support for farmers and fishermen to help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to develop leisure farming and fisheries.

The Government is progressively implementing the measures in the Blueprint, while maintaining close liaison with the agriculture and fisheries industries and continuing to take forward the above initiatives in accordance with the action agenda set out in the Blueprint, with a view to jointly promoting the upgrading and transformation of the agriculture and fisheries industries. Since facilitating the upgrading and transformation of the local agriculture and fisheries industries is part of the regular work of AFCD, AFCD does not have a breakdown of the relevant expenditure.

2. All farmland available for lease in Agri-Park Phase 1 were leased out, while the construction works for the remaining pieces of farmland are substantially completed. Arrangements will be made for leasing out the farmland to eligible farmers as soon as possible. Vegetables being grown by the farmers include broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, white corn, flowering Chinese cabbage, lettuce, pumpkin, modernised greenhouse tomatoes, etc. At the early stage of commissioning, some tenants encountered difficulties in cultivating new farmland. To assist tenants in farming in a completely new environment, AFCD has been providing them with technical support, such as the farm machinery lending services and relevant training, to encourage them to adopt modernised production modes and technologies, steadily step up to farm mechanisation and smart agricultural production, produce safe and speciality fresh premium agricultural products, and enhance their quality and productivity. Currently, the production volume of tenants has been improving gradually, and the production volume of most of them last winter was satisfactory, averaging about 6 000 catties per dau chung. These agricultural products were sold steadily through various channels, including direct sales by farms, on-site sales, retail outlets at markets, wholesale markets, etc. Some premium agricultural products, such as broccoli, zucchini and roselle, sold well at an average price of \$10 or above per catty.

To meet the overall objectives of the Agri-Park, persons who are interested in renting the land in Agri-Park Phase 1 for farming must accept the tenancy conditions of Agri-Park, which include the submission of an annual production plan to AFCD and progressive adoption of environmentally friendly and modernised operation modes, with a view to enhancing the quality and quantity of agricultural products, while relevant technical and financial support will be provided by AFCD to increase the productivity of farmland, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the local agricultural industry.

3. Regarding the project of Agri-Park Phase 2 First Stage, the Government is actively preparing for its planning work, and will take forward the works project in a timely and orderly manner. AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the expenditure on the use of modern agricultural technology and equipment in Agri-Park Phase 2.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)022

(Question Serial No. 1897)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 182 of the Budget Speech that the Government is proactively working to establish a brand building and certification system for leisure fisheries and farming, as well as local agricultural and fisheries produce. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. the financial expenditure earmarked by the Government for the relevant programme and whether a specific time table including the work objectives and progress of the various stages has been set, with a breakdown by categories including brand building, certification system, publicity and promotion, and technological support, and specify whether the relevant expenditures for the programme are allocated according to the principle of maintaining financial sustainability;
2. the specific measures of the Government to help enhance the market competitiveness of local agricultural and fisheries products, including the provision of professional support in terms of design, packaging and marketing for local agricultural and fisheries trades, the number of jobs expected to create as well as the estimated expenditure for and effectiveness of the relevant measures;
3. the implementation progress and coverage of the certification system, and whether the Government has made reference to international experiences or collaborated with professional organisations to ensure international recognition of the certification standards; and
4. whether additional resources have been allocated to promote internationalisation of the local agricultural and fisheries brand in the long run, and even use it to promote the development of green tourism and eco-tourism?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

1. and 3. In the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Government proposed a series of measures to promote the modernisation and sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries, including promoting the development of leisure farming and fisheries and branding of local agricultural and fisheries products. As the manpower and financial expenditure

for the relevant work are absorbed by the existing resources of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), no breakdown is available.

On the promotion of leisure farming, AFCD launched the “Agri enJoy” Scheme in June 2024 to assist farms mainly engaged in commercial crop production in providing leisure activities as their ancillary business, so as to facilitate farmers to market their agricultural products and enhance visitors’ experience. To facilitate the organisation of such leisure activities by “Agri enJoy” farms, the Government has reviewed the relevant laws and regulations and relaxed restrictions to allow room for the development of the industry, including the inclusion of ancillary activities directly related to commercial crop production as endorsed by the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation in the definition of “Agricultural Use” in statutory plans, and to provide assistance to “Agri enJoy” farms in applying for food business licences to sell light meals with self-grown crops and non-flame cooking. As at February 2025, a total of 83 farms have been granted approval to join the “Agri enJoy” Scheme.

In addition, to help marine fish farmers develop more diversified business, AFCD has launched a scheme allowing holders of marine fish culture licences to operate leisure fishing business on their fish rafts. As at February 2025, a total of about 50 licensees in 11 fish culture zones (FCZs) have been permitted to operate the relevant business. In January 2025, AFCD implemented enhancement measures, allowing fish farmers to provide simple food and beverages, including pre-packaged cooked dim sum, cup noodles, pre-packaged snacks, pre-packed or bottled non-alcoholic beverages to visitors participating in leisure fishing activities on the premise of not affecting the fish culture operations or the culture environment within the FCZs, so as to further promote the diversified development of leisure fisheries and open up new sources of income for fish farmers. Moreover, AFCD is actively exploring the development of inland leisure fisheries. The initial plan is to make reference to the “Agri enJoy” Scheme and facilitate the provision of leisure activities in fish ponds engaged in commercial food fish culture as their ancillary businesses, so as to promote the development of inland leisure fish farms. AFCD is also exploring the possibility of allowing fishermen to use their vessels for both fishing and leisure activities (i.e. dual uses of vessels), which can help fishermen transform their business.

AFCD is also progressively establishing a platform for publicity to enhance promotion of local leisure farming and fisheries, such as setting up a dedicated website for the “Agri enJoy” Scheme to step up promotion and introduce the participating farms, as well as setting up a search engine for leisure fisheries information to provide the public with information on leisure farming and fisheries activities in a more convenient manner. In addition, AFCD will continue to promote and introduce various leisure farming and fisheries activities through different channels such as social media platforms and by organising large-scale events to enhance public awareness and participation, thereby creating opportunities for the agriculture and fisheries industries to attract the industries to transform their business.

AFCD also continues to provide training and technical support for fishermen and farmers to help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to develop leisure farming and fisheries, such as setting up a mock-up for application for food business licences to enable “Agri enJoy” farms interested in applying for food business licences understand the relevant requirements more specifically. In addition, AFCD also continues to organise talks and workshops to help fishermen acquire the skills to operate leisure fisheries. AFCD will continue to explore the enhancement of the existing measures and discuss with other departments on how to relax restrictions so as to assist the industries in developing leisure farming and fisheries projects with Hong Kong characteristics and offer the public rich and diversified leisure experiences. AFCD will also provide financial support to projects on leisure farming and fisheries development through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) and the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) respectively, including allowing eligible “Agri enJoy” farms to apply for grants under the Farm Improvement Scheme of SADF to procure additional equipment so as to provide leisure activities as their ancillary business, and supporting the industries to develop “community-based leisure fisheries” centred around the communities, plan for and take forward brand activities on leisure fisheries in the communities and establish an operational mode for leisure fisheries so as to promote the transformation of fishermen and sustainable development of leisure fisheries at the district level, and helping fishermen enhance their skills and increase their incomes and job opportunities.

On the branding of local agricultural and fisheries products, in order to increase their competitiveness, AFCD plans to establish a unified new brand for safe, low-carbon and premium local agricultural and fisheries products (the new brand) covering various locally produced agricultural and fisheries products, and to establish production standards, farming methods, as well as a certification and traceability system, etc., for these products to ensure that the quality is up to standard. AFCD is carrying out preparatory work with the local certification body, fishermen and agricultural organisations, and other stakeholders. At the same time, AFCD encourages farmers and fishermen, wholesalers, retailers and the catering sector to adopt a traceability model for the production, processing, sales and cooking of local agricultural and fisheries products, and enables consumers to obtain information on the origin of the products and the fish farms / agricultural farms on where they were produced from the traceability labels. AFCD and the certification body will make reference to international experiences when formulating a certification system that applies to the local agricultural and fisheries products, and will fully consult the industries and relevant stakeholders before launching the new brand to ensure that the system standards are widely accepted by the industries. AFCD is actively striving to build the unified new brand in 2025/26.

2. To increase the market competitiveness of local agricultural and fisheries products in terms of product packaging and design, the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) and the Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) provide processing, chilling and packaging services for agricultural and fisheries products sold locally so as to add values to and provide packaging design for these products. The products will be promoted through the sales networks of FMO/VMO. Currently, there are

about 100 sales locations across Hong Kong, including the Local Fresh physical store, large supermarkets, special retail outlets and markets, etc. To facilitate consumers purchasing local agricultural and fisheries products, AFCD and FMO/VMO have jointly developed the “Local Fresh” mobile app and shopping website. AFCD and FMO/VMO also organise regular holiday bazaars at the physical store and thematic sales activities at supermarket chains to enhance publicity. In addition, AFCD also promotes local agricultural and fisheries products and build up sales networks through SADF and SFDF, such as the 3-year “Pilot Scheme on Marketing and Branding of Graded Local Vegetables”, which designs easily recognisable banding package for local “accredited vegetables” and provides grading and packaging services. Through SFDF, AFCD also supports branding and promotional projects for local fisheries products, which includes inviting the catering sector to visit local farms and fish farms, organising large-scale online and offline marketing campaigns, business matching events and seminars, etc., in order to foster co-operation between fish farmers and the catering and hotel sectors and promote premium fisheries products to the public and the sectors.

On product promotion, AFCD has been providing proactive assistance to the agriculture and fisheries industries to promote their local premium products. Such promotional efforts include the organisation of the 75th National Day Farm and Gourmet Festival in 2024, the annual FarmFest and Local Organic Watermelon Festival, and joint participation with FMO/VMO in various food exhibitions held in Hong Kong (e.g. Vegetarian Food Asia, the Food Expo, HOFEX and Organic Aquaculture Festival, etc.). AFCD and FMO/VMO also held the Happy Hong Kong - A and F Carnival between June 2023 and January 2024 to promote local premium agricultural and fisheries products and foster the sustainable development of the local agriculture and fisheries industries through an array of activities themed on local agricultural and fisheries delicacies.

AFCD has set up a new “Branding and Promotion Sub-committee” under the Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries, which will be responsible for advising on the formulation of promotion strategies and measures for local agricultural and fisheries products. AFCD will consolidate views and suggestions from the agriculture and fisheries sectors, academia and relevant sectors to further promote the building and promotion of the new brand.

As the promotion of local agricultural and fisheries products is absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD, no separate breakdown of the manpower and expenditure is available.

4. On assisting local agricultural and fisheries products to go global, FMO has been exporting and selling local premium fisheries products to the Mainland with tariff-free concessions through the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement since 2021. FMO/VMO will continue to actively participate in the promotional activities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), including participation in the Shenzhen International Fisheries and Seafood Expo and other suitable exhibitions. These efforts aim to promote local premium agricultural and fisheries products to the catering industry, superstores and e-commerce companies

in the Mainland, with a view to increasing the market share of local premium agricultural and fisheries products in the GBA and other markets in the Mainland. AFCD will continue to make optimal use of the existing resources and proactively consider combining the new brand with leisure farming and fisheries activities so as to promote local agricultural and fisheries products and enrich the leisure farming and fisheries experience of the public and tourists while boosting the sales of local agricultural and fisheries products, thereby facilitating internationalisation of the local agricultural and fisheries brand in the long run.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)023

(Question Serial No. 2709)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the application of technologies in combating illegal fishing, please advise of the following:

- a. given that technologies such as unmanned aircraft are already used in some Mainland regions in patrols and enforcement operations targeted at illegal fishing, whether the Government has allocated resources to conduct feasibility studies on the application of technologies such as unmanned aircraft, AI recognition, etc. in combating illegal fishing, and a breakdown of the expenditures involved;
- b. whether the Government will allocate resources to the use of technologies such as unmanned aircraft, etc. in combating illegal fishing in future, and a breakdown of the estimated expenditures.

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

Reply:

- a. and b. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been proactively exploring the possibility of using technology to assist in identifying fishing vessels engaging in illegal fishing and enhancing enforcement efficiency. AFCD has in place a real-time satellite automatic identification system which can assist with the enforcement team's follow-up investigation and tracking by analysing real-time satellite data in relation to vessels, such as their navigation speeds, directions, vessel digital identities, licence numbers and past tracks. AFCD is exploring the possibility of using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to analyse satellite information and videos to further strengthen the capability of analysing past tracks and forecasting the navigation directions of vessels as well as using unmanned aircraft to assist in detection for more effective identification and tracking of fishing vessels suspected of engaging in illegal fishing activities so as to facilitate the planning and investigation of the enforcement team. Besides, AFCD has also participated in a pilot project under the "Low-altitude Economy Regulatory Sandbox" by adopting unmanned aircraft to patrol Hong Kong waters, with a view to covering a large area of waters from an elevated viewpoint of unmanned aircraft and enhancing the capability and efficiency in gathering

intelligence. In addition, AFCD is also developing a video-analytics system by applying video-analytics technology and AI to carry out real-time monitoring of vessels in marine parks for detection of suspected illegal fishing activities.

The expenditure of AFCD on using technology to assist with its sea enforcement tasks over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	3.0
2023-24	4.8
2024-25 (revised estimate)	3.8

AFCD will continue to closely monitor the latest development of the relevant technology and proactively explore how to make further use of advanced technology to enhance the effectiveness of combating illegal fishing.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)024

(Question Serial No. 2718)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the operation of the “sustainable agricultural and fisheries development funds”, please advise on the following:

- (a) the average time for processing each application for the “sustainable agricultural and fisheries development funds”; how the operational effectiveness of the funds is assessed;
- (b) the number of approved projects under the above funds in each of the past 5 years; the average total amount of funding approved each year;
- (c) whether the Government will consider regularising the funding provision of some of the projects, such as veterinary services which have been applying for funding on an ongoing basis, so as to ensure that the funds can continue to support more stakeholders and more diversified projects?

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

Reply:

- (a) Regarding the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF), the processing of an application with all necessary information provided would normally be completed within 6 months.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will review from time to time the effectiveness of approved and completed projects under the two Funds in fostering the sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries. Upon project completion, the grantee should submit a final report and an audited account, specifying the benefits brought to the industry by the approved project and its financial position, as well as share the achievements of the project with the industries. The report will be uploaded onto the website of the respective Funds for public inspection. The Advisory Committees of the two 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. In addition, AFCD will also organise seminars and sharing sessions to share with the industries the achievements of the Funds in promoting diversification and sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries. The industries generally recognise that the relevant projects

can enhance their competitiveness while supporting the sustainable development of the local agriculture and fisheries industries. Overall speaking, since the establishment of the two Funds, progress has been made with initial achievements, benefitting more than 4 570 fishermen/farmers.

- (b) The details of the number of applications approved and the total amount of funding granted under the two Funds over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	SADF		SFDF	
	Number of applications approved*	Total amount granted (\$ million)	Number of applications approved @	Total amount granted (\$ million)
2020	51	8.0	3	19.2
2021	32	16.7	6	51.1
2022	20	30.0	2	12.2
2023	97	34.1	169 [#]	8.2
2024	65	22.5	694 [#]	76.1

[#] The significant increase in the number of approved applications from 2023 onwards is mainly due to the acceptance of fishermen's applications for the Equipment Improvement Project (EIP) in their personal capacity following the expanded coverage of the SFDF and the implementation of enhancement measures.

* Including general applications and those for the Farm Improvement Scheme (FIS)

@ Including general applications and those for the EIP

- (c) With the approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in December 2022, the coverage of the two Funds have been expanded and a series of enhancement measures have been implemented, including the introduction of a new category of "Support Service Projects" to subsidise projects that are of the nature of "providing support services for the sustainable development of the industries", such as veterinary services, organic certification services, assistance in drawing up funding proposals for the industries, publicity and promotion for local fishery/agricultural products, expenditure related to facilitating rehabilitation of fallow farmland, training and encouraging new blood to join the industries, training courses for enhancing the technique of working fishermen/farmers, etc. We will closely monitor the effectiveness of the approved projects, review the future operation and development needs of the industries, while continuing to consult the industries and the Advisory Committees of the Funds, so as to assess the need for continuation of the relevant projects. In the long run, while the industries continue to grow, they can achieve economies of scale in production, and the market may provide the industries with the necessary support services as driven by demand.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)025

(Question Serial No. 2720)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the artificial reef project, has there been any further study of its cost-effectiveness and results, and are there better alternatives, as it relates to developments over the coming 3 years? If yes, what are the details?

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

Reply:

Since 1996, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been implementing the artificial reef (AR) project for marine and fisheries resources enhancement. At present, over 600 units of ARs with a total volume of about 180 000 cubic metres have been deployed in suitable waters of Hong Kong, including marine parks (MPs), important fish spawning and nursery grounds and fish culture zones. Results of underwater monitoring surveys revealed that the deployed ARs supported a higher diversity and abundance of fish species as compared with natural reef habitat. Over 200 species of fish, including many species of high commercial values, such as groupers, snappers and sweetlips, are using the reefs for feeding, shelter and as spawning and nursery areas.

In the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, the deployment of ARs is one of the measures to improve the operating environment of the fisheries industry. To further restore and enhance the resources in MPs and adjacent waters, AFCD commissioned a consultancy study in 2023 to explore marine resources enhancement measures in MPs, including the proposed deployment of ARs or new types of artificial enhancement devices, e.g. coral nursery devices, eco-panels and oyster baskets, in designated MPs to provide marine life with the substratum, thereby enhancing fisheries resources. AFCD has consulted the Marine Parks Committee on the initial recommendations of the consultancy study and is reviewing the study report. The findings of the study will help AFCD set out the direction for the deployment of ARs and other resources enhancement measures in future. Besides, AFCD will conduct monitoring surveys to review the effectiveness of the AR project in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)026

(Question Serial No. 2722)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the transformation plan of the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market, please advise of the following:

the overall estimated expenditure and the breakdown of the expenditure (such as the construction of food processing facilities and catering area) of the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market transformation works; and

the timetable for the transformation plan of the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market.

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

Reply:

Under the efforts of the Invigorating Island South Office of the Development Bureau, the Environment and Ecology Bureau and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, along with the Fish Marketing Organization and other relevant government departments, are studying the feasibility of incorporating a new food and beverage (F&B) building, which is expected to provide F&B, retail, and fisheries product processing facilities, etc. in the vicinity of Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market. We will review the implementation arrangements in a timely manner upon completion of the above study.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)027

(Question Serial No. 2723)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (b) the type of pig and poultry vaccines introduced into the local industry and the expenditure involved respectively over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (c) the total expenditure involved in vaccinating pigs and poultry respectively over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (e) whether the Government will implement any new measures to strengthen the work on prevention of Avian Influenza; 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.: 17)

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 provides financial assistance to the City

University of Hong Kong through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) 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 tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	74.7	74
2023-24	81.9	74
2024-25 (revised estimate)	78.7	71

- (b) & (c) Over the past 3 years, AFCD has been mandatorily requiring all local chicken farms to vaccinate chickens with H5/H7 AI vaccine, which could protect the chickens against both H5 and H7N9 AI viruses, and AFCD provided technical assistance in the process. As the expenditure involved in this area of work was absorbed by AFCD's existing resources, there was no breakdown in this regard.

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 detected in 14 local pig farms in which culling of pigs was required. The number of relevant cases and the cumulative number of pigs culled are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of ASF cases detected in local pig farms in which culling of pigs was required	Cumulative number of pigs culled during the year
2022-23	1	107
2023-24	10	17 457
2024-25 (as at February 2025)	3	6 052

There were no other reports of livestock epidemic over the same period.

- (e) AFCD has been mandatorily requiring all local chicken farms to vaccinate chickens with 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 H5/H7 AI trivalent vaccine. The new vaccine can protect against both H5 and H7N9 AI viruses, and provides better protection against the AI virus strains currently circulating in Asia. AFCD has also been conducting surveillance work in local chicken farms, which include taking chicken and environmental samples for AI virus testing and early detection of potential cases.

(f) AFCD has been closely monitoring the epidemic situation of ASF and taking corresponding measures in a timely manner. In response to the outbreak of ASF in local pig farms, the new measures which have been implemented by AFCD in 2024-25 include:

- (i) amending the licensing conditions of rearing pigs to include testing arrangements for dead pigs and the key biosecurity requirements of local pig farms into the conditions of the Livestock Keeping Licence for local pig farms;
- (ii) strengthening the testing arrangements for ASF prior to the sale of pigs for early detection of positive cases;
- (iii) organising talks and providing training for the pig rearing industry on ASF cases and related follow-up matters, as well as advising on preventive and control measures against ASF, with a view to assisting pig farms in implementing biosecurity measures applicable to their farms as soon as possible to curb the spread of ASF in local pig farms;
- (iv) collaborating with international veterinary experts in conducting epidemiological investigations on outbreaks of ASF in local pig farms, as well as providing the guidelines on biosecurity measures to local pig farms;
- (v) launching the Guidelines for Reporting ASF Cases to enhance pig farmers' understanding of the symptoms of ASF and assist them in detecting suspected cases for early identification and reporting of abnormality of pig and appropriate follow-up actions;
- (vi) installing surveillance cameras to strengthen monitoring of wild pig activities in the vicinity of local pig farms, and setting up cage traps to capture wild pigs as necessary;
- (vii) continue working with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on a regular surveillance programme for ASF in local wild pig carcasses; for early detection of potential cases, collecting samples from humanely dispatched wild pigs for ASF testing under the programme;
- (viii) distributing sampling materials, rapid antigen test kits for ASF virus and protective clothing to all local pig farms in a timely manner to assist pig farmers in stepping up prevention of the disease; and
- (ix) disseminating the latest information on ASF via SMS groups in the event of an outbreak of ASF, as well as maintaining close liaison with pig farmers in the form of videos and following up on the health of pigs on farms in order to provide appropriate assistance to the relevant pig farmers and reduce the biosecurity risks posed by the movement of people in and out of the farms.

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)028

(Question Serial No. 2724)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the development of modernised pond fish culture, please advise of the following:

- a. the size of waters in which modernised pond fish culture is practiced and the production over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- b. the culture area to be expanded and the target production in the coming year (2024-25 to 2025-26).

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

Reply:

- a. and b. The pond fish culture industry in Hong Kong has mainly been practising the traditional mode of operation. Pond fish farmers generally adopt manual labour or relatively low-tech equipment to assist with their traditional fish culture operations. To promote the modernisation and sustainable development of the local agriculture and fisheries industries, the Government has set out specific development directions and targets for modernised pond fish culture in the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries. At present, only a small number of fish farmers are using modernised equipment, such as water quality monitors and automatic feeding machines, to assist in their fish culture business. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not have figures on the implementation of modernised pond fish culture at present.

To encourage the industry to adopt modernised aquaculture technologies, AFCD will use the Au Tau Fisheries Office (Fisheries Office) in Yuen Long as a demonstration farm to introduce modernised aquaculture equipment and a smart aquaculture management platform so as to promote the use of relevant technologies and provide support to the industry. In this regard, AFCD will try out the container eco-culture system in the fish ponds at the Fisheries Office. It is expected that the system will be established by the third quarter of 2025 for promoting the use of the relevant technologies and providing support to the industry.

Looking ahead, AFCD will provide suitable land and infrastructure in the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park (SPS WCP) for developing modernised aquaculture. AFCD is now conducting an investigation study on the SPS WCP to make initial recommendations on the setting up, design, layout, management, etc. of the park (including the proposed introduction of modernised aquaculture facilities). AFCD will set the target production volume upon completion of the study.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)029

(Question Serial No. 2726)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the promotion of the application of agricultural and fisheries technologies, please advise of the following:

- a. the respective service items and expenditures on infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, as well as training of talents provided by the Government to fishermen and farmers over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- b. the application of innovative technologies in the agriculture and fisheries industries over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) (coverage of application, application area and increase in unit output), with a breakdown by different technical projects;
- c. the implementation schedule and expected targets for promoting the application of technologies in new marine fish culture zones, including deep sea mariculture?

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

Reply:

- a. Regarding the support for agricultural infrastructure, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has established an Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) in Kwu Tung South. Agri-Park Phase 1 (with an area of about 11 hectares) has progressively commenced operation since late 2022, and the Government is now proactively preparing for the planning work of Agri-Park Phase 2 First Stage (with an area of about 19 hectares). Meanwhile, the Government facilitated the establishment of a "Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park" within part of the undeveloped farmland at Agri-Park Phase 2 (with an area of about 11 hectares) led by a local agricultural organisation through the public-private partnership approach. The agricultural organisation completed the open application process for letting the first phase of the farmland in late 2024. The expenditure of AFCD involved in the relevant measures in each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows (Table 1):

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	16.2
2023-24	10.6
2024-25(revised estimate)	29.3

Regarding the support for fisheries infrastructure, specific projects in support of deep-sea mariculture include the operation of a modern mariculture demonstration farm equipped with a steel truss cage at the Tung Lung Chau Fish Culture Zone (FCZ) to provide mariculture demonstration and technical training for the industry and those who are interested in engaging in deep-sea mariculture. To further expand the scope for development of mariculture industry, AFCD also designated 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Mirs Bay, Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast) in December 2023, providing an area of about 590 hectares for mariculture. The new FCZs are located in open waters with better currents, which facilitate the adoption of modern aquaculture facilities and technology such as steel truss cages or high density polyethylene (HDPE) gravity-type cages with resistance to strong wind and wave, as well as automated feeding and real-time monitoring systems. The establishment of the new FCZs facilitates fishermen to operate aquaculture in an intensification mode, and promotes and assists fishermen in switching to a modernised and sustainable mode of operation, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the local fisheries industry. Marine fish culture licences for operation in FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were open for application in the fourth quarter of 2024, and the first batch of licences is expected to be issued by mid-2025 at the earliest. In addition, to lower the start-up costs for fishermen to develop deep-sea mariculture, the industry may apply to the SFDF for setting up and operating new deep-sea cages to facilitate sustainable development in terms of intensification of production. AFCD will also set up modernised steel truss cages and other types of deep-sea cages with Government funding in the new FCZs for renting to fishermen associations/organisations. It is expected that the relevant facilities will be set up in batches in the new FCZs from 2025 onwards.

Regarding the development of modernised pond fish culture, AFCD encourages fish farmers to gradually enhance the use of modern technologies that can complement the operation of traditional fish ponds, such as remote real-time monitoring systems, smart control facilities and renewable energy systems. AFCD also explores with fish farmers the development of eco-friendly pond fish culture with a view to maintaining the ecosystems while ensuring the economic benefits of fisheries production to achieve a balance between aquaculture and conservation. AFCD will use the Au Tau Fisheries Office (Fisheries Office) in Yuen Long as a demonstration point to introduce modernised aquaculture equipment and a smart aquaculture management platform so as to promote the use of relevant technologies and provide support to the industry. In this regard, AFCD will try out the container eco-culture system in the fish ponds at the Fisheries Office. It is expected that the system will be established by the third quarter of 2025 for promoting the use of the relevant technologies and providing support to the industry. In addition, a small number of inland aquaculture farms in Hong Kong are now using indoor recirculating aquaculture systems in fish production to increase the aquaculture production volume and efficiency. AFCD will provide technical support to further promote similar high-density, high-tech and high-yield culture operations.

Looking ahead, AFCD will develop modernised aquaculture at the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park and provide suitable land and infrastructure. We plan to establish “ecologically-enhanced fishponds” of some 200 hectares to serve the dual functions of nature conservation and pond fish culture, as well as a “fisheries enhancement area” of about 40 hectares to pursue high-density, high-tech and high-yield aquaculture operations.

The expenditure of AFCD involved in supporting the above measures in relation to fisheries infrastructure over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows (Table 2):

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	12.7
2023-24	11.2
2024-25 (revised estimate)	14.2

AFCD has been providing technical support and introducing modern technology and practices to local fishermen and farmers with a view to promoting the modernisation and sustainable development of the local agriculture and fisheries industries. The work in relation to fisheries industry includes: (i) implementing the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme to promote good aquaculture practices such as enhancing biosecurity, feed management and the aquaculture system; (ii) applying new technologies in the monitoring of aquaculture environment; (iii) exploring and introducing new culture technology and facilities; and (iv) introducing new high-value culture species such as pearl oysters and lobsters in addition to new fish species. The work in relation to agricultural industry includes: (i) promotion of organic farming; (ii) implementation of the Accredited Farm Scheme, such as providing guidance to farmers on the adoption of good horticultural practices and the proper use of pesticides to improve the quality of vegetables; (iii) development and promotion of new farming techniques, such as multi-layer farming and smart greenhouse, to raise productivity; (iv) demonstration of controlled environment hydroponic farming and showcasing the related equipment through the Controlled Environment Hydroponic Research and Development Centre; (v) introduction of new or improved crop varieties for local propagation; (vi) promotion of an integrated pest and disease control management system; and (vii) introduction and promotion of the use of various modern farm machinery through the farm machinery and equipment lending services to raise productivity. AFCD has also organised technical seminars, workshops and training programmes to promote the above advanced production technologies to local fishermen and farmers, with a view to assisting them in enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of their farms. In addition, AFCD and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) also co-organise aquaculture-related programmes covering mariculture and pond fish culture, aquatic product processing, marketing and promotion, etc. IVE will launch the “Diploma in Modernised Aquaculture” programme in the second quarter of 2025.

The expenditure involved in the above technical support and training work over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows (Table 3):

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	78.3
2023-24	75.4
2024-25 (revised estimate)	80.0

Besides, AFCD provides financial support through 2 sustainable development funds (the SFDF and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF)) to assist the industries in providing technical assistance and vocational training to farmers and fishermen as well as those who intend to join the agriculture and fisheries industries. Details of the approved projects over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Title of approved projects	Amount of grant approved (\$ million)
SFDF	
Recreational Fishing Development and Fishermen Training Programme (Southern District)	6.3
Fish Pump Sharing Project	1.2
Aquaculture Practices Enhancement and Support Services in Hong Kong	11.7
Fishermen Enhancement Training Course — Subsidy for local fishermen holding Mainland Marine Fisheries Officer Certificates to upgrade their local certificates of competency	1.2
Promoting proper design of bright light apparatus for fishing	1.0
SADF	
Field trials to compare common melon/fruits flies control methods in Hong Kong	1.0
Pilot Scheme on Marketing and Branding of Graded Local Vegetables	14.9
Application of advanced health management to enhance the productivity of chicken flocks, as well as the food safety and quality of chicken meat	14.4
Introduction of technology and health management tools to enhance production efficiency, product safety and quality of pig farming industry in Hong Kong	15.0
Architectural Design Guidelines for Multilayer Livestock Farms	2.0
Comprehensive Agricultural Support and Promotion Scheme 2.0	14.2
Hong Kong Seed Technology and Education Center 2.0	14.9
Research and Development of Bio-Fortification Technology for Precision Hydroponics	3.6
Management, Operation and Support for an Organic Certification System, and Publicity and Education of Organic Certification	14.9

Title of approved projects	Amount of grant approved (\$ million)
Study of New Catalytic Oxidation Technology for Controlling Odour Emission and Bacterial Growth in Pig Farms	2.0

- b. Over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), innovation and technology (I&T) projects initiated by AFCD for application in agriculture include promoting the farming technology of controlled-environment greenhouse to enhance farm productivity by controlling the growing environment of crops as well as preventing pests and diseases, and developing and promoting hydroponic farming that can be carried out vertically to increase production per unit area and enhance production efficiency.

I&T projects initiated for application in the fisheries industry include promoting the use of wave resistant cage systems for deep sea mariculture (see (a) for implementation details); using small unmanned aircraft to assist in red tide monitoring in Hong Kong waters; monitoring phytoplankton in FCZs using a real-time phytoplankton monitoring system equipped with artificial intelligence analytic technology; and promoting the use of recirculation aquaculture systems.

In December 2023, the Government released the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries (the Blueprint), which was formulated in collaboration with the industries to promote the application of I&T in the industries and move towards a modernised mode of operation. As the promotion of I&T in the agriculture and fisheries industries is still at the initial stage, it is not yet possible to assess the effectiveness. AFCD will assist the industry in actively implementing the above measures and will review the effectiveness of each project in a timely manner.

- c. AFCD designated 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Mirs Bay, Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast) in December 2023, providing an area of about 590 hectares for mariculture. Marine fish culture licences for operation in the FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were open for application in the fourth quarter of 2024, and the first batch of licences is expected to be issued by mid-2025 at the earliest. We expect that the production of marine fish culture in 2027 will be double that of 2022.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)030****(Question Serial No. 2727)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the development of leisure fisheries, please advise of the following:

- a. the number of fish raft licenses issued for leisure fishing over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- b. the number of leisure fishing projects in progress and the number of participants;
- c. the number of training activities offered to help fishermen transform their operations and the number of participants over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- d. support measures to be taken by the Government in future to promote the development of leisure fisheries, such as pier ancillary facilities, staff training and publicity programmes, and the specific estimate and plan?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)Reply:

- a. The number of Recreational Fishing Consent Letters issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of Recreational Fishing Consent Letters issued
2022-23	64
2023-24	66
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	64

- b. Apart from allowing holders of marine fish culture licences to open up their fish rafts for the operation of leisure fishing, AFCD also subsidises projects relating to leisure fisheries through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF), including “Hong Kong Pearl Farm Centre” and “Recreational Fishing Development and Fishermen Training Programme (Southern District)”. The number of participants in the said leisure fisheries projects over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of participants		
	Fish rafts for leisure fishing	“Hong Kong Pearl Farm Centre”	“Recreational Fishing Development and Fishermen Training Programme (Southern District)”
2022-23	56 081	3 525	Not applicable
2023-24	71 928	2 444	5 221
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	65 170	1 463	921

- c. AFCD provides training to local capture fishermen and fish farmers on an ongoing basis, 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 field visits, covering different areas such as local coxswain training, maritime safety knowledge and practical skills, aquaculture technologies and development of leisure fisheries. The number of training activities offered to help fishermen transform their business and the number of participants over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of training activities	Number of participants
2022-23	16	271
2023-24	17	351
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	13	231

- d. The Government has been actively promoting the sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries and proposed in the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries to create favourable conditions, including providing supporting measures conducive to the development of fisheries industry; offering training, financial and technical support for fishermen; enhancing publicity and promotion; relaxing restrictions in laws and regulations, etc, to promote diversified development of the fisheries industry. To promote leisure fisheries, AFCD has funded projects through SFDF to establish and develop leisure fisheries, such as the “Recreational Fishing Development and Fishermen Training Programme (Southern District)” and the “Fishery & Eco, Conservation Program (Cheung Chau Waters/Northeastern Waters)” projects, which aim to plan and take forward brand activities on leisure fisheries in the communities, support the industry in developing “community-based leisure fisheries” projects centred around the communities and establish an operation mode for leisure fisheries, while helping fishermen enhance their skills in operating leisure fisheries activities, as well as the “Hong Kong Pearl Farm Centre” project, which aims to assist fish farmers in switching to the high value-added pearl cultivation industry and develop pearl eco-tours.

In addition, to help marine fish farmers diversify their business, AFCD has launched a scheme allowing holders of marine fish culture licences to operate leisure fishing business on their fish rafts. As at February 2025, a total of about 50 licensees in 11 fish culture zones (FCZs) have been permitted to operate the relevant business. In January

2025, AFCD implemented enhancement measures, allowing fish farmers to provide simple food and beverages, including pre-packaged pre-cooked dim sum, cup noodles, pre-packaged snacks, or pre-packaged or bottled non-alcoholic beverages, to visitors participating in leisure fishing on the premise of not affecting the fish culture operations or the culture environment within the FCZs, so as to further promote the diversified development of leisure fisheries and open up new sources of income for fish farmers.

Moreover, to promote diversified development of the industry, AFCD is actively exploring the development of inland leisure fisheries. The initial plan is to make reference to the “Agri enJoy” Scheme and facilitate the provision of leisure activities in fish ponds engaged in commercial food fish culture as their ancillary businesses, so as to promote the development of inland leisure fish farms. AFCD is also exploring the possibility of allowing fishermen to use their vessels for both fishing and leisure activities (i.e. dual uses of vessels), which can help fishermen transform their business. AFCD is also progressively establishing a platform for publicity to enhance promotion of local leisure fisheries, such as setting up a search engine for leisure fisheries information to provide the public with information on leisure fisheries activities in a more convenient manner. In addition, AFCD will continue to promote and introduce various leisure fisheries activities through different channels such as social media platforms and by organising large-scale events to enhance public awareness and participation, thereby creating opportunities for the fisheries industry to attract the industry to transform their business.

AFCD will also continue to provide training and technical support for fishermen to help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to develop leisure fisheries. AFCD will continue to explore the enhancement of the existing measures, so as to assist the fisheries industry in developing leisure fisheries projects with Hong Kong characteristics and offer the public rich and diversified leisure experiences.

As the manpower and financial expenditure for the promotion of leisure fisheries is absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD, no separate breakdown is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)031

(Question Serial No. 2729)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the development of leisure farming, please advise of the following:

- a. the respective numbers of applications submitted and successful applications under the “Agri enJoy” Scheme launched by the Government in 2024; the average processing time for each application;
- b. whether the Government will consider lifting restrictions for leisure farming on the policy front apart from the “Agri enJoy” Scheme, so that more leisure farming activities can be offered.

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

Reply:

- a. To promote the development of leisure farming, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched the “Agri enJoy” Scheme in June 2024 to assist farms mainly engaged in commercial crop production in providing leisure activities as their ancillary business, so as to facilitate farmers’ marketing of their agricultural products and improve visitor experiences. As at February 2025, AFCD received a total of 101 applications, among which 83 farms have been granted approval to join the Scheme. The average processing time for each application was about 3 weeks.
- b. To facilitate the organisation of such ancillary activities by “Agri enJoy” farms, the Government has reviewed the relevant laws and regulations and relaxed restrictions to allow room for the development of the industry, including the inclusion of ancillary activities directly related to commercial crop production as endorsed by the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation in the definition of “Agricultural Use” in statutory plans, and to provide assistance to “Agri enJoy” farms in applying for food business licence to sell light meals with self-grown crops and non-flame cooking. Based on the experience gained from the implementation of the Scheme and the feedback of the industry, the Government will review the permitted leisure activities in

“Agri enJoy” farms in a timely manner to further enhance the relevant measures and provide the trade with more room for development of leisure farming.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)032

(Question Serial No. 2731)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the effectiveness of promoting local agricultural and fisheries products and brands, please advise of the following:

- a. the number of local agricultural and fisheries brand promotion activities (such as FarmFest), total attendance, number of stalls and sales over the past 3 years with a breakdown by activity;
- b. apart from organising publicity programmes, whether the Government has evaluated the effectiveness of branding of local agricultural and fisheries products over the past 3 years; if yes, the details; if not, whether key performance indicators (KPIs) will be set;
- c. regarding the plan of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to set up a new "Subcommittee on Branding and Promotion" under the Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries in 2025, the expenditure and manpower involved, and the expected outcome; and
- d. regarding the Government's proposal to establish unified production standards for local agricultural and fisheries products, the specific plans, implementation timetable, and allocation of financial resources involved?

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

Reply:

- a. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been providing proactive assistance to the agriculture and fisheries industries to promote their local premium products, including the organisation of the 75th National Day Farm and Gourmet Festival in 2024, the annual FarmFest and Local Organic Watermelon Festival, and joint participation with Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) and Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) in various food exhibitions held in Hong Kong (e.g. Vegetarian Food Asia, the Food Expo, HOFEX and Organic Aquaculture Festival, etc.). AFCD and FMO/VMO also held the Happy Hong Kong - A and F Carnival between June 2023 and January 2024 to promote local premium agricultural and fisheries products and foster the sustainable development of the local agricultural and fisheries industries through an array of activities themed on local agricultural and fisheries delicacies. The attendance,

the number of booths and the volume of on-site sales of various brand promotional events for local agricultural and fisheries over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Name of event	2022			2023			2024		
	Attendance (‘000)	Number of booths	Sales (\$ million)	Attendance (‘000)	Number of booths	Sales^ (\$ million)	Attendance (‘000)	Number of booths	Sales^ (\$ million)
FarmFest	910*	63*	0.3*	90	317	4.9	160	402	5.9
Local Organic Watermelon Festival	2	17	0.1^	40	20	0.6	30	20	0.4
75th National Day Farm and Gourmet Festival	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	86	0.8
Happy Hong Kong - A and F Carnival: Lok Fu Fishermen’s and Farmers’ Market	-	-	-	40	14	0.2	-	-	-
Happy Hong Kong: National Day Celebration Carnival at Yuen Long FarmKet	-	-	-	50	104	0.5	-	-	-
Total	912	80	0.4	220	455	6.2	240	508	7.1

* Due to COVID-19 and the avoidance of crowds, the 2022 FarmFest was held online. The relevant figures are the total number of visits to the online event platform of FarmFest, the number of exhibitors and the total sales.

^ The sales only include the total on-site sales of agricultural and fisheries products.

- b. Besides organising promotional events, AFCD currently assists the local agricultural and fisheries industries to enhance the quality of their products and build their brands through various schemes. For agricultural products, the Accredited Farm Scheme provides farmers with services including carrying out pre-harvest sampling of vegetables for pesticide residue analysis, assisting them in the proper use of pesticides, as well as the adoption of environmentally-friendly crop production methods and good horticultural practices, so as to enhance the quality of vegetables and create a premium and safe brand. Currently, a total of 280 farms in Hong Kong have participated in this voluntary scheme. For fisheries products, the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme enhances the quality of locally cultured fisheries products through a quality assurance system, which helps build a premium and safe brand. Accredited fisheries products sold in the market bear a traceable quick response (QR) code fish tag, by which consumers can obtain information on the origin of the products, food safety test results, details and contact of the fish farm, etc. At present, 175 fish farms (87 pond fish farms and 88 marine fish farms) in Hong Kong have participated in the scheme.

To facilitate consumers purchasing local agricultural and fisheries products, AFCD and FMO/VMO have jointly developed the “Local Fresh” mobile app and shopping website. Moreover, apart from setting up “Local Fresh” physical

stores, FMO/VMO have also established regular sales channels with a number of retailers to sell their local premium agricultural and fisheries products, with around 100 sales locations, including large supermarkets, special retail outlets and markets. AFCD and FMO/VMO also organise regular holiday bazaars at the physical stores and thematic sales activities at supermarket chains to enhance publicity. Overall, the Government's efforts in promoting the brand of local agricultural and fisheries products are fairly effective.

- c. and d. AFCD has set up a new "Subcommittee on Branding and Promotion" under the Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries, which is responsible for advising on the formulation of promotion strategies and measures for local agricultural and fisheries products. AFCD will consolidate views and suggestions from the agricultural and fisheries sectors, academia and relevant sectors to further promote the building and promotion of the new brand.

On the branding of local agricultural and fisheries products, in order to increase their competitiveness, AFCD plans to establish a unified new brand for safe, low-carbon and premium local agricultural and fisheries products (the new brand) covering various locally produced agricultural and fisheries products, and to establish production standards, farming methods as well as a certification and traceability system for these products to ensure that the quality is up to standard. AFCD is carrying out preparatory work with the local certification body, fishermen and agricultural organisations, and other stakeholders. At the same time, AFCD encourages farmers and fishermen, wholesalers, retailers and the catering sector to adopt a traceability model for the production, processing, sales and cooking of local agricultural and fisheries products, and enables consumers to obtain information on the origin of the products and fish farms/agricultural farms where they were produced from the traceability labels. AFCD and the certification body will make reference to international experiences when formulating a certification system that applies to the local agricultural and fisheries products and will fully consult the industries and relevant stakeholders before launching the new brand to ensure that the system standards are widely accepted by the industries. AFCD is actively striving to build the unified new brand in 2025/26. AFCD will also actively encourage the industries and relevant organisations to make good use of the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund to promote the new brand, so as to promote the safe, low-carbon and premium agricultural and fisheries products of Hong Kong to locals, the catering sector and the Mainland market. As the promotion of local agricultural and fisheries products is absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD, no separate breakdown of the manpower and expenditure is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)033

(Question Serial No. 2733)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the name, location, size and date of establishment of the marine parks and the marine reserve currently established and to be established as well as the size of the core areas or restricted zones therein. Please also provide a map showing the boundary of the marine parks and the 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 upon the establishment of the marine parks and the marine reserve and over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (c) the number of enforcement operations and their effectiveness against illegal fishing activities (including capture, angling as well as any other method) in marine parks over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25).

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

Reply:

- (a) The information on the name, location, size, core area size and date of designation of the current designated 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 upon establishment	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve ⁽ⁱ⁾	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP) ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	409	N/A	N/A	N/A
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park (YCTMP) ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	409	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (SCLKCMP) ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	208	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park (TPCMP) ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾	280	N/A	N/A	N/A
The Brothers Marine Park ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	472	1 419	1 549	1 661
Southwest Lantau Marine Park (SWLMP) ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	742	1 407	1 543	1 660
South Lantau Marine Park (SLMP) ^{(iii) (iv)}	1 384	1 384	1 518	1 650
North Lantau Marine Park (NLMP) ^{(iii) (iv)}	637	N/A	N/A	637

(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) Commercial fishing in the 4 specified marine parks (namely HHWMP, YCTMP, SCLKCMP and TPCMP) has been banned since 1 April 2020.

(iii) Some fishing permits cover The Brothers Marine Park, SWLMP, SLMP and/or NLMP concurrently.

(iv) SLMP and NLMP were established in June 2022 and November 2024 respectively.

- (c) The number of enforcement/prosecutions for 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 (\$)
2022-23	11	13,200
2023-24	11	7,300
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	24*	17,000

* Including 15 cases of enforcement in progress.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) set up a sea enforcement team to focus on combatting illegal fishing activities in local waters (including the marine parks and the marine reserve), and enforced the relevant legislation to combat illegal fishing activities through a risk-based approach by deploying resources flexibly to conduct random and targeted patrols in the marine parks and the marine reserve having regard to the circumstances and intelligence collected.

AFCD will continue to exchange intelligence with relevant government departments and Mainland authorities and adjust the enforcement strategy from time to time in the light of circumstances with a view to making joint efforts to combat illegal fishing activities.

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	27.0	35
2023-24	31.8	43
2024-25 (revised estimate)	35.8	43

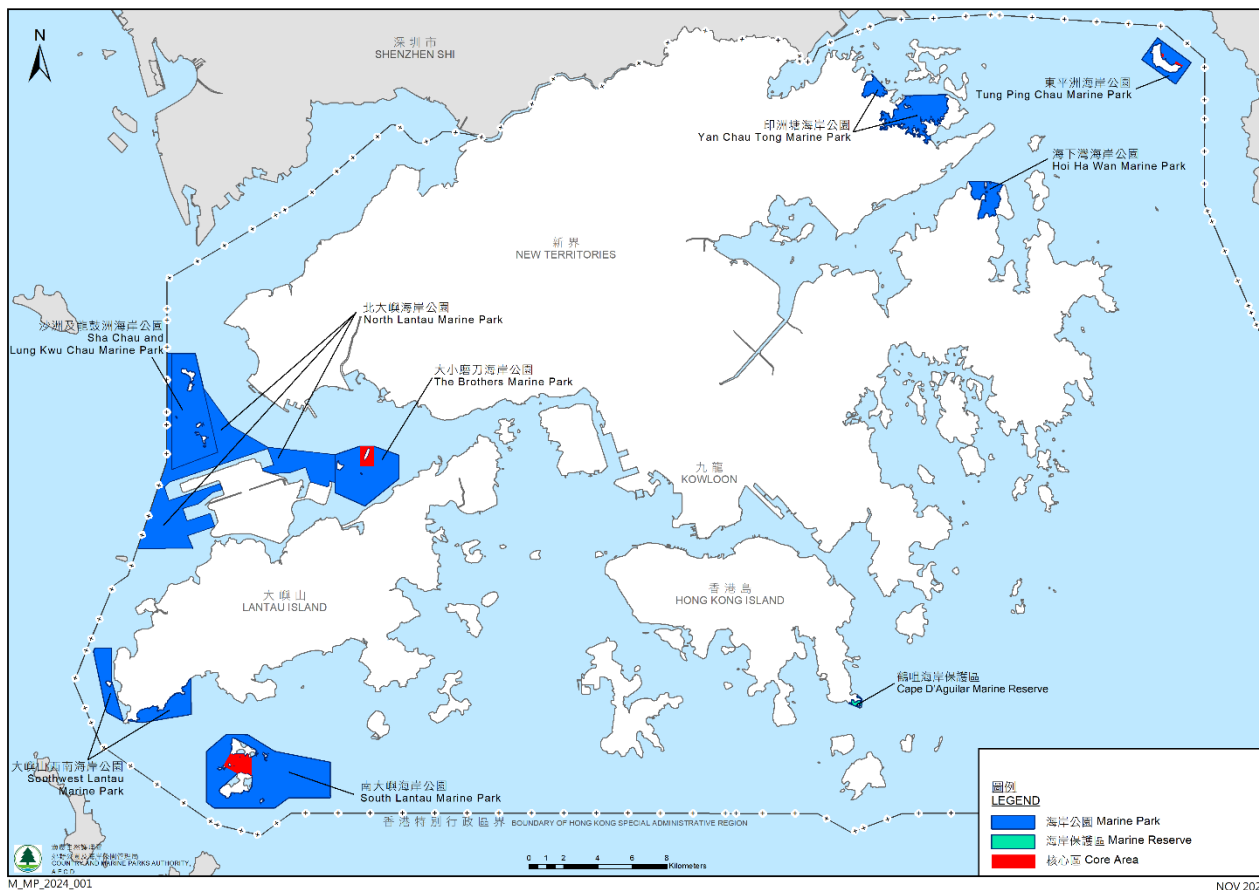
AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the figures involved in combatting illegal fishing activities in marine parks.

- (e) The sea enforcement team of AFCD has deployed 8 vessels for regular and targeted patrols at random hours (including night time and early morning) to combat illegal fishing in local waters (including the marine parks and the marine reserve). AFCD officers, when discharging duties on other vessels, will also stay vigilant to any illegal fishing activities, and notify AFCD's enforcement team and the Marine Police for follow-ups.

The number of patrols conducted in the marine parks and the marine reserve over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of patrols
2022-23	3 410
2023-24	3 485
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	3 355

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 of 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	Waters enclosing the airport in northern Lantau	2 400	0	Nov 2024



- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)034****(Question Serial No. 2734)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the work on combatting illegal fishing, please advise of the following:

- (a) the respective numbers of patrols and joint operations conducted in each of the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) in marine parks/marine reserve in Hong Kong. Please set out by location;
- (b) the respective figures in relation to illegal fishing cases in the marine parks/marine reserve mentioned in item (a) in each of the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25): (i) the number of complaint cases received; (ii) the number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations but no arrest was successfully made; (iii) the number of persons arrested and the number of cases involved; (iv) the number of persons convicted and the number of cases involved; (v) the maximum and minimum penalties imposed on the convicted persons; and (vi) the number of repeat offenders arrested and the number of cases involved (please set them out in the table below);

	Year		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Number of complaint cases received			
Number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was successfully made)			
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)			
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)			
The 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 each of the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) in Hong Kong waters (except in various marine parks/marine reserve) set out below;

		Year		
		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
The entire Hong Kong waters	(i)			
	(ii)			
The waters near Cheung Chau	(i)			
	(ii)			
The waters near Shek Kwu Chau	(i)			
	(ii)			
The waters near Soko Islands	(i)			
	(ii)			
The waters off The Brothers	(i)			
	(ii)			
The waters off Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau	(i)			
	(ii)			

- (d) the respective figures in relation to illegal fishing cases in the waters mentioned in item (c) in each of the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25): (i) the number of complaint cases received; (ii) the number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations but no arrest was successfully made; (iii) the number of persons arrested and the number of cases involved; (iv) the number of persons convicted and the number of cases involved; (v) the maximum and minimum penalties imposed on the convicted persons; and (vi) the number of repeat offenders arrested and the number of cases involved (please set them out in the table below);

	Year		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Number of complaint cases received			
Number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was successfully made)			
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)			
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)			
The maximum and minimum penalties			
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)			

- (e) whether the Government will consider strengthening the measures to combat illegal fishing, including: (i) purchasing additional patrol vessels; (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 over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (g) the number of patrol vessels deployed and the coverage and number of patrols conducted against illegal fishing throughout the territory over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- (h) the illegal fishing practices detected during patrols or joint operations over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), and the respective numbers and percentages involved.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

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		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park	Patrol	603	644	604
	Joint operation	31	24	25
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park	Patrol	541	519	470
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park	Patrol	367	407	327
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park	Patrol	401	357	299
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve	Patrol	410	460	410
	Joint operation	0	0	0
The Brothers Marine Park	Patrol	375	398	311
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Southwest Lantau Marine Park	Patrol	487	485	479
	Joint operation	0	0	0
South Lantau Marine Park [#]	Patrol	226	215	303
	Joint operation	0	0	0
North Lantau Marine Park [#]	Patrol			152
	Joint operation			0

[#] The South Lantau Marine Park was established in June 2022; the North Lantau Marine Park was established in November 2024.

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

Item	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Number of complaints received	17	11	27
Number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was successfully made)	27 (16)	44 (31)	74 (49)
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)	11 (11)	13 (13)	25 (25)
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)	11 (11)	11 (11)	9 (9)
The minimum and maximum penalties imposed	A fine of \$800 to \$2,000	A fine of \$500 to \$1,000	A fine of \$1,500 to \$2,000
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

- (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		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
The entire Hong Kong waters	(i)	2 038	2 343	2 232
	(ii)	145	135	147
The waters around Cheung Chau, Shek Kwu Chau and Soko Islands	(i)	317	302	372
	(ii)	49	39	44
The waters off The Brothers and Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau	(i)	252	226	205
	(ii)	25	26	31

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

Item	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Number of complaints received	162	205	229
Number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was successfully made)	65 (58)	100 (91)	96 (82)
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)	7 (16)	9 (25)	14 (34)

Item	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Number of successful prosecutions [^] (number of persons successfully prosecuted)	6 (11)	14 (30)	11* (31)
The minimum and maximum penalties imposed	A fine of \$1,000 to \$10,000	A fine of \$1,000 to \$20,000; imprisonment for 2 to 6 weeks	A fine of \$1,000 to \$20,000; imprisonment for 3 weeks to 2 months
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (3)

[^] Including cases with successful arrests and follow-up investigations.

* As at February 2025, 7 cases in 2024-25 are 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 relevant government departments (such as the Marine Police) and Mainland law enforcement agencies to exchange information and intelligence and, having regard to the circumstances and intelligence gathered, mounts joint operations (including using the “vessel arrest system” to intercept fishing vessels 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.

AFCD has set up an enforcement team at sea comprising 43 members and 8 patrol vessels to combat illegal fishing activities. It 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 acquire information about these vessels, such as their past navigation routes, locations and numbers of suspicious vessels, etc. for follow-up investigation and tracking by the enforcement team. In addition, AFCD works with fishermen associations and fishermen help gather intelligence regarding illegal fishing by using their fishing vessels. Together with the analysis of real-time satellite data, this would help AFCD 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 been actively studying the use of unmanned aircraft to detect illegal fishing activities, and will continue to study the use of artificial intelligence for analysing information such as satellite positioning and videos to detect illegal fishing activities.

- (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)
2022-23	27.0	35
2023-24	31.8	43
2024-25 (revised estimate)	35.8	43

- (g) AFCD has deployed 8 vessels for regular and targeted patrols at random hours (including nighttime and early morning) to combat illegal fishing activities 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-up. 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	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Shrimp trawling	43	66.2	58	58.0	56	58.4
Hang trawling	4	6.2	16	16.0	3	3.2
Stern trawling	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Pair trawling	3	4.6	8	8.0	1	1.0
Purse seining	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Gill netting	12	18.4	12	12.0	17	17.7
Cage trapping*	3	4.6	3	3.0	16	16.7
Long lining	0	0.0	1	1.0	1	1.0
Set netting	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Others	0	0.0	2	2.0	0	0.0
Total	65	100.0	100	100.0	96	100.0

* Including the fishing practice using the tool commonly known as "snake cage"

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)035****(Question Serial No. 2736)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

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)[^]
2022	6 139	4 343	10 324	2,170
2023	6 260	4 340	10 239	2,353
2024	6 125	4 412	10 181	2,404

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)036

(Question Serial No. 2739)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2022-23 to 2024-25)? Please set out the information with a breakdown by the 18 districts.

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

Reply:

- (a) As at December 2024, there were about 2 400 crop farms (including those growing vegetables, flowers and orchards) with a total cultivated area of about 714 hectares. These farms were mainly located in the North District and Yuen Long. Amongst these crop farms, there were 384 organic vegetable farms which had joined the Organic Farming Support Service Scheme of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department with a total agricultural land area of about 104 hectares. In addition, there were 64 farms which had joined the “Agri enJoy” Scheme with a total farm area of about 31 hectares. There were also 16 farms located in industrial buildings in Sham Shui Po, Kwun Tong, Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sai Kung, Tuen Mun and Eastern districts with a total area of about 8 000 m².

The number and distribution of vegetable marketing co-operative societies (VMCSs) and vegetable depots by district as at December 2024 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 December 2024 is as follows:

- (i) There were a total of 912 licensed marine fish culture farms with about 1 920 fish rafts in the 28 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 1 409 fish ponds, mainly located in the Northwest New Territories. The size of pond fish farms ranged from about 80 to 425 000 m².
- (iii) There were about 10 000 oyster rafts in Deep Bay, the size of which ranged from about 100 to 300 m².

* The 28 designated FCZs are 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), Tung Lung Chau, Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay 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 December 2024 are tabulated as follows:

Pig farms

	2024		
	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)
1	Yuen Long	384.65	300
2	Yuen Long	626.82	450
3	Yuen Long	706.90	1 000
4	Yuen Long	838.59	1 500
5	Yuen Long	902.78	1 000
6	Yuen Long	938.49	850
7	Yuen Long	1 142.90	600

	2024		
	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)
8	Yuen Long	1 180.97	1 200
9	Yuen Long	1 327.53	1 000
10	Yuen Long	1 374.87	1 200
11	Yuen Long	1 709.24	1 500
12	Yuen Long	1 725.58	1 900
13	Yuen Long	1 864.27	600
14	Yuen Long	1 923.26	1 500
15	Yuen Long	2 105.33	1 990
16	Yuen Long	2 146.27	1 600
17	Yuen Long	2 220.09	1 000
18	Yuen Long	2 614.85	2 000
19	Yuen Long	2 765.33	2 600
20	Yuen Long	2 860.03	1 500
21	Yuen Long	2 960.03	3 500
22	Yuen Long	3 015.53	2 000
23	Yuen Long	3 130.14	1 500
24	Yuen Long	3 205.77	2 000
25	Yuen Long	3 837.72	1 800
26	Yuen Long	3 914.32	3 000
27	Yuen Long	3 955.47	2 500
28	Yuen Long	3 965.31	2 000
29	Yuen Long	4 106.13	3 000
30	Yuen Long	4 248.04	3 000
31	Yuen Long	4 524.78	2 600
32	Yuen Long	5 085.70	1 500
33	Yuen Long	6 345.66	6 000
34	Yuen Long	7 108.62	4 000
35	North	556.96	250
36	North	557.91	800
37	North	691.19	500
38	North	1 239.02	1 500
39	North	1 280.91	600
40	North	1 611.16	950
41	North	2 407.85	2 000
42	North	4 953.09	4 000
43	Sai Kung	388.79	350
Total		104 448.85	74 640

Chicken farms

	2024		
	District	Licensed area (m ²)	Licensed capacity (number)
1	Yuen Long	387.23	10 000
2	Yuen Long	569.30	25 000
3	Yuen Long	648.36	20 000
4	Yuen Long	682.16	19 000
5	Yuen Long	723.86	19 900
6	Yuen Long	775.26	20 000
7	Yuen Long	948.17	18 000
8	Yuen Long	1 067.54	31 000
9	Yuen Long	1 137.70	48 000
10	Yuen Long	1 250.84	42 000
11	Yuen Long	1 336.34	39 000
12	Yuen Long	1 563.39	48 000
13	Yuen Long	1 610.01	26 000
14	Yuen Long	1 655.73	36 000
15	Yuen Long	2 004.75	41 000
16	Yuen Long	2 477.98	46 000
17	Yuen Long	2 597.37	50 000
18	Yuen Long	2 944.67	62 800
19	Yuen Long	3 163.24	70 000
20	Yuen Long	3 226.20	108 000
21	Yuen Long	3 372.57	35 000
22	Yuen Long	4 604.03	102 000
23	Yuen Long	4 693.83	80 000
24	Yuen Long	10 454.52	162 300
25	North	708.10	18 000
26	North	873.34	27 000
27	North	1 757.95	38 500
28	North	4 518.98	48 000
29	Tuen Mun	433.41	10 000
Total		62 186.83	1 300 500

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)037

(Question Serial No. 1124)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is stated in the Programme that the aim of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is to facilitate agricultural and fisheries production and improve productivity. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) the expenditure on infrastructural support and the amount of loans provided by AFCD to local farmers and fishermen over the past 3 years as well as the effectiveness of the relevant study and review;
- 2) the amount of grants provided by AFCD in assisting Hong Kong fishermen to develop deep-sea mariculture in the new fish culture zones and developing modernised pond fish culture and how the effectiveness is evaluated;
- 3) the number of team members and the administrative expenditure involved by AFCD in administering the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) through deployment of its departmental staff;
- 4) whether the application guidelines for SADF and SFDF will be reviewed on a regular basis and their application procedures be streamlined; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- 1) Regarding the support for agricultural infrastructure, 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 modern farm management. Agri-Park Phase 1 (with an area of about 11 hectares) has progressively commenced operation since late 2022. All farmland available for lease in Agri-Park Phase 1 were leased out, while the construction works for the remaining pieces of farmland are substantially completed. Arrangements will be made for leasing out the farmland to eligible farmers as soon as possible. Moreover, the production volume has been improving gradually. The production volume of most tenants last winter was satisfactory. Their agricultural products were sold steadily through various channels with good sales records. AFCD will continue to provide them with technical support

and training and encourage them to use modern modes of production and technologies so as to enhance the quality and volume of their production. The Government is now preparing for the planning work for Agri-Park Phase 2 First Stage. Meanwhile, the Government facilitated the establishment of a “Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park” (with an area of about 11 hectares) within part of the undeveloped farmland in Agri-Park Phase 2 led by a local agricultural organisation through the public-private partnership approach and completed the open application process for letting the first phase of the farmland in late 2024. The Government is also carrying out the consultancy study on Agricultural Priority Areas (APAs) to put forward specific recommendations on the delineation of quality farmland and support measures with a view to facilitating the use of such quality farmland for farming. The Government has launched a stakeholder engagement exercise to listen to stakeholders’ views so as to enhance the recommendations. The manpower and expenditure involved in the development of the Agri-Park and APAs in each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower
2022-23	16.2	11
2023-24	10.6	16
2024-25 (revised estimate)	29.3	17

Regarding fisheries, the infrastructural support provided by AFCD mainly includes the support for deep-sea mariculture and development of modernised pond fish culture. Please refer to the reply to part 2) for details.

In addition, the Government provides credit facility to local farmers and fishermen for the purposes of agricultural and fisheries production and development through 6 loan funds administered by AFCD, including the J.E. Joseph Trust Fund (agriculture), the Vegetable Marketing Organization Loan Fund (agriculture), the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund (agriculture and fisheries), the Fisheries Development Loan Fund (FDLF) (fisheries), the Fish Marketing Organization Loan Fund (fisheries) and the World Refugee Year Loan Fund (fisheries). Over the past 3 years, apart from FDLF, the loans issued by other loan funds every year were mainly used as production-related liquid capital (such as for the purchase of seeds, fertilisers and feeds, etc.) rather than for infrastructure. The amount of loans approved by FDLF and relating to infrastructural development is listed below:

FDLF

Year	Amount of loans issued[#] (\$ million)
2022	5.6
2023	33.8
2024	12.9

[#] Referring to the total amount of loans issued in the respective years, including instalments issued at all stages.

- 2) The expenditure incurred by AFCD on supporting deep-sea mariculture and developing modernised pond fish culture over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	12.7
2023-24	11.2
2024-25 (revised estimate)	14.2

Specific projects of AFCD in support of deep-sea mariculture include provision of technical training, designation of new fish culture zones (FCZs) suitable for the development of deep-sea mariculture, and provision of financial support. Regarding the provision of technical training, AFCD established a modernised mariculture demonstration farm equipped with a steel truss cage at the Tung Lung Chau FCZ to provide mariculture demonstration and technical training for the industry and those who are interested in engaging in deep-sea mariculture. To further expand the scope for development of the mariculture industry, AFCD also designated 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Mirs Bay, Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast) in December 2023, providing an area of about 590 hectares for mariculture. The new FCZs are located in open waters with better currents, which facilitate the adoption of modern aquaculture facilities and technology such as steel truss cages or high-density polyethylene (HDPE) gravity-type cages with resistance to strong wind and wave, as well as automated feeding and real-time monitoring systems. The establishment of the new FCZs facilitates fishermen to operate aquaculture in an intensification mode, and promotes and assists fishermen in switching to a modernised and sustainable mode of operation, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the local fisheries industry. Marine fish culture licences for operation in the FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay are open for application from the fourth quarter of 2024, and the first batch of licences is expected to be issued by mid-2025 at the earliest. To lower start-up costs for fishermen to develop deep-sea mariculture, the industry may also apply to the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund for setting up and operating new deep-sea cages to facilitate sustainable development in terms of intensification of production. AFCD will also set up modernised steel truss cages and other types of deep-sea cages with Government funding in the new FCZs for renting to fishermen associations/organisations so as to lower their investment costs. It is expected that the relevant facilities will be set up in batches in the new FCZs from 2025 onwards.

Regarding the development of modernised pond fish culture, AFCD encourages fish farmers to progressively enhance the use of modern technologies that can complement traditional fish pond operations, such as remote real-time monitoring systems, smart control equipment and renewable energy systems. AFCD also explores with fish farmers the development of eco-friendly pond fish culture with a view to ensuring the economic effectiveness of fisheries production while protecting the ecology to achieve a balance between aquaculture and conservation. AFCD will use its Au Tau Fisheries Office (Fisheries Office) in Yuen Long as a demonstration farm to introduce modernised aquaculture equipment and a smart aquaculture management platform, promote the use of relevant technologies and provide support to the industry. In this regard, AFCD will try out the container eco-culture systems in the fish ponds at the Fisheries Office. It is expected that the system will be established in the third quarter of 2025 for promoting the use of the relevant technologies and providing support to the industry. In addition, a small number of inland aquaculture farms are now using indoor recirculation

aquaculture systems in fish production to increase aquaculture production volume and efficiency. AFCD will provide technical support to further promote similar high-density, high-tech and high-yield culture operations. Looking ahead, AFCD will provide suitable land and infrastructure in Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park for developing modernised aquaculture.

As the development of deep-sea mariculture and modernised pond fish culture is now in the initial stage, the economic effectiveness of the various projects cannot be evaluated at the moment. AFCD, together with the industry, will actively implemented the aforesaid initiatives and review the effectiveness of the various projects in a timely manner.

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

Year	SADF		SFDF	
	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	4.5	7	5.3	11
2023-24	4.3	8	8.0 [#]	11
2024-25 (revised estimate)	7.0 [#]	9	9.7 [#]	11

[#] The increases in the expenditures on SADF and SFDF projects were mainly due to expansion of the coverage of the two Funds and the implementation of enhancement measures since February 2023.

- 4) SADF and SFDF implemented a series of enhancement measures in February 2023, which included the establishment of task forces to provide targeted support for all potential applicants before they submit formal applications, including advising them on the refinement of their project proposals and preparation of the necessary documents. The 2 Funds have also further streamlined the application procedures, such as vetting by paper circulation those general project applications of a simpler nature and involving funding of no more than \$2 million, minimising seeking information/documents from applicants as far as possible without compromising the vetting requirements, and expediting the financial assessment process. AFCD will from time to time review the application guidelines of the Funds and streamline the application procedures to improve the formalities and facilitate application for the Funds by more fishermen and farmers as well as trade organisations, thereby promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries and increasing the overall competitiveness of the local industries.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)038

(Question Serial No. 1126)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is stated in the Programme that the aim of AFCD is to safeguard the welfare of animals, and control the diseases in animals and plants through the enforcement of relevant legislation; protect public health; protect and regulate fisheries; and provide technical services. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) whether artificial intelligence technology will be introduced in measures for stray animal management (e.g. feeding, observation, etc.); if yes, the estimated savings in manpower and expenditure;
- 2) whether the Government has reserved resources to strengthen the promotion of animal welfare and education; if yes, the relevant measures and expenditure; and
- 3) regarding enhancing the surveillance on antimicrobial resistance and diseases in food animals in local farms, the average number of inspections conducted and the manpower and expenditure involved each year?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- 1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has not applied artificial intelligence (AI) technology to manage stray animals for the time being, but will closely monitor the development of relevant technology and the use of AI technology in managing stray animals in other countries and regions, and consider introducing relevant technology when necessary.
- 2) AFCD has taken the following measures to strengthen the promotion of animal welfare and education, which include promoting “Responsible Pet Ownership” and proper care of animals, advising the public against the abandonment of pets and appealing to dog owners to have their dogs licensed and vaccinated against rabies:
 - (i) 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;

- (ii) held talks at schools and housing estates on a regular basis; and
- (iii) organised roving exhibitions in the 18 districts, dog obedience training courses and pet adoption activities, etc.

In 2025-26, AFCD has earmarked about \$20 million for the promotion of animal welfare and education.

- 3) Over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25[#]), the average number of inspections, manpower and expenditure of AFCD involved in antimicrobial resistance and disease surveillance on food animals at local farms are tabulated as follows:

	Annual averages over the past 3 years
Number of inspections	2 882
Manpower (number of staff)	72
Expenditure (\$ million)	78.4

[#] Based on the revised estimate for 2024-25.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)039

(Question Serial No. 1127)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the financial and staffing provision mentioned in the Programme, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) according to the document, the estimated expenditure on the subvention for animal welfare organisations for 2023-24 to 2025-26 remains at about \$1.5 million, but it is reported that the number of animals in need of rescue has been on the rise, whether the Government will review the expenditure on the relevant subvention; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;
- 2) further to the above question, whether the Government will review and streamline the application procedures for the aforesaid subvention scheme; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;
- 3) the posts and the amount of expenditure involved in the net decrease of 15 posts in the establishment in 2025-26 as expected by the Government;
- 4) further to the above question, whether the Government will step up the adoption of AI technology to reduce administrative manpower and expenditure; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

- 1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been co-operating with various animal welfare organisations (AWOs) to promote animal welfare and proper animal management, and has been providing subvention to some eligible AWOs through the subvention scheme. The AFCD will keep in view the operation and the relevant expenditure of these organisations and provide appropriate assistance when necessary.
- 2) Regarding the application procedures of the subvention scheme, to ensure proper use of public money, eligible applicants should submit a detailed proposal, a financial budget and relevant documents, and specify that their project is directly related to the promotion of animal welfare and proper animal management.

When vetting applications, AFCD will assess the objective(s) and expected result(s) of the proposed projects, the cost-effectiveness of the projects and whether the proposed expenditures are justified. Document and audit reviews are conducted to monitor the implementation of subvented projects. Upon completion of the projects, AWOs must submit the relevant invoices to AFCD. Subventions will only be released after checking the invoices and confirming the compliance of project expenditures.

AFCD has no plan to change the application procedures of the above subvention scheme for the time being, but will continue to maintain communication with AWOs and conduct review when necessary.

- 3) There will be a net decrease of 15 posts under the establishment in 2025-26, including 2 Senior Field Officer posts, 1 Field Assistant post, 1 Fisheries Supervisor II post, 2 Artisan posts, 8 Workman I posts and 1 Workman II post. The notional annual salary cost at mid-point involved in the net decrease of the 15 posts in 2025-26 is about \$4.85 million.
- 4) The “Animal Management” thematic website (pets.gov.hk) under AFCD currently adopts an “artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot” provided by the Digital Policy Office (DPO) to assist in answering common enquiries about dog licensing instantly. Besides, AFCD will make use of the “generative AI document processing application”, developed by DPO through the deployment of AI technologies, to assist with clerical duties to enhance work efficiency. AFCD will closely monitor the development of AI technologies and apply them to the daily work as appropriate to enhance efficiency.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)040****(Question Serial No. 1128)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expensesProgramme: Not specifiedControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the general non-recurrent account, including the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF), mentioned in the Programme, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) the management and administrative expenses of SADF and SFDF;
- 2) the time for vetting in general and the number of successful and unsuccessful cases of the two funds;
- 3) whether the Government has followed up the cases and assessed their effectiveness after awarding the grants; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)Reply:

- 1) The expenditures involved in the management of the two Funds over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	
	Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF)	Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF)
2022-23	4.5	5.3
2023-24	4.3	8.0 [#]
2024-25 (revised estimate)	7.0 [#]	9.7 [#]

[#] The increases in the expenditures on SADF and SFDF relevant items were mainly due to the expanded coverage of the two Funds since February 2023 and the implementation of enhancement measures.

- 2) The vetting of an application for SADF or SFDF with all required supporting information and documents can normally be completed within six months. The details

of vetting results of applications since the introduction of the two Funds are tabulated as follows:

Number of applications (as at Jan 2025)	SADF		
	General project	Farm Improvement Scheme (Group/Individual)	Total
Received	68	447	515
Approved	22	430	452
Rejected	23	3	26
Withdrawn by applicant	15	12	27
Under processed	8	2	10

Number of applications (as at Jan 2025)	SFDF			
	General project	Equipment Improvement Project (Group)	Equipment Improvement Project (Individual)	Total
Received	57	18	1 082	1 157
Approved	25	13	893	931
Rejected	18	0	17	35
Withdrawn by applicant	11	4	16	31
Under processed	3	1	156	160

- 3) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will review from time to time the effectiveness of approved and completed projects under the two Funds in fostering sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries. Upon project completion, the grantee should submit a final report and audited accounts, specifying 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. 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. The approved projects include introduction, optimisation, transfer of new aquaculture technologies and related training, introduction of new aquaculture species, brand-building and marketing of fisheries produce, provision of professional veterinary consultation and drug prescription services at fish farms, development of quality pellet feed from food waste and development of district-based leisure fisheries projects, etc.

Regarding SADF, the scope of completed and ongoing projects include 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, research on bio-fortification technology for precision hydroponics, overseas study on urban farming, provision of veterinary consultation services to improve the health and production efficiency of livestock, development of advanced sewage treatment technologies for local pig farms, supporting the livestock industry in formulating the Guidelines for Architectural Design of Multi-Story Livestock Farms and conducting a feasibility study on the setting up of a multi-storey livestock farm at a trial site.

These projects are in line with the policy objectives under the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, and can provide the industries with support in terms of production technologies and sales, facilitating the enhancement of productivity, as well as the development towards modernisation, intensification and diversification of the local agriculture and fisheries industry. Overall speaking, since the establishment of the two Funds, progress has been made with initial achievements, benefitting more than 4 570 fishermen/farmers.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)041

(Question Serial No. 0601)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Farm Improvement Scheme (FIS) is set up under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund to assist farmers in adopting modernised farming equipment and facilities by providing them with direct grants for procuring farming equipment/materials. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the total amount of grants disbursed since the launch of FIS and the major farming equipment and materials applied for procurement;
- (2) the number of farms in Hong Kong, the size of the arable agricultural land in hectares, as well as the number of farmers and workers directly employed in each of the past 3 years;
- (3) the number of applications made under FIS, the number of successful applications, the total amount of grants disbursed, as well as the number of cases in which the grants had to be recovered from applicants for the loss of their farming equipment or materials they had applied for in each of the past 3 years; and
- (4) given that once the applicants (including their spouse) have been allocated grants under FIS, they will not be eligible to re-apply for the grant even if they own more than one farm, whether the Government has any plan to change this requirement, so as to enable more farms to be modernised and enhance their productivity and operation efficiency?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

- (1) The total amount of grants disbursed since the launch of the Farm Improvement Scheme (FIS) (as at February 2025) is \$10.7 million. The major farming equipment and materials applied for procurement by farmers are tillers, brush cutters as well as parts and materials for irrigation systems.
- (2) The estimated number of farms, the area of active agricultural land and the number of farmers and workers directly employed in Hong Kong over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of farms	Area of active agricultural land (hectares)	Number of farmers and workers directly employed
2022	2 500	733	4 300
2023	2 500	729	4 300
2024	2 500	714	4 300

- (3) The number of applications, the number of successful applications and the total amount of grants disbursed under FIS in each of the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications	Number of successful applications	Total amount of grants disbursed* (\$ million)
2022	16	14	0.5
2023	122	117	0.5
2024	45	42	1.7

* The total amount of grants disbursed in the relevant year.

Over the past 3 years, no grants have been recovered from grantees due to their loss of farming equipment or materials purchased under FIS.

- (4) To strengthen the support for farmers to adopt modernised equipment and facilities for production, AFCD has implemented enhancement measures for FIS in February 2023, which include raising the grant ceiling under FIS from \$30,000 to \$50,000, and allowing farmers who own more than one production unit to apply for two grants instead of one previously, while the grants may be used in all their production units. If an eligible farmer and his/her spouse own or operate more than one production unit that has not received a grant, or subsequently acquire or operate another production unit that has not received a grant previously, they may apply for up to two grants, and the items so acquired can be used in all production units they own or operate.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)042****(Question Serial No. 0608)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Since the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Vegetable Marketing Organization launched the Accredited Farm Scheme (the Scheme) in 1994, a number of local and Mainland vegetable farms have been accredited under the Scheme. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the new cultivation techniques or technical advice provided by AFCD to accredited farms and the expenditure involved over the past 3 years;
- (2) according to the website of AFCD, there are currently 25 Mainland farms participating in the Scheme. Please set out the names of these Mainland farms, year of joining the Scheme and the cultivated area by the province they belong to;
- (3) the number and details of farms whose accredited status was suspended or lifted for not observing the relevant requirements over the past 3 years; and
- (4) the plan of the Government to continue enhancing the Scheme in future so to promote good agricultural practices and ensure that the farms produce quality and safe vegetables for consumption?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) provides technical support to all crop farms (including accredited farms). The services provided include introduction of modern cultivation techniques, technical guidance in respect of control of crop 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)
2022-23	8.9
2023-24	9.2
2024-25 (revised estimate)	10.0

The expenditure involved in providing technical supporting services to accredited farms is an integral part of the above provision and there is no separate breakdown.

- (2) The province/autonomous region in which the 25 Mainland accredited farms are located, the name of the farms, the year of their joining the Accredited Farm Scheme and their cultivated area are tabulated as follows:

Province/ Autonomous region	Registered name of the farm	Cultivated area (hectare)	Year of joining the Scheme
Guangdong	Tonghu Heli (Farm No. 1)	44	1996
	Tonghu Heli (Farm No. 2)	44	
	Tonghu Heli (Farm No. 3)	44	
	Tonghu Heli (Farm No. 4)	44	
	Boluo Wanfeng (Wan Ping An)	36	2000
	Boluo Wanfeng (Wan Gong Zhuang)	54	
	Renhua Honglin (Farm No. 1)	65	2004
	Renhua Honglin (Farm No. 2)	13	
	Tonghu Hengfu (Farm No. 3)	49	2005
	Tonghu Hengfu (Farm No. 4)	46	
	Jiexi Hongjin	72	2008
	Conghua Congyu	92	2009
	Boluo Hexing	61	2016
	Taishan Yixin	131	2016
	Qingyuan Jiaduoli	32	2018
	Boluo Heli	68	2018
Ningxia	Ningxia Heli	258	2011
	Ningxia Nongyi (General Farm)	209	2011
	Ningxia Honglin	192	2011
	Ningxia Wanfeng	101	2011
	Ningxia Wenhui	175	2012
	Ningxia Hengfu	163	2013
	Ningxia Hexing	157	2013
	Ningxia Congyu (General Farm)	78	2014
	Ningxia Congyu (Farm No. 3)	131	2015

- (3) The Accredited Farm Scheme is voluntary in nature. It aims to provide services to farmers to help them adopt good horticultural practices and environmentally-friendly production methods as well as proper use of pesticides to improve the quality of vegetables, build their brands and promote sustainable development of local agriculture. There was no farm whose accredited status was suspended or lifted for not observing the relevant requirements over the past 3 years.

- (4) AFCD and the Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) proactively assist the trade in promoting premium “accredited vegetables”. They will also explore more diversified channels for publicising and promoting the brand of “accredited vegetables” and attract more producers to join the Accredited Farm Scheme through the brand effect. The measures include:
- (a) AFCD and VMO will continue to organise an array of carnival activities themed on local agricultural and fisheries products, and continue to publicise and promote local premium agricultural and fisheries products, including “accredited vegetables”, by participating in various types of food fairs;
 - (b) VMO will promote, showcase and sell local “accredited vegetables” through the “Local Fresh” mobile app and shopping website, and by setting up a physical store;
 - (c) AFCD allocated about \$15 million from the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) in 2022 to launch a 3 -year “Pilot Scheme on Marketing and Branding of Graded Local Vegetables” to grade local “accredited vegetables” and establish regional packaging and distribution centres with a view to providing a stable supply of quality vegetables and enhancing the consumers’ awareness of and demand for “accredited vegetables”. AFCD will continue to assist the trade in making good use of SADF to further promote local “accredited vegetables”; and
 - (d) AFCD has set up a new “Branding and Promotion Sub-committee” under the “Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries”, which will be responsible for advising on the formulation of promotion strategies and measures for local agricultural and fisheries products. AFCD will consolidate views and suggestions from the agriculture and fisheries sectors, academia and relevant sectors to further promote the building and promotion of the new brand, including establishing production standards and farming methods for various local agricultural and fisheries produces such as “accredited vegetables”, as well as establishing a certification, testing and traceability system.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)043

(Question Serial No. 0627)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched the “Agri enJoy” Scheme (the Scheme) last year to facilitate farms engaged in commercial crop production, with a view to promoting the development of local leisure farming. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the technical support provided to eligible farms since the launch of the Scheme;
- (2) the respective amounts of financial assistance granted to farms since the launch of the Scheme; and
- (3) whether it has any plan to relax the application criteria for the Scheme in the future by, for example, lowering the requirement on farm area, or allowing farms which have not participated in AFCD's Accredited Farm Scheme or Organic Farming Support Service to participate in the Scheme, thereby benefitting more farms engaged in commercial crop production?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched the “Agri enJoy” Scheme (the Scheme) in June 2024 to assist farms mainly engaged in commercial crop production in providing leisure activities as their ancillary business, so as to facilitate farmers to market their agricultural products and enhance visitors' experience. To facilitate the organisation of such leisure activities by “Agri enJoy” farms, the Government has reviewed the relevant laws and regulations and relaxed restrictions to allow room for the development of the industry, including the inclusion of ancillary activities directly related to commercial crop production as endorsed by the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation in the definition of “Agricultural Use” in statutory plans, and to provided assistance to “Agri enJoy” farms in applying for food business licences to sell self-grown agricultural products with non-flame cooking. As at February 2025, a total of 83 farms have been granted approval to join the Scheme. In addition, farms participating in the Scheme will be provided with technical support, including the adoption of good horticultural practices and environmentally-friendly

production methods, proper use of pesticides to improve the quality of vegetables, as well as soil fertility management, pest control, the use of modernised agricultural machinery and seed saving for organic production.

- (2) Eligible “Agri enJoy” farms may apply to the “Farm Improvement Scheme” under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund for grants to acquire equipment for the provision of leisure activities as ancillary business. Each eligible farm may apply for a maximum grant of \$50,000 for the purchase of farm tools or materials.
- (3) Since the implementation of the Scheme, the Government has been liaising with the industry and the participating farmers. During the implementation of the Scheme, many views have also been received. AFCD will consolidate and analyse the relevant information and review the implementation details of the Scheme in a timely manner, with a view to better supporting the development of leisure farming.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)044

(Question Serial No. 1739)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is understood that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has launched the "Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons" to reduce the population of feral pigeons. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. the consultant fees and expenditures of the 2-year Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons undertaken by the City University of Hong Kong, the consultant of the Programme; and
2. the expenditures of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department on measures for reducing the population of feral pigeons over the past 2 years?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) conducted the "Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons" at 3 spots in Central and Western District, Kowloon City District and Sai Kung District, where more feral pigeons were congregated, between September 2021 and September 2023, to evaluate the effectiveness of feeding feral pigeons with the contraceptive-coated feed in reducing the nuisance caused by them. AFCD commissioned the City University of Hong Kong as the programme consultant who was responsible for undertaking data collection, study and evaluation, etc. The launch of the programme involved an expenditure of about \$4.3 million, among which about \$1.4 million was consultant fees.
2. AFCD has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to reduce nuisance caused by feral pigeons. Apart from the Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons, AFCD has also provided advices on bird prevention to affected individuals and the relevant property management agents or government departments, and educated the public not to feed feral pigeons through different publicity channels. Besides, since the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 came into operation on 1 August 2024, expanding the prohibition on feeding of wild animals to cover feral pigeons, AFCD has stepped up its enforcement efforts to curb the feral pigeon nuisance issue caused by illegal feeding activities. AFCD has also launched a survey on the

number of feral pigeons, and will analyse the number of complaints related to feral pigeon nuisance to monitor the effectiveness of the relevant measures in tackling the feral pigeon nuisance on an ongoing basis, and make timely adjustment to the relevant management measures.

AFCD's expenditure on the aforesaid work over the past 2 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2023-24	7.9
2024-25 (revised estimate)	7.5

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)045

(Question Serial No. 1993)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Among the indicators, the production of vegetables and livestock in 2024 both decreased and the throughput at Vegetable Marketing Organization also continued to decline. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) the reasons for the decline in the production of both vegetables and livestock and whether the decline will affect the operating conditions of the agricultural industry;
- b) the number of new grants increased from 22 to 63 in 2024 and is estimated to increase to 70 in 2025; whether the growth trend is related to the decrease in the production and sales of vegetables and livestock; if yes, the details;
- c) as it is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention that the Department will administer the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund under the enhanced mechanism and expanded scope, to help farmers/fishermen adopt a sustainable and high value-added operation mode and subsidise relevant programmes and research so as to enhance the overall competitiveness of the industries, the specific support plan of the Department in this regard; and
- d) regarding the Government's proposal to promote the sale of agricultural products with a unified brand in the Mainland market, the details of the Department's specific plan in future?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- a) The production volume of local vegetables in 2024 was 15 300 tonnes, decreased by about 3% compared to 2023 and remained largely stable, whereas the production volume of local livestock in 2024 was 18 500 tonnes, decreased by about 17% compared to 2023, and was mainly affected by African swine fever which broke out between November 2023 and January 2024. Since it takes time for the affected farms to resume operation, it is expected that the production volume and operating conditions of the industry will be comparable to those of 2024.

- b) In December 2022, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the injection of an additional \$500 million into the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF). At the same time, the coverage of the Fund was expanded and a series of enhancement measures were implemented, including introducing new subsidies for “application projects” and “support services projects”, raising the ceiling for each grant under the “Farm Improvement Scheme” from \$30,000 to \$50,000, and allowing a farmer who owns more than 1 production unit to apply for 2 grants at most. As the injections and enhancement measures facilitate more individual farmers and trade organisations to submit applications for financial support, the number of applications and approved projects is expected to increase.
- c) The Government has been actively supporting the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries and enhancing their competitiveness through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund and SADF (the Funds). 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 leisure fisheries. The approved projects include introduction, optimisation, transfer of new aquaculture technologies and related training, introduction of new aquaculture species, brand-building and marketing of fisheries produce, provision of professional veterinary consultation and drug prescription services at fish farms, development of quality pellet feed from food waste and development of district-based leisure fisheries projects, etc.

Regarding SADF, the scope of completed and ongoing projects includes the 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, research on bio-fortification technology for precision hydroponics, overseas study tour on urban farming, provision of veterinary consultation services to improve the health and production efficiency of livestock, development of advanced sewage treatment technologies for local pig farms, supporting the livestock farming industry in formulating the Guidelines for Architectural Design of Multi-Storey Livestock Farms and conducting feasibility study on the setting up of a multi-storey livestock farm at a trial site.

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

These projects are in line with the policy objectives under the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, and can provide the industries with support in terms of production technologies and sales, facilitating the enhancement of productivity, modernisation, intensification and diversification of the local agriculture and fisheries industries. Moreover, after management enhancement and expansion of their coverage, the Funds will attract more project applications from trade members and

the projects will be more diversified, thereby supporting the on-going development of the industries and enhancement of the overall competitiveness of the local agriculture and fisheries industries.

- d) On the branding of local agricultural and fisheries products, in order to increase their competitiveness, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) plans to establish a unified new brand for safe, low-carbon and premium local agricultural and fisheries products (the new brand) covering various locally produced agricultural and fisheries products, and to establish production standards, farming methods as well as a certification and traceability system, etc., for these products to ensure that the quality is up to standard. AFCD is carrying out preparatory work with the local certification body, fishermen and agricultural organisations and other stakeholders. At the same time, AFCD encourages farmers and fishermen, wholesalers, retailers and the catering sector to adopt a traceability model for the production, processing, sales and cooking of local agricultural and fisheries products, and enables consumers to obtain information on the origin of the products and the fish farms/agricultural farms where they were produced from the traceability labels. AFCD and the certification body will make reference to international experiences when formulating a certification system that applies to the local agricultural and fisheries products and will fully consult the industries and relevant stakeholders before launching the new brand to ensure that the system standards are widely accepted by the industries. AFCD is actively striving to build the unified new brand in 2025/26. The new brand will also be used in the promotion of local agricultural and fisheries products in the Mainland market.

AFCD has set up a new “Branding and Promotion Sub-committee” under the Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries, which will be responsible for advising on the formulation of promotion strategies and measures for local agricultural and fisheries products. AFCD will consolidate views and suggestions from the agriculture and fisheries sectors, academia and relevant sectors to further promote the building and promotion of the new brand.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)046

(Question Serial No. 1994)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Among the indicators, both capture and culture fisheries recorded considerable growth in production in 2024, but the throughput at the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) markets decreased rather than increased. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) the reasons for the decrease in throughput at FMO markets, and the specific measures the Department has taken to support the fisheries sector in the face of an increase in production but a decrease in throughput? If yes, the details; if not, the reasons?
- b) the reasons for the decrease in new loans to the fisheries industry in the same year?
- c) as it is stated in the "Matters Requiring Special Attention" that the Department will enhance the promotion and marketing of local agricultural and fisheries products by diversifying sale and marketing channels as well as establishing local brand, so as to raise public awareness of and demand for local premium products and strengthen their overall competitiveness, the specific plans and objectives of the Department in this regard?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

- a) As the pandemic subsided, the local capture and culture fisheries gradually recovered, with the production volumes increased by 6.6% and 27% respectively in 2024. However, since the post-pandemic economy was still recovering, and changes in consumer habits, overall local demand for marine produce has decreased. Therefore, the throughput of marine fish at wholesale fish markets (fish markets) under the Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) in 2024 experienced a slight decline of 3% compared to 2023. It is believed that as economic activity continues to grow, the local demand for marine produce will rise gradually, while the throughput at the FMO fish markets will rebound accordingly. FMO will continue to maintain communication with the wholesalers of the fish markets and provide supporting measures to meet their operational needs.

- b) Due to the persistently low catch value, and a mix of factors such as persistently high fuel prices last year, the operating environment for the capture fisheries industry in 2024 remained difficult, while the industry became less active. As the industry sentiments towards operation and development dampened, the number of applications for special fishing moratorium loan, which is set up for helping Hong Kong mobile fishermen to resume their operations after the fishing moratorium in the South China Sea of the Mainland, as well as the Fish Development Loan Fund, which assists fishermen in building new vessels, has decreased in 2024.
- c) On the branding of local agricultural and fisheries products, in order to increase their competitiveness, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) plans to establish a unified new brand for safe, low-carbon and premium local agricultural and fisheries products (the new brand) covering various locally produced agricultural and fisheries products, and to establish production standards, farming methods as well as a certification and traceability system for these products to ensure that the quality is up to standard. To enhance product credibility of the new brand, AFCD is carrying out preparatory work with the local certification body, fishermen and agricultural organisations, and other stakeholders. At the same time, AFCD encourages farmers and fishermen, wholesalers, retailers and the catering sector to adopt a traceability model for the production, processing, sales and cooking of local agricultural and fisheries products. Traceability labels will be attached to certified products, which enable consumers to obtain information on the origin of the products and the fish farms/agricultural farms where they were produced. AFCD and the certification body will make reference to international experiences when formulating a certification system that applies to the local agricultural and fisheries products and will fully consult the industries and relevant stakeholders before launching the new brand to ensure that the system standards are widely accepted by the industries. AFCD is actively striving to build the unified new brand in 2025/26.

On diversifying sales and marketing channels, AFCD in collaboration with the FMO and the Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) will identify more partners by participating in various activities to strengthen publicity in the public and the catering and retail sectors, while promoting local agricultural and fisheries products by means of leisure farming and fisheries activities. At the same time, FMO/VMO will actively participate in the promotional activities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), with a view to increasing the market share of local premium agricultural and fisheries products in the GBA and other markets in the Mainland.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)047

(Question Serial No. 1073)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 182 of the Budget Speech that the Government will continue to take forward the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries to assist the upgrading and transformation of the agriculture and fisheries industries. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of registered local fishing vessels in Hong Kong as at February this year; the number of fishermen currently engaged in capture fisheries in Hong Kong, among which the number of fishing vessels and fishermen engaged in offshore fisheries; the total economic output of the fisheries industry in Hong Kong in the past year;
2. according to the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Government indicated that it would promote the development of offshore fisheries, including formulating and implementing suitable and feasible measures to assist capture fishermen in capitalising on new opportunities in offshore fisheries. In this connection, what are the Government's plans and strategies to promote the future development of offshore fisheries in Hong Kong?
3. further to the above, how the Government will support the upgrading and transformation of Hong Kong's fisheries industry through technical and financial measures, including the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund, so as to help them engage in the development of the fisheries industries of our country and Hong Kong in a manner that keeps pace with the times;
4. our country is vigorous promoting the development of offshore fisheries. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs has also introduced the Administrative Rules on Hong Kong and Macao Floating Fishing Vessels and Fishermen, setting out various supporting measures benefiting Hong Kong and the fisheries industry. In this connection, what are the Government's plans to encourage and assist fishermen in Hong Kong to seize the opportunities to develop offshore fisheries in future? How will it collaborate and co-operate with the relevant Mainland authorities to strive for legal participation of more Hong Kong and Macao residents in the development of offshore fisheries of our country?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

1. As at the end of 2024, there are 6 125 local fishing vessels registered with the Marine Department in Hong Kong, and it is estimated that about 10 180 local fishermen are engaged in fishing activities. Currently, no local fishing vessels are engaged in offshore fisheries. As far as we understand, only a small number of fishermen in Hong Kong have invested in offshore fisheries outside Hong Kong. In 2024, the capture fisheries industry of Hong Kong produced an estimated 92 000 tonnes of fisheries produce valued at about \$2.4 billion.
- 2-3. In order to promote the development of offshore fisheries, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will provide technical support to fishermen interested in developing offshore fisheries, including exploring suitable fishing grounds, arranging field visits, etc., as well as advising them on the feasibility of their development plans and assisting fishermen in liaising with relevant organisations in the Mainland or other places to obtain the information required for the development of offshore fisheries when necessary. In terms of financial support, local fishermen associations may apply for the grants from the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund for developing offshore fisheries, including conducting relevant field visits, arranging vocational training needed, or launching pilot schemes. In addition, fishermen may also consider applying for the Fisheries Development Loan Fund to modify existing fishing vessels or construct new ones to facilitate the transformation and development of offshore fisheries.
4. We will continue to explore with the relevant Mainland authorities the opportunities for Hong Kong mobile fishermen to switch to developing offshore fisheries and continue to maintain liaison and exchanges with organisations at home and abroad, with a view to promoting fishermen in Hong Kong to engage in offshore fisheries outside Hong Kong. At the same time, we will continue to maintain close communication with the industry to understand their needs so as to provide appropriate support.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)048

(Question Serial No. 2986)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will continue to take forward the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the implementation timetable and estimated expenditure for upgrading and transformation of the agriculture and fisheries industries;
2. in addition to developing new deep-sea mariculture zones, whether there will be any support to the 26 existing Fish Culture Zones (FCZs) and the estimated expenditure involved; and
3. the timetable and estimated expenditure for establishing a fisheries research centre?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. The Blueprint for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries (the Blueprint) has set out specific work targets for the development of agriculture and fisheries industries, including enhancing the quantity, quality and value of local agricultural and fisheries products. To assist with the upgrading and transformation of the local agriculture and fisheries industries, the Government will implement a series of measures:

Regarding the agricultural industry, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is developing "urban farming" through a multipronged approach, including obtaining consent from the Town Planning Board (TPB) in 2024 to revise the Definition of Terms used in statutory plan for "Open Space", so as to allow the setting up of urban farms to be operated on a commercial basis in suitable "Open Space" areas, as well as preparing for the launch the first pilot project on urban farming in Ma On Shan Sai Sha Road Garden, which is expected to commence operation this year. On the promotion of leisure farming, AFCD launched the "Agri enJoy" Scheme in June 2024 to facilitate farms mainly engaged in commercial crop production in providing leisure activities as their ancillary business, so as to increase farmers' income. As at February 2025, 83 farms have joined the Scheme. Regarding livestock farming,

the Government is carrying out formation works on a site, which is targeted to be completed by 2026, for the establishment of the first modernised and environmentally-friendly multi-storey livestock farm. In addition, Agri-Park Phase 1 has commenced operation progressively since late 2022, while Phase 2 is under planning. Meanwhile, the Government has facilitated the establishment of a “Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park” through the public-private partnership approach, and has completed the open application process for letting the first phase of the farmland in late 2024 as scheduled.

Regarding the fisheries industry, to support deep-sea mariculture, the Government designated 4 new fish culture zones (FCZs) in December 2023. Marine fish culture licences for operation in the FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were open for application in the fourth quarter of 2024, and the first batch of licenses is expected to be issued by mid-2025 at the earliest. AFCD will also set up modernised steel truss cages and other types of deep-sea cages with Government funding in the new FCZs for renting to fishermen associations/organisations. It is expected that the relevant facilities will be set up in batches in the new FCZs from 2025 onwards. Regarding the development of modernised pond fish culture, AFCD will use the Au Tau Fisheries Office (Fisheries Office) in Yuen Long as a demonstration farm to introduce modernised aquaculture equipment and a smart aquaculture management platform. AFCD will also try out the container eco-culture system in the fish ponds at the Fisheries Office. It is expected that the system will be established by the third quarter of 2025. In addition, to further promote the diversified development of leisure fisheries and open up new sources of income for fish farmers, AFCD implemented enhancement measures in January 2025, allowing fish farmers to provide specific food and beverages to visitors participating in leisure fishing on the premise of not affecting the fish culture operations or the culture environment within the FCZs. AFCD is also progressively establishing a publicity platform to step up publicity of local leisure farming and leisure fisheries, while continuing to provide training and technical support for farmers and fishermen to help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to develop leisure farming and fisheries.

The Government is progressively implementing the measures in the Blueprint, while maintaining close liaison with the agriculture and fisheries industries and continuing to take forward the above initiatives in accordance with the action agenda set out in the Blueprint, with a view to jointly promoting the upgrading and transformation of the agriculture and fisheries industries. Since facilitating the upgrading and transformation of the local agriculture and fisheries industries is part of the regular work of AFCD, AFCD does not have a breakdown of the relevant expenditure.

2. AFCD implemented a series of support measures in all FCZs, including the existing 26 FCZs, to assist fish farmers, which includes implementing the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme; promoting good aquaculture practices such as enhancing biosecurity, feed management and the aquaculture system; exploring and introducing new mariculture technology and facilities; and introducing new high-value culture species such as pearl oysters and lobsters in addition to new fish species. AFCD has also organised technical seminars, workshops and training programmes to promote to local fishermen the application of technology, with a view to assisting them in enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of their fish farms. Recently, AFCD and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) also co-organise aquaculture-related programmes

covering aquaculture, aquatic product processing, marketing and promotion, etc. IVE will launch the “Diploma in Modernised Aquaculture” programme in the second quarter of 2025. Since supporting the sustainable development of marine fish culture is part of the regular work of AFCD, AFCD does not have the breakdown of the relevant expenditure.

The Government is currently conducting investigation work on the setting up of a Fisheries Research Centre (the Centre), and plans to take forward the detailed design of the Centre by late 2025. The initial plan is that the Centre will conduct research and experiments on modernised aquaculture, including research projects on species selection, feed and nutrition management, disease prevention and health monitoring, etc. The Centre will also promote processing of aquatic products, build a platform for industrial demonstration and promotion of technology, establish a remote real-time monitoring platform, and at the same time provide supporting facilities to help deepen co-operation and exchanges in aquaculture research and development in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and transfer relevant technologies to the industry. Regarding the estimate for building the Centre, a more accurate estimate can only be made after the completion of the detailed design.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)133

(Question Serial No. 3753)

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 (LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) with a breakdown by district;
- (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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) with a breakdown 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) with a breakdown 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (g) the size and average density of rafts in fish culture zones (FCZs) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) with a breakdown by the 26 FCZs;
- (h) the total size of FCZs over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (i) the expenditure and manpower involved in processing matters related to FCZs over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (j) the expenditure and manpower involved in processing matters related to the designation of 4 new FCZs as well as the work progress and time frame;
- (k) the respective numbers of fish rafts in the 26 FCZs of Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) in tabular form; and
- (l) the manpower and the expenditure involved in conducting inspections at each FCZ over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) and the time frame for the inspections.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	15.9	11
2023-24	15.5	12
2024-25 (revised estimate)	17.0	12

- (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		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at 10 Mar 2025)
North	Nil	1 <i>Chattonella marina</i>	Nil
Tai Po	5 <i>Gonyaulax polygramma</i>	6 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Dictyocha octonaria</i>	2 <i>Asterionellopsis glacialis</i>
Sha Tin	Nil	Nil	1 <i>Asterionellopsis glacialis</i>
Sai Kung	4 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>	3 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	7 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia pungens</i> , <i>Levanderina fissa</i> , <i>Mesodinium rubrum</i>
Southern	22 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i> , <i>Scrippsiella trochoidea</i>	10 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i> , <i>Levanderina fissa</i>	13 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>
Islands	8 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Dactyliosolen phuketensis</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>	2 <i>Scrippsiella trochoidea</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>	4 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>
Tuen Mun	2 <i>Cerataulina dentata</i>	Nil	3 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>

District	Number of red tides observed and the causative species involved		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at 10 Mar 2025)
Kwun Tong	Nil	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia pungens</i>
Tsuen Wan	2 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	1 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	6 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia pungens</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>
Yuen Long	Nil	Nil	1 <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>
Central and Western	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>	Nil	2 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia pungens</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>
Wan Chai	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>	Nil	Nil
Eastern	Nil	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia pungens</i>
Kowloon City	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia delicatissima</i>	Nil
Yau Tsim Mong	Nil	Nil	2 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia pungens</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>

- (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 (2022-23 to 2024-25), AFCD received 305 applications for the Emergency Relief Fund in 2023-24 due to typhoons affecting marine fish culture farms. Among these applications, 256 were approved, involving an amount of about \$2.33 million. AFCD received no applications for the Emergency Relief Fund due to red tides, water quality or pollution affecting marine fish culture farms over the past 3 years.
- (f) AFCD has been promoting the sustainable development of mariculture. The new support measures launched over the past 3 years include designation of 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Outer Tap Mun, Po Toi (Southeast) and Mirs Bay in December 2023, providing an area of about 590 hectares for mariculture. The new FCZs are located in open waters with better currents, which facilitate the adoption of modern aquaculture facilities and technology such as steel truss cages or high-density polyethylene (HDPE) gravity-type cages with resistance to strong wind and wave, together with automated feeding and real-time monitoring systems. The establishment of the new FCZs facilitates fishermen to operate aquaculture in

an intensification mode, and promotes and assists fishermen in switching to a modernised and sustainable mode of operation, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the local fisheries industry. Marine fish culture licences for operation in the FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were open for application in the fourth quarter of 2024, and the first batch of licences is expected to be issued by mid-2025 at the earliest. In addition, to lower the start-up costs for fishermen to develop deep-sea mariculture, the industry may apply to the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund for setting up and operating new deep-sea cages to facilitate development of the industry in terms of application of advanced technology and intensification of production, and to leverage the opportunities arising from the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. To support the sustained development of the local aquaculture industry, AFCD, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE), has in recent years actively organised aquaculture-related programmes covering mariculture and pond fish culture, aquatic product processing, marketing and promotion, etc. IVE will launch the “Diploma in Modernised Aquaculture” programme in the second quarter of 2025 to nurture the required local professionals for the aquaculture sector.

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

FCZ [#]	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	
	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	250	6.0
Cheung Sha Wan	13 289	6.2	13 249	6.2	13 342	6.2
Kai Lung Wan	5 469	20.2	5 417	20.0	5 493	20.3
Kat O	2 872	8.9	2 887	8.9	2 984	9.2
Kau Lau Wan	1 143	10.2	1 143	10.2	1 143	10.2
Kau Sai	11 770	25.5	11 735	25.4	11 678	25.3
Leung Shuen Wan	5 678	32.8	5 597	32.4	5 575	32.2
Lo Fu Wat	978	18.1	978	18.1	978	18.1
Lo Tik Wan	21 589	19.8	21 502	19.7	21 005	19.2
Ma Nam Wat	5 052	12.6	5 048	12.6	5 049	12.6
Ma Wan	13 748	29.7	13 818	29.8	13 717	29.6
O Pui Tong	2 321	2.2	2 321	2.2	2 321	2.2
Po Toi	249	8.3	247	8.2	248	8.3
Po Toi O	3 486	9.1	3 484	9.1	3 491	9.1
Sai Lau Kong	140	1.9	35	0.5	35	0.5
Sha Tau Kok	12 015	6.7	12 088	6.7	11 767	6.5
Sham Wan	11 764	6.5	11 491	6.4	13 749	7.6
Sok Kwu Wan	26 491	18.8	26 570	18.8	26 580	18.8
Tai Tau Chau	12 033	19.2	11 951	19.0	12 025	19.1

FCZ [#]	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	
	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)
Tap Mun	7 639	10.6	7 640	10.6	7 265	10.0
Tiu Cham Wan	131	0.8	132	0.8	229	1.3
Tung Lung Chau	10 314	12.9	10 083	12.6	9 890	12.4
Wong Wan	2 500	11.1	2 500	11.1	2 500	11.1
Yim Tin Tsai	21 317	15.6	21 481	15.8	21 308	15.6
Yim Tin Tsai (East)	20 556	13.8	20 397	13.6	20 409	13.7
Yung Shue Au	37 342	10.9	37 422	10.9	37 495	11.0
Total	250 141	12.0	249 471	11.9	250 526	12.0

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

AFCD is processing the applications for marine fish culture licences for operation in the new FCZs received in the fourth quarter of 2024. As at late February 2025, no licence for operation in Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay FCZs has been issued.

- (h) The total area of FCZs remained at about 209 hectares in 2022-23. In 2023-24 to 2024-25, due to commissioning of the new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay, the total area of FCZs increased from 209 hectares to about 650 hectares.
- (i) and (j) The expenditure and manpower involved in processing applications related to the marine fish culture licence and conducting patrols and inspections in FCZs (including designation of the 4 new FCZs) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	12.2	21
2023-24	12.3	21
2024-25 (revised estimate)	16.4	21

AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the expenditure and manpower involved in processing matters related to the 4 new FCZs.

The Government has designated 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Mirs Bay, Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast), among which Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay FCZs were commissioned in December 2023. Marine fish culture licences for operation in Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay FCZs were open for application in the fourth quarter of 2024. AFCD is now processing the applications received.

- (k) The number of fish rafts in the FCZs over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) is tabulated as follows:

FCZ [#]	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Ap Chau	4	4	4
Cheung Sha Wan	65	63	64
Kai Lung Wan	39	39	39
Kat O	28	28	28
Kau Lau Wan	20	20	20
Kau Sai	59	59	58
Leung Shuen Wan	62	61	61
Lo Fu Wat	19	19	19
Lo Tik Wan	65	65	65
Ma Nam Wat	42	42	42
Ma Wan	93	93	93
O Pui Tong	5	5	5
Po Toi	6	6	6
Po Toi O	35	34	34
Sai Lau Kong	2	2	2
Sha Tau Kok	108	108	108
Sham Wan	161	161	163
Sok Kwu Wan	137	135	135
Tai Tau Chau	98	98	97
Tap Mun	72	72	72
Tiu Cham Wan	2	2	3
Tung Lung Chau	55	55	55
Wong Wan	18	18	18
Yim Tin Tsai	245	244	243
Yim Tin Tsai (East)	195	195	195
Yung Shue Au	282	285	292
Total	1 917	1 913	1 921

[#] AFCD is processing the applications for marine fish culture licences for operation in the new FCZs received in the fourth quarter of 2024. As at late February 2025, no licence for operation in Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay FCZs has been issued.

- (l) To ensure the operation of fish rafts is in compliance with the Marine Fish Culture Ordinance (Cap. 353), AFCD conducts regular inspections in the various FCZs. The expenditure and manpower involved in the inspections over the past 3 years are tabulated below. AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the figures by individual FCZ.

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	10.0	18
2023-24	10.1	18
2024-25 (revised estimate)	14.3	18

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)134

(Question Serial No. 3754)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding co-operative societies, please advise of

- (a) the respective numbers of co-operative societies related to the fisheries and agriculture industries, as well as other co-operative societies over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- (b) the respective expenditure and manpower involved in co-operative societies related to the fisheries and agriculture industries, as well as other co-operative societies over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 44)

Reply:

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

Industry	2022-23			2023-24			2024-25		
	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	2.0	3	54	1.8	3	54	1.9	3
Fisheries	54	2.8	4	54	3.0	4	54	2.1	3
Others	54	6.0	9	53	6.4	9	46	6.5	9
Total	162	10.8	16	161	11.2	16	154	10.5	15

* As at end of the year

As at February 2025

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)135

(Question Serial No. 3755)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) (please set out by loans);
- (c) the maximum amount of the above loans granted in each of the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- (d) the number of deferred repayment and bad debt cases among the loans mentioned in (a) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 45)

Reply:

- (a) Currently, the Government provides credit facility to farmers, fish farmers and fishermen through the following 6 loan funds administered by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department: 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) and the World Refugee Year Loan Fund (WRYLF).
- (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 (Agriculture)

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2022	20.7	6	6	1.1
2023	21.5	5	5	1.0
2024	22.3	5	5	1.0

VMOLF (Agriculture)

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2022	13.5	16	16	1.4
2023	14.0	26	26	2.0
2024	14.5	27	27	2.4

KAALF (Agriculture and Fisheries)

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2022	15.9	21	21	3.1
2023	16.3	23	21	3.5
2024	16.8	24	26	4.3

FDLF (Fisheries)

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2022	1,100	2	1	5.6
2023	1,100	7	7	33.8
2024	1,100	2	1	12.9

FMOLF (including normal loans and special fishing moratorium loans) (Fisheries)

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2022	397.3	232	224	83.6
2023	396.3	193	195	74.0
2024	395.9	148	145	56.5

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

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

Over the past 3 years, WRYLF (Fisheries) received no application for loans. Its capital stands at some \$2 million.

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

Loan Funds	2022 (\$)	2023 (\$)	2024 (\$)
JEJTF	200,000	200,000	200,000
KAALF	200,000	500,000	200,000
VMOLF	200,000	200,000	200,000
FDLF	5,000,000	8,000,000	- [^]
FMOLF	450,000	450,000	450,000

[^] The 2 applications for loans received in 2024 are still being processed.

- (d) The number of deferred repayment and bad debt cases of the above loan funds over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Number of deferred repayment cases

Loan Funds	2022 (number of cases)	2023 (number of cases)	2024 (number of cases)
JEJTF	0	0	0
KAALF	3	2	1
VMOLF	5	2	1
FDLF [^]	33	21	17
FMOLF	546	532	547

[^] The figures of FDLF do not include cases in which borrowers of FDLF were granted an interest-free loan repayment deferral for 1 year in view of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022.

Number of bad debt cases

Loan Funds	2022 (number of cases)	2023 (number of cases)	2024 (number of cases)
JEJTF	0	0	0
KAALF	0	0	0
VMOLF	0	0	0
FDLF	0	0	0
FMOLF	0	0	0

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)136****(Question Serial No. 3756)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (b) the number of fishing vessels registered in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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.: 46)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		
	2022	2023	2024
Fish carrier	19	23	19
Fishing sampan "C7"	1 832	1 829	1 811
Fishing vessel	1 384	1 486	1 364
Outboard open sampan "P4"	2 904	2 922	2 931
Total	6 139	6 260	6 125

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 4 343, 4 340 and 4 412 fishing vessels registered under the Ordinance in 2022, 2023 and 2024 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		
	2022	2023	2024
Purse seining/purse seining with light	42	41	40
Long lining/hand lining	31	33	40
Gill netting	521	515	515
Cage trapping	43	42	42
Mixed fishing methods	3 706	3 709	3 775
Total	4 343	4 340	4 412

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)137****(Question Serial No. 3757)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) and the time frame 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 the 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.: 47)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)
2022-23	11.3	5
2023-24	8.0	4
2024-25 (revised estimate)	12.2	4

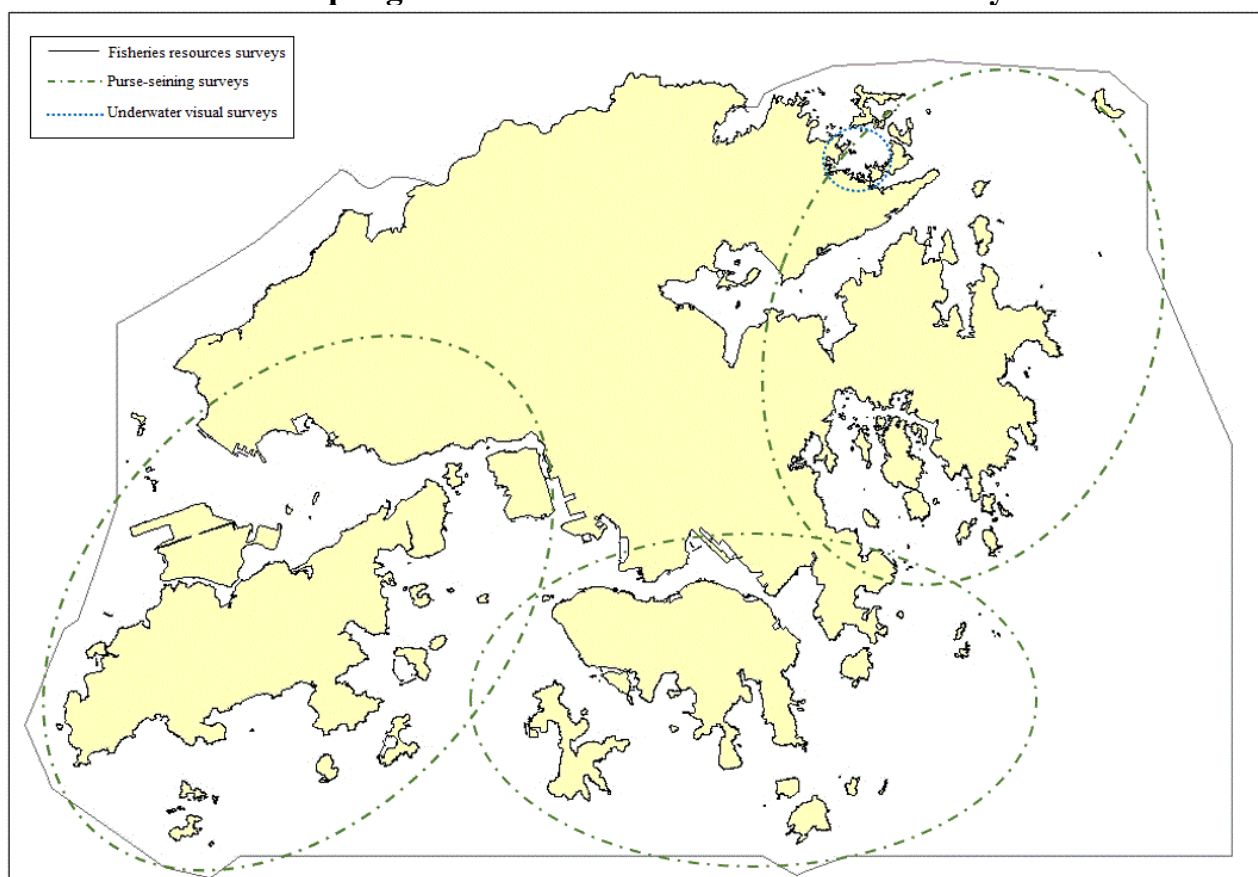
- (b) The surveys mentioned in part (a) above include:
 - (i) purse-seining surveys conducted 2 to 5 times a month to study the operation of local purse seiners and their fish catch at sampling stations in the eastern, southern and western coastal waters of Hong Kong;

- (ii) fisheries resources surveys undertaken approximately 10 times per month using cage-trapping, long-lining and gill-netting at sampling stations across Hong Kong waters; and
- (iii) underwater visual surveys undertaken almost once a month to evaluate the effectiveness of the restocking exercise at the Yan Chau Tong Marine Park.

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 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 92 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)138

(Question Serial No. 3758)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (b) the expenditure and manpower involved in the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- (c) since the introduction of SFDF and its Equipment Improvement Project, the number of beneficiaries, and among them, the number of in-service fishermen benefitted.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 48)

Reply:

- (a) The Government has been promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry. In late 2023, it released the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, proposing an array of measures to promote the upgrading and transformation, modernisation and sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries, and to integrate with the development plan of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), thereby enhancing the quality, quantity and value of local agricultural and fisheries products in the long run. The concrete measures to promote the sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries include: (i) implementing fisheries management measures 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 providing 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) designating 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, Outer Tap Mun, Po Toi (Southeast) and Mirs Bay to provide some 590 hectares of marine fish culture area; (vi) developing modernised pond fish culture; and (vii) 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 cage mariculture, offshore fishing, leisure fishing and eco-tourism, 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 GBA.

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)
2022-23	254.8 [*]	107
2023-24	109.8	101
2024-25 (revised estimate)	151.6 [^]	101

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

[^] The drastic increase in the estimated expenditure for 2024-25 is mainly due to the increase in the amount of grants in accordance with the rise in the number of applications following the expanded coverage of and the implementation of enhancement measures for SFDF since February 2023.

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	5.3	11
2023-24	8.0 [#]	11
2024-25 (revised estimate)	9.7 [#]	11

[#] The increase in the expenditure for the relevant item is mainly due to the expanded coverage of and the implementation of enhancement measures for SFDF since February 2023.

- (c) Progress has been made with initial achievements since the establishment of SFDF. 23 SFDF projects (including the Equipment Improvement Projects (Group Application)) were completed. Together with the Equipment Improvement Projects (Individual Application), it has benefitted around 3 820 in-service fishermen.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)139****(Question Serial No. 3759)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the imports of animals and plants, please advise of the following:

- (a) the number of animals and plants imported, by animal and plant species (in particular those endangered species which require possession licences) and place of export, over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (b) the number of shops with animal and plant trader licences over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- (c) the total 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25).

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

- (a) (i) Imported live non-endangered animals

The quantity of imported live non-endangered animals under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance (Cap. 139) and the Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421) and the places of export over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Animal type	Quantity	Country/region of export (top 5)
2022	Cats and dogs	3 229	Japan; Taiwan, China; United Kingdom; Australia; United States
	Birds	14 855	Guinea; Kenya; Malaysia; Uzbekistan; Singapore
	Horses	2 909	Mainland China (Conghua); Australia; United Kingdom; New Zealand; United States

Year	Animal type	Quantity	Country/region of export (top 5)
	Reptiles	202 477	Ghana; Mexico; United States; Mainland China; Netherlands
	Small mammals*	6 335	Netherlands; Mainland China; United States; Canada; France
	Pigs, cattle and goats [#]	977	Taiwan, China; United States; Canada; Australia
	Poultry (day-old chicks)	2 816 900	Mainland China
2023	Cats and dogs	4 465	Japan; Australia; United States; United Kingdom; Canada
	Birds	37 121	Kenya; Mozambique; Lebanon; Malaysia; Belgium
	Horses	3 356	Mainland China (Conghua); Australia; New Zealand; United Kingdom; United States
	Reptiles	323 092	Ghana; Togo; United States; Nicaragua; Netherlands
	Small mammals*	27 825	Netherlands; Mainland China; United States; Taiwan, China; Singapore
	Pigs, cattle and goats [#]	333	Taiwan, China; New Zealand
	Poultry (day-old chicks)	3 034 600	Mainland China
2024	Cats and dogs	4 447	Japan; Australia; United Kingdom; Canada; United States
	Birds	15 686	Mozambique; Kenya; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Malaysia; Belgium
	Horses	4 537	Mainland China (Conghua); Australia; New Zealand; United Kingdom; Japan
	Reptiles	243 883	Ghana; United States; Togo; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Czech Republic
	Small mammals*	15 872	Mainland China; Netherlands; United States; Canada; Australia
	Pigs, cattle and goats [#]	255	Taiwan, China
	Poultry (day-old chicks)	3 120 470	Mainland China

* Such as hamsters, rabbits, guinea pigs and chinchillas.

[#] For breeding or keeping, not including animals for direct slaughter.

(a) (ii) Imported plants

The importation of plants is subject to the regulation of the Plant (Importation and Pest Control) Ordinance (Cap. 207). Apart from articles¹ exempted from the

import document requirement by the Ordinance, importers shall provide the phytosanitary certificates issued by the places of export.

According to the phytosanitary certificates provided by importers, the total number of batches of imported plants over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Total number of batches of imported plants*	Country/region of export (top 5)
2022	2 279	United States, Netherlands, Tanzania, Japan, Indonesia
2023	1 973	United States, Netherlands, Tanzania, Japan, South Africa
2024	1 526	United States, Netherlands, Japan, Tanzania, South Africa

* The major types of important plants include live plants (flowers, potted plants), forage feed, nuts and seeds. A phytosanitary certificate (each batch of plants) usually covers more than one type of plants and there is no standard unit of measure for the quantity of plants. AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the imported species.

¹ *Cut flowers; fruit and vegetables for consumption; grains, pulses, seeds and spices for human or animal consumption or for industrial use; timber and timber products; dried tobacco and manufactured articles incorporating dried leaves, and plants produced in and imported from any place in China outside Hong Kong are exempted from the import document requirement by the Ordinance.*

(a) (iii) Imported endangered species of wild fauna and flora

Through the enforcement of the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586), the Government implements the regulations on the import and export of endangered species of fauna and flora through a permit system as stipulated in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). As far as the CITES Appendix species are concerned, the species of imported live animals and plants and their respective quantities and places of export over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows (in view of the large number of species, only the top 5 imported species in each category are listed):

Year	Species*	Quantity	Place of export
2022	Birds		
	<i>Pyrrhura molinae</i>	30	Taiwan, China
	<i>Eolophus roseicapilla</i>	18	Belgium
	<i>Ara ararauna</i>	2	Belgium
	<i>Psittacus erithacus</i>	3	Singapore
	<i>Ara chloropterus</i>	3	Belgium
	Others	5	

Year	Species*	Quantity	Place of export
	Reptiles		
	<i>Podocnemis unifilis</i>	236 914	Peru; Taiwan, China
	<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	16 888	United States
	<i>Stigmochelys pardalis</i>	10 344	Kenya; South Africa; Taiwan, China; Zambia
	<i>Mauremys reevesii</i>	5 500	Mainland China
	<i>Testudo hermanni</i>	4 013	Italy; North Macedonia; Slovenia
	Others	25 406	-
	Amphibians		
	<i>Agalychnis callidryas</i>	325	Nicaragua; United States
	<i>Dendropsophus ebraccatus</i>	300	Nicaragua
	<i>Dyscophus guineti</i>	38	Madagascar
	Fishes		
	<i>Scleropages formosus</i>	12 426	Indonesia; Malaysia; Singapore
	<i>Arapaima gigas</i>	1 680	Peru
	<i>Hippocampus reidi</i>	370	Taiwan, China
	<i>Holacanthus clarionensis</i>	173	Indonesia
	<i>Potamotrygon sp.</i>	162	Taiwan, China
	Others	137	-
	Molluscs		
	<i>Tridacna maxima</i>	180	France; French Polynesia; Vietnam
	<i>Tridacna crocea</i>	105	Vietnam
	<i>Tridacna squamosa</i>	85	Vietnam
	Cnidarians (corals)		
	<i>Acropora sp.</i>	30 040	Australia; Indonesia; Taiwan, China; Tonga
	<i>Euphyllia glabrescens</i>	11 359	Australia; Indonesia; Tonga; Vietnam
	<i>Goniopora sp.</i>	3 534	Australia; Indonesia; Taiwan, China; Tonga; Vietnam
	<i>Echinophyllia sp.</i>	2 505	Australia; Indonesia; Tonga
	<i>Montipora sp.</i>	2 491	Australia; Indonesia; Taiwan, China; Tonga; Vietnam
	Others	33 838	
	Plants		

Year	Species*	Quantity	Place of export
	Hybridised <i>Phalaenopsis</i>	84 599	Mainland China; Thailand; Taiwan, China
	<i>Pachypodium gracilius</i>	8 138	Madagascar
	Hybridised <i>Cattleya</i>	7 124	Thailand; Taiwan, China
	Hybridised <i>Dendrobium</i>	6 014	Thailand; Taiwan, China
	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Arai × <i>Phalaenopsis</i> New Eagle	5 031	Taiwan, China
	Others	38 003	-
2023	Birds		
	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>	221	Belgium
	<i>Amazona aestiva</i>	37	Belgium
	<i>Eolophus roseicapilla</i>	29	Belgium
	<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i>	22	Belgium; Thailand
	<i>Pionites leucogaster</i>	19	Belgium; Thailand
	Others	98	-
	Reptiles		
	<i>Podocnemis unifilis</i>	303 507	Peru
	<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	17 974	United States
	<i>Stigmochelys pardalis</i>	14 658	Germany; Kenya; South Africa; Taiwan, China; Zambia
	<i>Sternotherus odoratus</i>	13 515	Germany; United States
	<i>Testudo hermanni</i>	12 596	Germany; North Macedonia; Slovenia; Taiwan, China
	Others	82 893	-
	Amphibians		
	<i>Agalychnis callidryas</i>	395	Nicaragua; United States
	<i>Dendropsophus ebraccatus</i>	200	Nicaragua
	<i>Ambystoma mexicanum</i>	100	Czech Republic
	<i>Dyscophus guineti</i>	63	Madagascar
	<i>Dyscophus insularis</i>	43	Madagascar
	Fishes		
	<i>Arapaima gigas</i>	11 766	Peru
	<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i>	1 905	Indonesia
	<i>Scleropages formosus</i>	1 818	Indonesia; Malaysia
	<i>Holacanthus clarionensis</i>	125	Indonesia
	<i>Hippocampus erectus</i>	96	Taiwan, China
	Others	122	-
	Molluscs		
	<i>Tridacna maxima</i>	164	French Polynesia; Vietnam

Year	Species*	Quantity	Place of export
	<i>Tridacna crocea</i>	110	Vietnam
	<i>Tridacna squamosa</i>	65	Vietnam
	Cnidarians (corals)		
	<i>Acropora sp.</i>	22 927	Australia; Indonesia; Malaysia; Taiwan, China; Tonga
	<i>Euphyllia glabrescens</i>	7 355	Australia; Indonesia; Malaysia; Tonga; Vietnam
	<i>Goniopora sp.</i>	4 694	Australia; Indonesia; Malaysia; Taiwan, China; Tonga; Vietnam
	<i>Scolymia australis</i>	3 756	Australia; Tonga
	<i>Acanthastrea lordhowensis</i>	2 696	Australia; Vietnam
	Others	28 860	-
	Plants		
	Hybridised <i>Phalaenopsis</i>	56 992	Mainland China; Netherlands; Thailand; Taiwan, China
	<i>Phalaenopsis Sogo Yukidian</i>	7 979	Taiwan, China
	Hybridised <i>Dendrobium</i>	6 362	Thailand; Taiwan, China
	Hybridised <i>Cattleya</i>	4 764	Japan; Thailand; Taiwan, China
	<i>Operculicarya pachypus</i>	4 751	Madagascar
	Others	25 139	-
2024	Birds		
	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>	46	Belgium
	<i>Amazona aestiva</i>	43	Belgium
	<i>Pionites leucogaster</i>	36	Belgium; Spain
	<i>Psittacula derbiana</i>	25	Belgium; Spain
	<i>Eolophus roseicapillus</i>	20	Belgium
	Others	60	-
	Reptiles		
	<i>Podocnemis unifilis</i>	161 000	Peru
	<i>Sternotherus odoratus</i>	20 791	Mainland China; Germany; United States
	<i>Stigmochelys pardalis</i>	19 415	Germany; Italy; Kenya; South Africa; Taiwan, China; Zambia
	<i>Testudo hermanni</i>	14 402	Germany; Italy; North Macedonia; Slovenia
	<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	13 955	United States

Year	Species*	Quantity	Place of export
	Others	95 182	-
	Amphibians		
	<i>Agalychnis callidryas</i>	650	Nicaragua; United States
	<i>Dyscophus guineti</i>	90	Czech Republic; Madagascar
	<i>Dyscophus insularis</i>	16	Madagascar
	<i>Scaphiophryne marmorata</i>	12	Madagascar
	Fishes		
	<i>Arapaima gigas</i>	27 394	Peru
	<i>Scleropages formosus</i>	1 755	Indonesia; Malaysia; Thailand
	<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i>	484	Indonesia
	<i>Holacanthus clarionensis</i>	107	Indonesia
	<i>Potamotrygon leopoldi</i>	72	Malaysia; Taiwan, China
	Others	117	-
	Molluscs		
	<i>Tridacna squamosa</i>	123	Indonesia; Vietnam
	<i>Tridacna maxima</i>	35	Australia; Indonesia
	<i>Tridacna derasa</i>	20	Palau
	<i>Tridacna crocea</i>	11	Indonesia
	Anthropods		
	<i>Pandinus dictator</i>	50	Cameroon
	<i>Dromus dromas</i>	15	Czech Republic
	<i>Brachypelma albopilosum</i>	12	United States
	<i>Brachypelma hamorii</i>	12	United States
	<i>Zygonyx iris</i>	6	Belgium
	<i>Brachypelma boehmei</i>	2	United States
	Cnidarians (corals)		
	<i>Acropora sp.</i>	12 894	Australia; Fiji; Indonesia; Malaysia; Palau; Peru; Solomon Islands; Tonga
	<i>Euphyllia glabrescens</i>	5 821	Australia; Indonesia; Malaysia; Palau; Peru; Solomon Islands; Tonga; Vietnam
	<i>Goniopora sp.</i>	3 115	Australia; Indonesia; Malaysia; Palau; Peru; Solomon Islands; Tonga; Vietnam
	<i>Scolymia australis</i>	2 401	Australia; Peru
	<i>Acanthophyllia deshayesiana</i>	1 755	Australia; Malaysia; Peru; Tonga

Year	Species*	Quantity	Place of export
	Others	23 910	-
	Plants		
	Hybridised <i>Phalaenopsis</i>	190 016	Mainland China; Netherlands; Taiwan, China
	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Sogo Yukidian	6 830	Taiwan, China
	<i>Operculicarya pachypus</i>	3 056	Madagascar
	Hybridised <i>Cattleya</i>	2 623	Ecuador; Thailand; Taiwan, China
	Hybridised <i>Dendrobium</i>	1 370	Thailand; Taiwan, China
	Others	11 841	-

* Only the scientific names of the species or their genera are available. No Chinese names are available.

- (b) The number of animal trader licences issued by AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of animal trader licences issued
2022	340
2023	343
2024	285

The sale of plants in Hong Kong is not subject to the regulation of the Plant (Importation and Pest Control) Ordinance (Cap. 207) and Cap. 586. However, under Cap. 586, retailers possessing an Appendix I species or an Appendix II live species of wild origin for commercial purposes requires a possession licence (PL) issued by AFCD.

- (c) Under Cap. 586, retailers possessing an Appendix I live endangered birds and Appendix II live endangered birds of wild origin for commercial purposes requires a PL for each keeping premises. Each PL can cover more than 1 species/individual. Currently, there are a total of 10 valid PLs issued in respect of live endangered birds, covering 184 individuals of 22 species, among which 9 PLs were issued by AFCD over the past 3 years, including 4 PLs in 2022, 1 PL in 2023 and 4 PLs in 2024.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)140****(Question Serial No. 3760)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25).

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

- (a) Information on the wholesale quantity of freshwater fish traded through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years is tabulated below. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not keep 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)
2022	34 419	94	169	6
2023	38 544	106	157	8
2024	35 535	97	159	9

Information on the wholesale quantity of marine fish traded over the past 3 years is set out at **Annex A**.

- (b) The monthly wholesale price of freshwater fish traded through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years is tabulated below. AFCD does not keep 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
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
2023	30,439	30,472	30,722	31,101	31,678 [*]	31,626	30,884	31,422	31,465	30,673	30,467	30,022 [^]
2024	29,692	28,461 [^]	29,399	29,463	29,958	30,109	30,192	30,683	30,526	30,718	30,798	30,838 [*]

^{*} Highest monthly average price in the relevant year

[^] Lowest monthly average price in the relevant year

Information on the monthly average wholesale price of marine fish over the past 3 years is set out at **Annex B**.

Wholesale quantity of marine fish from 2022 to 2024

Year	Fish	Total quantity (tonnes)	Daily average quantity (tonnes)	Highest daily quantity (tonnes)	Lowest daily quantity (tonnes)
2022	Golden thread (紅衫)	2 586.4	7.1	8.4	4.8
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	2 880.9	7.9	9.1	5.6
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	2 127.5	5.8	6.7	3.7
	Big-eyes (木棉)	2 085.4	5.7	6.4	3.7
	Scads (池魚)	516.0	1.4	2.0	0.9
	Breams (立魚)	2 074.5	5.7	6.9	4.3
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	1 081.3	3.0	3.8	1.5
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	1 378.7	3.8	4.6	2.1
	Croakers (鰻魚)	298.4	0.8	1.2	0.3
2023	Golden thread (紅衫)	2 508.7	6.9	7.6	5.7
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	2 640.1	7.2	8.7	6.1
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	1 994.1	5.5	6.6	4.6
	Big-eyes (木棉)	2 212.9	6.1	7.8	4.7
	Scads (池魚)	692.8	1.9	2.7	1.0
	Breams (立魚)	1 984.6	5.4	6.3	4.6
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	1 038.5	2.8	3.8	2.0
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	1 277.0	3.5	4.1	2.4
	Croakers (鰻魚)	456.3	1.3	2.1	0.6
2024	Golden thread (紅衫)	2 561.6	7.0	8.0	5.5
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	2 491.7	6.8	8.0	5.1
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	1 982.1	5.4	6.5	4.3
	Big-eyes (木棉)	2 370.7	6.5	8.4	4.4
	Scads (池魚)	692.8	1.9	2.7	1.0
	Breams (立魚)	1 865.6	5.1	5.7	4.1
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	1 154.1	3.2	3.7	2.2
	Mackerels (鯪魚)	1 271.2	3.5	4.1	2.2
	Croakers (鰻魚)	442.9	1.2	1.6	0.6

Figures on Filefish (沙魮) are not available.

Monthly average wholesale price of marine fish from 2022 to 2024

Year	Fish	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/kg)											
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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 (鮫魚)	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 (鰺魚)	30.90	31.67 [^]	33.45	35.56	37.81	41.67	47.13 [*]	45.75	36.89	36.13	39.74	37.04
2023	Golden thread (紅衫)	91.23 [*]	89.48	84.60	77.71	89.43	90.72	84.66	84.23	84.96	78.33	74.82 [^]	75.32
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	58.14	59.96	59.71	58.16	60.60	61.84	64.78 [*]	62.16	58.60	51.19 [^]	55.93	52.63
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	105.07	77.55 [^]	101.45	94.92	88.87	89.78	96.72	95.17	97.58	118.66 [*]	109.43	100.92
	Big-eyes (木棉)	100.77	105.06 [*]	103.07	100.66	104.14	104.93	104.17	100.90	87.53 [^]	89.04	97.56	92.69
	Scads (池魚)	28.11	34.40 [*]	26.66	26.01	30.06	31.34	30.14	29.32	22.25	21.08	20.79 [^]	21.40
	Breams (立魚)	79.72	80.14	81.67 [*]	78.23	76.70	76.67	77.79	76.02	65.70 [^]	71.51	75.12	74.65
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	59.99	69.21	59.99	58.72	64.25	72.18	73.10 [*]	71.21	54.11	50.54 [^]	51.31	50.61
	Mackerels (鮫魚)	81.63	79.79	83.67 [*]	80.64	79.29	76.65	75.03	73.50	67.43 [^]	70.75	70.14	70.56
	Croakers (鰺魚)	38.61	38.97	36.23	39.02	43.07 [*]	41.44	42.91	38.72	36.89	35.35 [^]	37.87	36.19
2024	Golden thread (紅衫)	74.33 [^]	75.70	81.03	78.55	82.87	84.12	84.96	86.87 [*]	75.55	77.42	78.33	80.78
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	54.06	54.17	56.78	52.84	55.16	55.56	57.63 [*]	56.48	50.68	49.89 [^]	51.97	51.43
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	109.87	126.20 [*]	104.70	105.10	90.59	86.49 [^]	89.04	92.16	102.11	99.95	107.50	102.70
	Big-eyes (木棉)	102.21	102.99	95.93	99.77	101.58	103.06	102.29	103.42	85.47 [^]	105.44 [*]	102.34	101.97
	Scads (池魚)	22.30	23.71	23.01	21.59	23.13	23.49	24.35	24.57 [*]	20.90	18.80	18.45	17.87 [^]
	Breams (立魚)	74.45	75.72 [*]	72.47	73.31	74.60	71.26	67.42	69.64	65.16 [^]	69.52	70.87	73.21
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	48.68	51.77	53.31	49.54	54.82	64.84	64.75	66.17 [*]	53.72	49.96	45.52 [^]	46.02
	Mackerels (鮫魚)	72.86	71.48	68.97	73.23	73.37 [*]	72.49	71.47	71.34	67.04 [^]	72.03	69.09	71.48
	Croakers (鰺魚)	36.12	41.93	37.25	36.21	38.17	40.11	39.98	42.87 [*]	37.23	36.02 [^]	36.29	36.80

Figures on Filefish (沙鯪) are not available.

* Highest monthly average wholesale price in the relevant year.

[^] Lowest monthly average wholesale price in the relevant year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)141****(Question Serial No. 3761)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (c) the number of fishing vessels applying for Mainland deckhands with a breakdown by type over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 51)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)
2022-23	2.2	3
2023-24	1.8	3
2024-25 (revised estimate)	2.2	3

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

Vessel type	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25*	
	Number of [#]					
	Applications	Deckhands involved	Applications	Deckhands involved	Applications	Deckhands involved
Pair trawler	114 (112)	740	40 (38)	243	30 (28)	149
Stern trawler	66 (66)	339	44 (44)	216	34 (34)	157
Shrimp trawler	55 (53)	287	47 (47)	251	44 (44)	232
Hang trawler	21 (21)	123	24 (24)	143	19 (19)	112
Purse seiner with light and purse seiner	78 (74)	574	66 (65)	494	69 (69)	514
Liner and gill netter	82 (77)	557	89 (89)	603	104 (103)	713
Fish carrier	225 (223)	1 489	219 (218)	1 538	195 (193)	1 284
Other fishing vessels	19 (18)	129	18 (17)	115	14 (14)	94
Total	660 (644)	4 238	547 (542)	3 603	509 (504)	3 255

* As at February 2025

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 1, 12 and 37 cases contravening the rules of the Scheme in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 (as at February 2025) 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)142

(Question Serial No. 3764)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2020-21 to 2024-25); 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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.: 54)

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 (i.e. parts of the New Territories and outlying islands), 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, no livestock keeping is allowed, unless the relevant premises had been in use continuously for livestock keeping for at least 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:

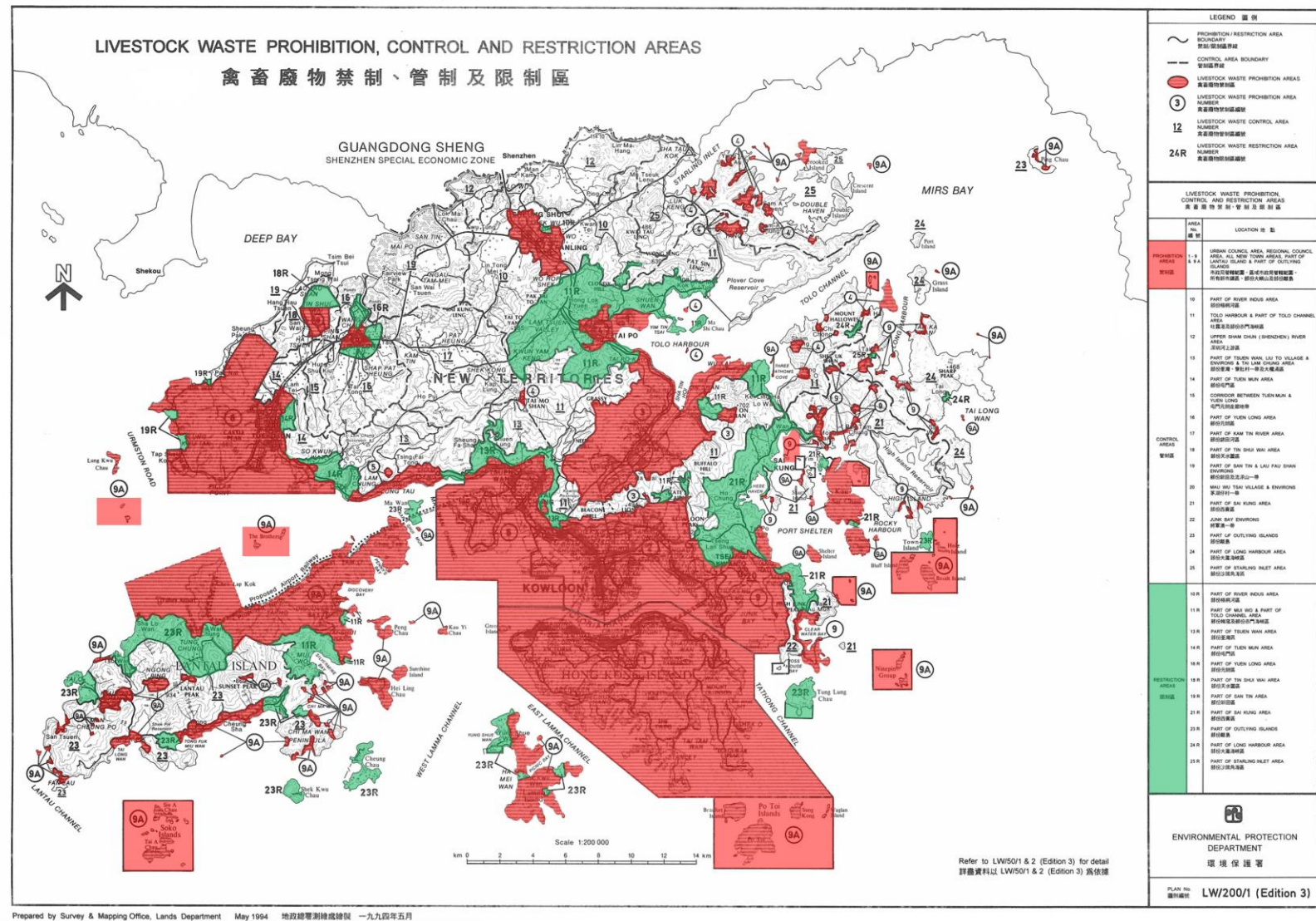
Year	Livestock waste prohibition areas		Livestock waste control areas		Livestock waste restriction areas	
	Pig farms	Chicken farms	Pig farms	Chicken farms	Pig farms	Chicken farms
2020	0	0	42	26	1	3
2021	0	0	42	26	1	3
2022	0	0	42	26	1	3
2023	0	0	42	26	1	3
2024	0	0	42	26	1	3

- (2) and (3) Over the past 3 financial years (2022-23 to 2024-25), a pig farm was cleared due to the Kwu Tung North New Development Area. The relevant land reverted to the Government in April 2024, and the Government will provide cash ex-gratia compensation according to applicable policies. At present, 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 and reprovisioning. 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 in the reprovisioning of livestock farms, DEVB has made reference to the considerations about the areas mentioned in (1) above and identified 3 sites of about 1 to 2 hectares each, located in the vicinity of Sheung Shui, which are suitable to be used as multi-storey livestock farms by the industry for reprovisioning of livestock farms affected by government development projects. DEVB will co-ordinate relevant departments in conducting feasibility studies on the infrastructure and formation works for the sites and be responsible for carrying out the relevant works. The land formation works for the first relocation site are expected to be completed within 2026. Upon completion of the works, the sites will be handed over to AFCD to follow up on the reprovisioning arrangement for development of multi-storey livestock farms with the industry. AFCD plans to receive applications from interested groups (including agricultural organisations) within the first half of 2025 for leasing the relevant site to set up and operate the first modernised and environmentally friendly multi-storey livestock farm.

Moreover, the Government enhanced the parameters for calculating the ex-gratia allowances (EGAs) for pig and poultry farmers in October 2023 to better reflect the impacts on the farmers. The Government will provide EGAs to farmers affected by clearance exercises arising from development projects according to the aforesaid enhanced arrangements in future.



- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)143****(Question Serial No. 3765)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 55)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 keep a breakdown by type of eggs and place of origin.

Year	Quantity (tonnes)			
	Total	Daily average	Highest daily	Lowest daily
2022	68 822	189	368	6
2023	61 336	168	349	3
2024	55 577	152	293	2

- (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 keep 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
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*
2023	18,361	18,400	18,400	18,420	18,400	18,407	18,239^	18,387	18,413	18,406	18,387	18,439*
2024	18,400	18,234	18,432*	17,773^	17,819	17,833	17,806	17,800	17,800	17,826	17,833	17,819

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
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
2023	19,652^	20,129	19,839	20,080	21,284	21,373*	20,884	20,768	20,367	20,781	20,300	21,071
2024	21,690	21,945*	21,735	21,700	21,600	21,620	21,600	21,645	21,600	21,594^	21,827	21,613

* Highest monthly average wholesale price

^ Lowest monthly average wholesale price

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)144****(Question Serial No. 3766)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 the work, 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (c) the total value and quantity of local production and import of flowers respectively over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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.: 56)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)
2022-23	8.9	18
2023-24	9.2	18
2024-25 (revised estimate)	10.0	16

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 2025-26, AFCD will continue to provide the above services to crop farmers (including flower farmers) with a similar level of resources as in 2024-25.

Agricultural Park Phase 1 has gradually come into operation since late 2022, and the works for the remaining parts of agricultural land and infrastructure facilities have been substantially completed in 2024. AFCD will provide part of the agricultural land for lease to local flower farms, and will provide technical support to impart agro-technology and knowledge of modernised farm management to the tenants.

- (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)
2022	160	257
2023	173	251
2024	173	223

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)145

(Question Serial No. 3767)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is learned that some marine works are under way. However, the estimated figure of claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia payment is zero in 2025. In this connection, please advise of the following:

- (a) the reason for estimating the claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia payment in 2025 as zero;
- (b) the anticipated commencing date of claims for ex-gratia payment; and
- (c) whether there are claims involving aquaculture-related assessment; if yes, the relevant amount.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 57)

Reply:

- (a) and (b) The Government has established a mechanism to grant ex-gratia allowance (EGA) to eligible fishermen affected by marine works projects in Hong Kong waters. When the total EGA for an area of water has accumulated to a certain amount, the Government will set up an inter-departmental working group to handle EGA registration and disbursement. In 2024, the Government completed the processing of applications for EGA for the capture fishermen affected by marine works projects in the northeastern waters of Hong Kong and with vessels not exceeding 15 metres in length. Most of the eligible applicants have already received their EGA in early 2025. As the Government has no plan for the time being to conduct any assessment of claims for EGA for the capture fisheries in 2025, the estimated figure for this item is zero. Subject to the situation of individual marine works projects in various water zones in Hong Kong, as well as the amount of EGA accumulated, the Government will commence the relevant preparatory work in a timely manner.
- (c) Regarding EGA for the aquaculture fisheries, the estimated area of fish ponds affected by development projects for assessment in 2025 is 166 660 square metres. The major development projects and works involved are Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area – Second Phase Development; Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen

New Development Area – Advance Works Phase 3 and Stage 2 Works – Site Formation and Engineering Infrastructure; Yuen Long South New Development Area – Second Phase Development and its road works; and the San Tin Technopole – Phase 1 Stage 1 development. Since the amount of EGA involved can only be calculated in accordance with the established criteria after the eligibility of the applicant has been assessed and confirmed, the Government does not have the relevant estimates at the moment.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)146

(Question Serial No. 3769)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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.: 59)

Reply:

Hong Kong waters are generally available for fishing with the use of fishing vessels, except in certain areas such as the 4 specified marine parks (namely Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park, Yan Chau Tong Marine Park, Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park and Tung Ping Chau Marine Park) as well as the core areas of other marine parks, the 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)147****(Question Serial No. 3770)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 (2022-23 to 2024-25); 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 60)Reply:

- (a) The wholesale quantity of vegetables traded through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years is tabulated below. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) does not keep a breakdown of the figures for different kinds of vegetables.

Year	Quantity (tonnes)			
	Total	Daily average	Highest daily	Lowest daily
2022	217 127	595	721	101
2023	217 173	595	744	53
2024	213 960	585	733	45

- (b) The monthly average price, the highest and the lowest monthly average prices of vegetables traded through government wholesale food markets over the past 3 years are tabulated below. AFCD does not keep 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
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
2023	11,065	11,883*	11,036	11,392	11,111	10,359	10,226	10,213	10,774	10,444	9,947	9,661^
2024	12,137*	11,252	11,351	11,824	10,777	10,284	10,210^	10,607	10,688	10,676	10,303	10,262

* Highest monthly price

^ Lowest monthly price

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)148

(Question Serial No. 3771)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the locations of agricultural, active agricultural and arable land in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) (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 (2022-23 to 2024-25):
 - 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; and
 - 8 the annual rent for the successful cases;
- (c) the expenditure and manpower involved in administering the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF), the Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) and the Agricultural Priority Areas (APAs) respectively over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (d) the progress of the work on Agri-Park and APAs and the estimated work schedules for the two projects; and
- (e) the details, expenditure and manpower involved in promoting the sustainable development of agriculture (e.g. the development of eco-tourism, leisure farming, agricultural industry employing innovative technology, and other sustainable agriculture) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 61)

Reply:

- (a) According to the survey on agricultural land use conducted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), the total area of land for agricultural use in Hong Kong is around 3 900 hectares as at end of 2024. 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)		
	2022	2023	2024
North	248	252	247
Yuen Long	260	250	247
Tai Po	91	90	88
Tuen Mun	44	46	45
Islands	33	33	32
Sai Kung	24	24	23
Tsuen Wan	18	19	17
Others	15	15	15
Total	733	729	714

- (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 tillers for rehabilitation and farm machinery and equipment lending services, as well as technical advice 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 tabulated as follows:

Manpower and expenditure involved in operating ALRS

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	0.6	1
2023-24	0.6	1
2024-25 (revised estimate)	0.6	1

Relevant statistics on the cases handled under ALRS

Year	2022	2023	2024
Number of landowners participating in ALRS	23	19	16
Number of new applications/ land area involved (hectares)	88/11.7	40/3.0	30/4.3
Number of successful cases	16	18	15
- Total land area involved (hectares)	1.6	1.3	0.4
- Range of annual rent (per dau chung [*])	\$1 to \$48,000	\$769 to \$105,000	\$400 to \$156,816
- Average waiting time (year)	5.3	5.3	3.9
Number of applications on the waiting list as at year-end/ land area involved (hectares)	516/83.3	479/68.3	393/55.5

^{*}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. Under SALRS, the Government has earlier identified 10 pieces of agricultural land with a total area of about 6 800 m² in Wa Shan and Ma Tso Lung for affected eligible farmers to lease on a short-term tenancy basis to resume farming. As at 1 March 2025, 9 pieces of agricultural land with a total area of 6 600 m² have been leased to individual farmers affected by government development projects, while the 1 remaining piece of agricultural land are pending allocation. In 2024-25, the annual rent of agricultural land in Wa Shan and Ma Tso Lung is about \$829 per dau chung. Lodging and storage units are also available for rent at an annual rate of \$3,340 and \$1,560 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 (SADF), preparing for the establishment of the Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) and commissioning the Consultancy Study on Agricultural Priority Areas (APAs) are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	20.6	19
2023-24	14.9	24
2024-25 (revised estimate)	36.3	26

- (d) AFCD has established 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. All farmland available for lease in Agri-Park Phase 1 were leased out, while the construction works for the remaining pieces of farmland are substantially completed. Arrangements will be made for leasing out the farmland to eligible farmers as soon as possible. Regarding the development of Agri-Park Phase 2 First Stage (with an area of about 19 hectares), the Government is actively preparing for the planning work for the development, and will take forward the works project in a timely and orderly manner. Meanwhile, the Government facilitated the establishment of a “Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park” (with an area of about 11 hectares) within part of the undeveloped land at Agri-Park Phase 2 led by a local agricultural organisation through the public-private partnership approach. The agricultural organisation completed the open application process for letting the first phase of the farmland in late 2024. In addition, after excluding the land with specific development plan, the Government has delineated quality farmland based on 10 selection criteria and planned to facilitate the use of such quality farmland for farming through support measures. The Government will continue to listen to stakeholders’ views so as to enhance the recommendations.
- (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 organic farming and facilitating the development of leisure farming through the “Agri enJoy” Scheme; (iv) assisting in the setting up of farmers’ markets and organisation of the annual FarmFest to help farmers with the promotion and sales of local agricultural produce; (v) administering 3 funds to provide loans to farmers as development and/or operation capital; and (vi) implementing various measures in phases according to the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries released in late 2023. 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)
2022-23	78.6	118
2023-24	77.0	124
2024-25 (revised estimate)	102.8	129

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)149

(Question Serial No. 3772)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) and the details.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 62)

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)150

(Question Serial No. 3773)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2022-23 to 2024-25) and in the future?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 63)

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 the organisation of major events such as the 75th National Day Farm and Gourmet Festival in 2024 and the annual FarmFest, and joint participation with the Fish Marketing Organization and Vegetable Marketing Organization (FMO/VMO) in various food exhibitions held in Hong Kong (e.g. Vegetarian Food Asia, the Food Expo, HOFEX and Organic Aquaculture Festival, etc.). AFCD and FMO/VMO also held the Happy Hong Kong - A and F Carnival between June 2023 and January 2024 to promote local premium agricultural and fisheries products and foster the sustainable development of the local agriculture and fisheries industries through an array of activities themed on local agricultural and fisheries delicacies.

To facilitate consumers purchasing local agricultural and fisheries products, AFCD and FMO/VMO have jointly developed the "Local Fresh" mobile app and shopping website to facilitate consumers purchasing local agricultural and fisheries products. Moreover, apart from setting up "Local Fresh" physical stores, FMO/VMO have also established regular sales channels with a number of retailers to sell their local premium agricultural and fisheries products, with around 100 sales locations, including large supermarkets and special retail outlets. AFCD and FMO/VMO also organise regular holiday bazaars at the physical stores and thematic sales activities at supermarket chains to enhance publicity.

On assisting local agricultural and fisheries products to go global, FMO has been exporting and selling local premium fisheries products to the Mainland with tariff-free concessions through the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement since 2021.

FMO/VMO will continue to actively participate in promotional activities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), including participation in the Shenzhen International Fisheries and Seafood Expo and other suitable exhibitions. These efforts aim to promote local premium agricultural and fisheries products to the catering industry, superstores and e-commerce companies in the Mainland, with a view to increasing the market share of local premium agricultural and fisheries products in the GBA and other markets in the Mainland.

In addition, AFCD will also promote local agricultural and fisheries products and build up sales networks through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF) and the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF), such as the 3-year “Pilot Scheme on Marketing and Branding of Graded Local Vegetables”, which has designed an easily recognisable banding package for local “accredited vegetables” as well as providing grading and packaging services. Through SFDF, AFCD also supports branding and promotional projects for local fisheries products, which includes inviting the catering sector to visit local farms and fish farms, organising large-scale online and offline marketing campaigns, business matching events and seminars, etc., in order to foster co-operation between fish farmers and the catering and hotel sectors and promote premium fisheries products to the public and the sectors.

On the branding of local agricultural and fisheries products, in order to increase their competitiveness, AFCD plans to establish a unified new brand for safe, low-carbon and premium local agricultural and fisheries products (the new brand) covering various locally produced agricultural and fisheries products, and to establish production standards, farming methods as well as a certification and traceability system for these products to ensure that the quality is up to standard. AFCD is carrying out preparatory work with the local certification body, fishermen and agricultural organisations, and other stakeholders. At the same time, AFCD encourages farmers and fishermen, wholesalers, retailers and the catering sector to adopt a traceability model for the production, processing, sales and cooking of local agricultural and fisheries products. Traceability labels will be attached to certified products, which enable consumers to obtain information on the origin of the products and the farms where they were produced. AFCD and the certification body will make reference to international experiences when formulating a certification system that applies to the local agricultural and fisheries products, and will fully consult the industries and relevant stakeholders before launching the new brand to ensure that the system standards are widely accepted by the industries. AFCD is actively striving to build the unified new brand in 2025/26.

AFCD has set up a new “Branding and Promotion Sub-committee” under the Advisory Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries, which is responsible for advising on the formulation of promotion strategies and measures for local agricultural and fisheries products. AFCD will consolidate views and suggestions from the agriculture and fisheries sectors, academia and relevant sectors to further promote the building and promotion of the new brand.

As the promotion of the sales of local agricultural and fisheries products is absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD, no separate breakdown of the manpower and financial expenditure is available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)151****(Question Serial No. 3774)**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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (b) the monthly average price, as well as the highest and lowest monthly prices of imported and local live chickens over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (c) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported minor poultry, as well as the largest and smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (d) the monthly average price, as well as the highest and lowest monthly prices of imported minor poultry over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (e) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported day-old chicks, as well as the largest and smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- (f) the percentage of live chickens, minor poultry and day-old chicks imported from various places over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 64)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
2022	3 929 112	10 765	42 147	6 250
2023	4 023 165	11 022	37 040	6 270
2024	3 841 323	10 495	37 238	990*

* On 5 September 2024, Hong Kong was affected by Typhoon Yagi and the No. 8 Gale or Storm Signal was issued, leading to a drop in the wholesale quantity of poultry traded to 990 on that day. The second lowest daily wholesale quantity in 2024 was 6 600.

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
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
2023	415 665	298 570	343 668	321 437	349 890	339 305	333 186	299 932	325 752	321 240	338 882	335 638
2024	317 797	374 220	323 745	314 287	319 260	313 188	292 069	325 328	327 636	311 883	282 419	339 491

(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
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
2023	64.28*	55.76	43.40	42.90	40.74	39.77	39.60^	39.60^	40.66	43.00	42.90	44.21
2024	43.22	52.89*	47.25	42.07	38.28	36.92	36.35^	36.57	45.52	42.90	45.89	52.41

* Highest monthly average price in the relevant year

^ Lowest monthly average price in the relevant year

(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
2022	2 816 900	7 718	40 000	2 000
2023	3 034 600	8 314	33 000	3 000
2024	3 120 470	8 526	35 060	3 000

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
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
2023	282 200	253 600	261 500	254 100	235 900	253 300	223 600	215 600	254 850	276 900	285 900	237 150
2024	254 400	235 400	258 150	242 000	235 100	261 100	253 500	204 400	268 500	339 000	297 900	271 020

(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)152

(Question Serial No. 3775)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2022-23 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 65)

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 2022, 2023 and 2024 were about \$2,880 million, \$2,510 million and \$2,480 million respectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)153

(Question Serial No. 3479)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In the Matters Requiring Special Attention, the Government states that it will “strengthen promotion of animal welfare, including preparing for legislative amendments and other measures to introduce a positive duty of care on persons responsible for animals to enhance animal welfare and further protect animals from unnecessary suffering”. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. the staff expenditures and estimates involved in the implementation of the programme;
2. the preparation work done so far for the public consultation on the legislative amendments which was mentioned as early as in the 2019-20 Budget (page 41, Volume I) but no specific legislative proposals have been put forward as yet, the specific work plan for this year and whether there is any plan to put forward the amendments this year; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons; and
3. the greatest obstacle for the amendment work in the Government's view, whether additional resources and other departments' assistance will have to be sought to expedite the progress; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 101)

Reply:

1. The manpower and related estimated expenditure of the Government in 2025-26 to strengthen the promotion of animal welfare and education, including the preparation for legislative amendments and the implementation of other measures, are 10 staff members and about \$20 million respectively.
2. and 3. The Government has been studying amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169). In preparing the Bill, it is necessary to consult the relevant stakeholders again on some of the proposals, and after collating the views, we will finalise the proposals and complete the law drafting work promptly. Once the work is completed, we will introduce the proposed legislative amendments into the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)154

(Question Serial No. 3968)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

As Singapore, an economy with a population and economic scale comparable to Hong Kong, has also implemented “a licensing scheme for manufacturers and importers, and imposed labelling requirements and import control arrangements” for the pet food market, will the Government make reference to the relevant experience and put forward regulatory proposals for Hong Kong? If yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 103)

Reply:

Unlike the case of food for human consumption, there are currently no specific internationally recognised safety standards for pet food that can be followed. Generally speaking, various jurisdiction around the world adopt different regulatory approaches according to their own needs. For instance, the European Union and the Mainland authorities have enacted specific regulations to regulate animal food; the United States has in place a single regime governing food for both human and animal consumption; in Australia, self-monitoring by the pet food trade is practised; in Singapore, the relevant trade is regulated according to the actual situation of the country. It can thus be seen that different places have adopted different regulatory strategies according to their own needs.

At present, there is no large-scale commercial enterprise in Hong Kong which produces pet food locally. In most cases, the pet food sold in Hong Kong is compound formula food imported from the United States, Europe, Thailand, the Mainland, Australia, etc.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) had earlier commissioned a consultancy study to collect 360 samples of different pet food products commonly available in the Hong Kong market, including dry and wet dog food products, dry and wet cat food products and food products for other pets, to test for the presence of any harmful substances and micro-organisms (including *Salmonella*, *Escherichia coli* (including O157), *Listeria monocytogenes*, aflatoxin, melamine, malathion, lead and arsenic). The study was completed in February 2020. The report showed that the results of all samples tested were

below the upper limits on the above harmful substances and micro-organisms generally set by major pet food producing countries/places.

AFCD is studying on the provision of guidelines on the safety standards and labelling information of pet food for the pet food industry, and will continue to keep in view the development of regulation of pet food in overseas countries as well as the overall safety situation of pet food supplied in Hong Kong. In addition, AFCD will also continue to step up the relevant public education work in order to remind the pet food industry and pet owners to handle and use pet food properly.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)001****(Question Serial No. 3117)**

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Subhead (No. & title): (610) Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote)

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Provision of \$30,300,000 under Subhead 610 is for minor works such as construction of fire lookouts, shelters, water filling stations and roads, and for procurement of building materials for recreational facilities such as barbecue pits, information boards, shelters and outdoor furniture. The provision for 2025-26 represents an increase of 24.2% over the revised estimate for 2024-25. Please list out the minor works projects and their expenditures under that Subhead for the years 2024-25 and 2025-26 and explain the reasons for the increased estimate.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The provision under Subhead 610 is mainly used for improving visitor, recreational and infrastructural facilities in country parks as well as the procurement of related materials. To enhance country park services, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has planned to carry out various enhancement works projects in 2025-26, including renovation works of Aberdeen Tree Centre, renovation works of Volcano Discovery Centre as well as installation works of a new surveillance and public address system at the carpark of Lions Nature Education Centre at Tsiu Hang, Sai Kung. Thus, the estimate has increased as compared with that for 2024-25. A breakdown of the provision under Subhead 610 and the estimated expenditure for 2024-25 and 2025-26 are tabulated as follows:

Works projects	Revised estimate for 2024-25 (\$ million)
Procurement of materials for minor recreational facilities in country parks and related works (including works projects such as repair of hiking trails, enhancement of recreational facilities, etc.)	11.6

Works projects	Revised estimate for 2024-25 (\$ million)
Construction and improvement works of mountain bike trails in country parks	1.6
Enhancement works of educational and visitor information facilities in country parks	1.0
Installation works of automatic people counters in country parks	2.0
Minor slope works	2.0
Repair works of shelters in country parks	1.7
Repair works of forest tracks in country parks	4.0
Renovation works of Volcano Discovery Centre	0.5
Total expenditure	24.4

Works projects	Estimated expenditure for 2025-26 (\$ million)
Procurement of materials for minor recreational facilities in country parks	3.8
Repair projects of hiking trails in country parks	6.0
Enhancement works of recreational facilities in country parks	4.5
Enhancement works of fire lookouts	1.2
Construction and improvement works of mountain bike trails in country parks	1.2
Enhancement works of visitor information in tree walks	0.8
Installation works of automatic people counters in country parks	1.8
Minor slope works	0.6
Repair works of shelters in country parks	3.2
Repair works of forest tracks in country parks	3.6
Renovation works of Volcano Discovery Centre	1.2
Renovation works of Aberdeen Tree Centre	1.0
Installation works of a surveillance and public address system for the carpark at Lions Nature Education Centre at Tsiu Hang, Sai Kung	1.4
Total expenditure	30.3

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)002

(Question Serial No. 3118)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 include taking forward the establishment of the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park and carrying out the management and operation of the new North Lantau Marine Park. Please advise of the following:

1. the manpower and estimated expenditure involved;
2. whether it has earmarked any resources for carrying out eco-education and promotion activities for conservation; if yes; what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. In 2025-26, the manpower and estimated expenditure of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) for taking forward the establishment of the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park are 5 staff members and \$4.9 million respectively.

As for the newly established North Lantau Marine Park, the AFCD will manage and operate it together with the adjoining Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park and The Brothers Marine Park, as well as the nearby Southwest Lantau Marine Park and the South Lantau Marine Park. In 2025-26, the manpower and estimated expenditure for the above 5 marine parks are 25 staff members and about \$17.7 million. The AFCD does not have a breakdown of the manpower and estimated expenditure for each of the above 5 marine parks.

2. The AFCD always attaches great importance to the education, promotion and publicity work on nature conservation, and continues to raise public awareness on respecting and caring for nature. Through the organisation of different publicity and educational activities, such as nature and marine excursions, ecological conservation exhibitions and workshops, public and school talks, school visits, orienteering, as well as volunteer/marine parks ambassador services, the AFCD aims to allow members of the public to enjoy the nature and engage them in the nature conservation work so as to foster an attitude of caring for the nature and knowledge of the relevant legislation. In 2025-26, the relevant estimated expenditure is about \$48 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)003

(Question Serial No. 0395)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Please advise this Committee of the following over the past 5 years:

- (1) the number of wild pigs in Hong Kong; 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; 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 each year;
- (4) the number of wild pigs captured and humanely dispatched each year;
- (5) the details and expenditure of appealing to the public to stop feeding wild animals each year; its proportion in the total expenditure of the Department; and
- (6) the number of reports received regarding illegal feeding of wild animals (including but not limited to feral pigeons) and successful prosecutions each year, broken down by the type of animals; the number of persons arrested and convicted in each case, and the penalties imposed.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (1) Since 2019, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has launched a study to estimate the number of wild pigs. By using infrared camera and spatial analysis models, the population density of wild pigs in the countryside is estimated for the projection of the number of wild pigs across the countryside in Hong Kong, with a view to monitoring the population trend in the long term. Over the past 5 years, the number of wild pigs across the countryside in the territory is tabulated below:

Year	Number of wild pigs across the countryside in the territory
2020	About 1 700
2021	About 2 000
2022	About 1 830
2023	About 1 360
2024	About 900

The manpower and expenditure involved in the work in relation to wild pig management by the AFCD and its percentage in the overall expenditure of the Department over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Percentage of the overall departmental expenditure (%)
2020-21	32	17.8	0.9
2021-22	32	19.2	1.0
2022-23	34	22.3	1.1
2023-24	33	21.8	1.1
2024-25 (revised estimate)	33	22.8	1.1

- (2) The AFCD implemented the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) for wild pigs between late 2017 and November 2021. However, the AFCD's investigations revealed that the effectiveness of the relevant operations was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, after wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food even after being relocated to the countryside. To effectively control the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has implemented a new measure since November 2021 to capture wild pigs which pose potential danger or cause nuisance to members of the public, to replace the CCRP. During wild pig capture and humane dispatch 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:

Month \ Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Apr	11	13	12	12	16
May	14	16	7	21	24
Jun	16	13	6	11	29
Jul	4	17	11	16	33
Aug	6	21	13	32	31
Sep	16	30	24	20	32
Oct	22	16	28	38	40
Nov	22	22	20	46	33
Dec	14	11	19	28	31
Jan	13	19	10	45	21
Feb	16	8	20	20	25
Mar	24	5	17	18	Data not yet available
Total	178	191	187	307	315

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:

Year District	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Islands	0	1	0	0	0
Kwai Tsing	4	4	4	1	0
North	8	10	3	9	11
Sai Kung	27	23	28	39	28
Sha Tin	16	13	17	23	34
Tai Po	16	16	10	29	31
Tsuen Wan	4	7	6	22	17
Tuen Mun	2	1	3	20	20
Yuen Long	4	3	1	5	16
Kowloon City	2	0	0	0	0
Kwun Tong	1	0	6	4	6
Sham Shui Po	0	2	3	11	9
Wong Tai Sin	3	1	4	3	6
Yau Tsim Mong	0	1	0	1	0
Central and Western	19	26	23	37	32
Eastern	24	31	31	27	39
Southern	39	45	40	50	41
Wan Chai	9	7	8	26	25
Total	178	191	187	307	315

(3) and (4) The numbers of wild pigs captured, administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised, and humanely dispatched over the past 5 years are tabulated respectively as follows:

Year	Number of wild pigs		
	Captured	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised	Humanely dispatched*
2020-21	344	165	26
2021-22	370	109	105
2022-23	378	The CCRP has ceased.	361
2023-24	540		525
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	643		630

* Including wild pigs humanely dispatched due to injury.

(5) The AFCD has all along been striving to promote to members of the public of different age groups about preventing wild animal nuisance and no-feeding of wild

animals, including providing eco-educational activities and guided tours at kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, centres for the elderly and communities near feeding black spots, uploading promotional and educational information on social media, and placing advertisements on public transport and at stations. Since the first quarter of 2024, the AFCD has further launched a series of publicity and education activities with the theme of “All For No Feeding”, including extensive advertisements, release of promotional videos, setting up of education booths, display of banners and posters and distribution of leaflets at feeding black spots, so as to inform the public about the latest feeding ban regulations and the negative impacts of feeding animals. The expenditure on the relevant publicity and education by the AFCD over the past 5 years and its percentage in the overall expenditure of the Department are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Percentage of the overall departmental expenditure (%)
2020-21	3.2	0.2
2021-22	5.0	0.3
2022-23	11.2	0.6
2023-24	9.6	0.5
2024-25 (revised estimate)	8.6	0.4

- (6) The Feeding Ban Area designated under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) was only limited to the 7 specific locations in Hong Kong before 31 December 2022, and was expanded to cover the entire territory thereafter. Besides, the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) came into effect on 1 August 2024, expanding the territory-wide prohibition on feeding of wild animals to cover feral pigeons, increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding of animals to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year, introducing a fixed penalty of \$5,000, and expanding the categories of enforcement officers to cover appointed officers of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Housing Department (HD), in addition to officers of the AFCD and police officers under the original arrangement.

The numbers of reports received regarding illegal feeding of wild animals and feral pigeons over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Numbers of reports received regarding illegal feeding of animals			
	Monkeys	Wild pigs	Wild birds/ feral pigeons ^(a)	Others ^(b)
2020-21	25	0	0	7
2021-22	48 ^(c)	6 ^(c)	0	0
2022-23	45	28	35 ^(d)	1
2023-24	56	81	54 ^(d)	4
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	55 ^(e)	143 ^{(e)(f)}	2 016 ^(f)	23

- (a) Cases of illegal feeding of feral pigeons often also involve illegal feeding of wild birds, and vice versa, hence a breakdown by feral pigeon and wild bird is not available.
- (b) Including cases of illegal feeding of other wild animals or cases involving non-specified wild animal type.
- (c) In 2021-22, 6 cases concurrently involved illegal feeding of monkeys and wild pigs.
- (d) Only cases of illegal feeding of wild birds were involved.
- (e) In 2024-25, 2 cases concurrently involved illegal feeding of monkeys and wild pigs.
- (f) In 2024-25, 1 case concurrently involved illegal feeding of wild pigs and wild birds.

The numbers of prosecutions instituted and successful prosecutions against illegal feeding of monkeys, wild pigs and wild birds, and the penalties imposed over the past 5 years are tabulated by animal type as follows:

Year	Illegal feeding of monkeys		
	Number of prosecutions instituted ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	Number of successful prosecutions ⁽²⁾	Fine (\$)
2020-21	50	31	300 to 2,000
2021-22	120 ⁽³⁾	90	200 to 1,500
2022-23	95 ⁽³⁾	77 ⁽⁴⁾	300 to 1,500
2023-24	135 ⁽³⁾	128 ⁽⁴⁾	250 to 3,000
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	27 ⁽³⁾	71 ⁽⁴⁾	400 to 5,000

Year	Illegal feeding of wild pigs		
	Number of prosecutions instituted ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	Number of successful prosecutions ⁽²⁾	Fine (\$)
2020-21	0	0	Not applicable
2021-22	1 ⁽³⁾	0	Not applicable
2022-23	12 ⁽³⁾	3 ⁽⁴⁾	300 to 800
2023-24	23 ⁽³⁾	19 ⁽⁴⁾	450 to 1,000
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	5 ⁽³⁾	13 ⁽⁴⁾	300 to 5,000

Year	Wild birds (excluding feral pigeons) ⁽⁵⁾		
	Number of prosecutions instituted ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	Number of successful prosecutions ⁽²⁾	Fine (\$)
2020-21	0	0	Not applicable
2021-22	0	0	Not applicable
2022-23	0	0	Not applicable
2023-24	7	1	500
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	1	5	300 to 5,000

- (1) Some of the prosecutions instituted in the year might be processed in the following year.
- (2) Each prosecution involved 1 person.
- (3) In 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25, 1, 1, 2 and 3 cases concurrently involved illegal feeding of monkeys and wild pigs respectively.
- (4) In 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25, 1, 3 and 3 cases concurrently involved illegal feeding of monkeys and wild pigs respectively.
- (5) Since the territory-wide prohibition on feeding of wild animals was expanded to cover feral pigeons starting from 1 August 2024 and the relevant departments mainly issued fixed penalty notices for cases of illegal feeding of feral pigeons after the relevant regulation came into operation, no summonses were issued for the purpose of prosecution for illegal feeding of feral pigeons over the past 5 years.

Besides, during the period from the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance on 1 August 2024 to February 2025, the relevant law enforcement departments have issued 194 fixed penalty notices in relation to illegal feeding, 45 of which involved feeding of monkeys, 20 involved feeding of wild pigs, 33 involved feeding of wild birds and 96 involved feeding of feral pigeons.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)004

(Question Serial No. 0129)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Development of Culture, Sports and Tourism in the Northern Metropolis

The Government officially inaugurated Robin's Nest Country Park (RNCP) in November 2024 and exempts those who take minibus route 59K to Lin Ma Hang Village from applying for a closed area permit with effect from January 2025. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the maintenance works expenditure and operating expenditure of the RNCP since its inauguration;
2. the change in daily visitor flow in the RNCP before and after the exemption of those who take minibus route 59K from applying for a closed area permit, and whether the Government has made any adjustment to ancillary facilities in response to the change in visitor flow; and
3. there are views that preliminary cultural, sports and tourism effects have been brought about in the peripheral of the RNCP. In response to such cultural, sports and tourism effects brought about by the RNCP, its positioning in the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle of the Northern Metropolis and whether its functions will be enhanced/new functions will be added?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

1. Since the establishment of the Robin's Nest Country Park (RNCP) in March 2024, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has continued to carry out management work and enhancement works, including the construction and maintenance of hiking trails and recreational facilities, hill fire prevention, implementation of nature conservation measures, cleansing and litter collection. The AFCD performs the above duties by deploying existing human resources and engaging service contractors. The expenditure for 2024-25 is about \$8.7 million.
2. Starting from 24 January 2025, the Government opened the specified section of road within the Frontier Closed Area (FCA) near Lin Ma Hang Village (Wang Lek to the

entrance of the Lin Ma Hang Village). Visitors travelling to and from Lin Ma Hang Village and the RNCP directly by green minibus through the abovementioned section of road within the FCA are exempted from the requirement to apply for a Closed Area Permit. According to the AFCD's statistics between 25 January and 2 March 2025, the number of visitors was clearly higher on weekends (about 530) than on weekdays (about 220), but the figures were not significantly different from the average number of visitors on weekends (about 530) and weekdays (about 290) during the period between 2 November 2024 and 19 January 2025 (i.e. the period after the opening ceremony for the RNCP but before the opening of the above road section by the Government). AFCD will continue to monitor the number of visitors and liaise with relevant departments in a timely manner to facilitate visitors' visits.

3. Located in the eastern part of the Northern Metropolis, the RNCP is part of the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle of the Northern Metropolis. In addition to its beautiful natural landscape and rich biodiversity, Robin's Nest also hosts an array of historic and cultural elements and has the potential for low-density and high-quality recreation and tourism development. The AFCD has provided facilities such as two hiking trails, as well as notice boards, shelters and viewing points, at the RNCP, and has progressively enhanced other recreational facilities. The Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave Revitalisation Project was opened to the public in end-2024, showcasing the mining history, wartime history and bat ecology to the public and enriching the experience of visitors to the country park. The AFCD will continue to work with relevant departments to make use of the rich eco-tourism resources in Robin's Nest and its peripheral areas (such as Sha Tau Kok, Mirs Bay/Yan Chau Tong) and develop sustainable tourism in the light of the circumstances of the local community and the environment.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)005

(Question Serial No. 0143)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Hong Kong-Shenzhen ecological corridor

Wutong Mountain in Shenzhen and Robin's Nest in Hong Kong are going to form the Hong Kong-Shenzhen ecological corridor. Robin's Nest Country Park (RNCP) has also been established. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1 given that the North East New Territories Landfill Extension project is being carried out at a distance of 150 metres from the RNCP and it is expected that the ecological corridor will be affected by the operation of the landfill for a number of years, whether the power of the Country and Marine Parks Authority (the Authority) allows effective monitoring so as to minimise the pollution of the country park caused by the landfill;
- 2 as it is learnt that the hiking trail and lead mine works projects are involved in the RNCP, the annual project expenditures so far, the overall progress of the works projects in the park and their completion time;
- 3 given that there are views relaying that workers of works projects in the park have to carry the materials, weighing 45 kg, uphill on their own strength, whether the Government will consider using technology or giving appropriate assistance to them;
- 4 as there are dedicated management staff and docents in the RNCP at present, please give a brief account of their establishment and how they perform their regular duties, as well as the related staff expenditure;
- 5 further to the above, the channels through which members of the public can inform the dedicated staff or the Authority if they detect problems in the RNCP?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

- 1 North East New Territories Landfill Extension – Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report has been approved in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance. According to the EIA Report, upon implementation of the mitigation measures, the impacts of the landfill extension project during its construction and operation on the environment (including the natural environment in the vicinity of Robin's Nest) will be at an acceptable level. The

contract of the landfill extension project has also included clauses relating to various requirements of the EIA and the environmental permit, and will ensure the effectiveness of the various mitigation measures according to the environmental monitoring and audit programmes proposed in the EIA Report. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is co-operating with the management authority of the Shenzhen Wutong Mountain Scenic Area on the jointly enhancement of the cross-boundary ecological corridor. Since there is a considerable distance from the landfill and its extension to the area of Wutong Mountain (Shenzhen) - Robin's Nest (Hong Kong) Ecological Corridor, it is expected that the operation of the landfill will not affect the aforesaid work. The AFCD will also check for any changes in Robin's Nest Country Park (RNCP) and its ambient environment during daily inspections, and will maintain liaison with the relevant departments for appropriate follow-up.

- 2 To prepare for the designation of the RNCP, the AFCD has progressively constructed hiking trails and basic recreational facilities in the past few years. Currently, 2 hiking trails, namely Robin's Nest Country Trail and Lin Ma Hang Country Trail, are open, and the information boards, viewing points, a rain shelter and interpretation panels have also been installed along the hiking trails to facilitate hiking and appreciation of the nature and cultural heritage. In addition, the works to revitalise the Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine into an open museum were completed in late 2024 and the mine relic is open to the public. The expenditures on the construction of the trails and recreational facilities in the RNCP and the lead mine revitalisation project by the AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on the construction of trails and recreational facilities (\$ million)	Expenditure on the lead mine revitalisation project (\$ million)
2022-23	1.9	0.9
2023-24	3.5	12.1
2024-25 (revised estimate)	3.7	17.0

The AFCD will continue to review the needs of the RNCP visitors and further enhance the facilities in the RNCP.

3. The AFCD has all along attached great importance to the occupational safety and health of its staff, and will protect their safety by carrying out risk assessment and implementing appropriate mitigation measures in its daily work. As there is no proper vehicular access in the RNCP, the AFCD and the relevant departments will, wherever possible, arrange a helicopter to lift the materials and provide suitable mechanical aids and equipment such as trolleys to assist with the transportation when it is necessary to transport overweight or massive construction materials. The AFCD will continue to proactively study the use of technology to assist its staff with the transportation of heavy objects.
4. The daily management work of the RNCP is undertaken by Hok Tau Management Centre under the Country Parks Management Division of the AFCD. The management work includes construction and maintenance of trails and recreational facilities,

prevention of hill fires, implementation of nature conservation measures, cleansing and litter collection, etc. The Management Centre is also responsible for the daily management of Pat Sin Leng Country Park and Plover Cove Country Park. In 2024-25, there were 22 staff members in the Management Centre. The manpower expenditure incurred by the RNCP calculated on a pro-rata basis was about \$5.9 million. In addition, the AFCD also provides docent services in the RNCP by hiring a service contractor. The expenditure involved was about \$900,000 in 2024-25.

5. In case members of the public detect problems in the RNCP, they may contact the AFCD through the existing channels (such as 1823, email, etc.) for appropriate follow-ups.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)006

(Question Serial No. 3268)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is stated in the Programme that the Government will promote 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:

1. the expenditure on trail maintenance for long distance hiking trails, country trails, nature trails and family walks in Hong Kong over the past 3 years in tabulated form;
2. the number of artisans under the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department who assisted in trail maintenance over the past 3 years; the number of vacancies concerned; and the expenditure on the relevant training;
3. the expenditure on public education and publicity work for the promotion of trail conservation over the past 3 years;
4. whether the Government has any plan to allocate additional resources to strengthen education work on hiking etiquette and safety in view of the increasing popularity of hiking tours; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) provides various visitor facilities in country parks for public use, including various hiking trails (long distance hiking trails, country trails, family walks and nature trails, etc.), picnic sites, barbecue areas, rain shelters, viewing points, etc., and will conduct regular inspections as well as maintenance and repairs. As the construction and maintenance of hiking trails is part of the regular facility management work for country parks, the AFCD does not have a breakdown of the expenditure involved. The recurrent expenditure on the construction, inspection, repair and maintenance of the various visitor facilities mentioned over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	76.7
2023-24	84.4
2024-25 (revised estimate)	89.1

2. The construction and maintenance of hiking trails and other recreational facilities in country parks is mainly carried out by frontline staff at different ranks, including Field Assistant, Artisan, Workman I and II, etc. The establishment of relevant frontline staff and the related job vacancies over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Staff establishment	Number of vacancies in staff establishment
2022-23 (as at 31 Mar 2023)	503	208
2023-24 (as at 31 Mar 2024)	502	204
2024-25 (as at 28 Feb 2025)	485	171

Besides, in view of the relatively large number of vacancies in the establishment at present, the AFCD has also employed staff to carry out the above work through the Non-Civil Service Contract Staff Scheme and the Post-retirement Service Contract (PRSC) Scheme. As at February 2025, a total of 52 contract staff have been employed. To ensure that the staff engaged in construction and maintenance of trail can master the skills, frontline staff will receive relevant in-house training. Such training does not involve additional expenditure, and staff employed through the PRSC Scheme can help transfer their experience.

3. Trail conservation is one of the themes of the promotional and educational programmes for country parks. The AFCD does not have a breakdown of the expenditure on the individual publicity programmes. The expenditure involved in promoting nature conservation in country parks and educational programmes by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	21.8
2023-24	33.4
2024-25 (revised estimate)	31.9

4. The AFCD continues to promote messages of hiking etiquette and safety to the public through various channels. In recent years, the AFCD has been promoting the messages of “Respect Nature”, “Hike Safely”, “Reduce Waste”, “Take Your Litter Home”, etc. under the theme of “Hiking Etiquette”, by publicising through social media and organising diversified nature education activities, including nature interpretations, booth activities, etc., with a view to promoting proper outdoor etiquette and practice during hiking. The AFCD will consistently review the publicity and promotional strategies and make appropriate adjustments when necessary. The AFCD will also continue to

disseminate messages of hiking etiquette and safety through diversified channels, ensuring that the public and tourists can have quality and safe countryside experience.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)007

(Question Serial No. 3269)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is stated in the Programme that there were 22 hill fires attended to in 2024, and the Fire Services Department often publishes figures on hill fire reports. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of fire reports involving country parks and hiking trails over the past 3 years with a break down by districts;
2. regarding the 22 hill fires attended to in 2024, a detailed account of the locations of fire, fire alarm levels and causes of fires, and whether any people were injured;
3. as more and more people are using the hiking trails, whether the Government has any plan to rollout fire safety publicity campaigns for hiking trails, if yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

1. Over the past 3 years, there were 65 reports of hill fires inside or posing potential threats to country parks (CPs) and special areas. Relevant information by district is tabulated as follows:

District [^]	Number of hill fires happened or posing potential threats (number of cases)		
	2022	2023	2024
Islands	5	2	6
North	2	1	1
Sai Kung	4	3	0
Sha Tin	4	3	2
Southern	0	1	0
Tai Po	1	2	2
Tsuen Wan	1	1	1
Tuen Mun	1	6	2
Yuen Long	3	3	8
Total	21	22	22

Remark: [^]Over the past 3 years, there were no hill fires inside CPs and special areas in the Central and Western, Eastern, Kwai Tsing, Sham Shui Po, Wan Chai and Wong Tai Sin Districts, while there were no CPs and special areas in the other districts.

- Unlike the system of fire alarm levels for the urban areas, hill fires in CPs are divided into 3 levels. The total of 22 hill fires recorded in 2024 were all level 1 alarm fires with the minimal impact and were fought mainly by the AFCD fire crews. The location of each hill fire and the area of CPs and special areas affected are tabulated as follows:

Serial number	CP or special area affected	Location of hill fire	Area affected (hectares)
1	Tai Lam CP	Tai Tong, Yuen Long	1.8
2	Lantau North CP	Cheung Shan, Tai O	2.0
3	Tai Mo Shan CP	Lin Au, Tai Po	1.7
4	Lion Rock CP	Tsok Pok Hang, Sha Tin	2.6
5	Lantau North CP	Cheung Shan, Tai O	26.0
6	Tai Lam CP	Shap Pat Heung, Yuen Long	2.2
7	Tai Mo Shan CP	Lin Au, Tai Po	2.0
8	Lantau North CP	Cheung Shan, Tai O	54.0
9	Robin's Nest CP	Tam Shui Hang Village, Sha Tau Kok	0 [#]
10	Tai Lam CP	Cheung Po, Yuen Long	0 [#]
11	Tai Lam CP	Tai Wo Tsuen, Yuen Long	0 [#]
12	Lam Tsuen CP	Wang Toi Shan, Yuen Long	34.0
13	Tai Lam CP	Tseng Tau Sheung Tsuen, Tuen Mun	1.8
14	Lantau North (Extension) CP	Tung Wan Tau, Mui Wo	0.2
15	Lion Rock CP	Tsok Pok Hang, Sha Tin	0.1
16	Lantau North CP	Sze Shan, Tai O	3.9
17	Tai Mo Shan CP	Fu Yung Shan, Tsuen Wan	0 [#]

18	Lantau South CP	Shek Lam Chau, Lantau Island	0.5
19	Tai Lam CP	Tai Tong, Yuen Long	1.1
20	Tai Lam CP	Tai Tong, Yuen Long	1.3
21	Lam Tsuen CP	Fung Kat Heung, Yuen Long	0.9
22	Tai Lam CP	Wong Nai Tun Reservoir, Yuen Long	82.0

Remark: #The location of fire was near a CP and a special area, which were not affected after the fire had been attended to.

After each hill fire, the AFCD staff would visit the fire scene to assess the area affected by the fire and conduct an investigation into the cause of the hill fire. However, the causes of the tabulated hill fires could not be ascertained. The AFCD has not learnt of any people injured as a result of the tabulated hill fires.

3. The AFCD has been promoting the message of care for the nature and hill fire prevention to the public through various channels, such as publicising through social media and organising diversified nature education activities, including nature interpretations and booth activities, so as to raise the public awareness of fire prevention. Besides, during the Chung Yeung and Ching Ming Festivals, the department will educate the public on the preventive measures for hill fires through different media, such as press releases, Announcements in the Public Interest and press conferences, social media, publicity leaflets, etc. and will hand out metal containers to grave sweepers to burn offerings at suitable locations in country parks, as well as patrol and distribute fire safety leaflets at some hotspots for grave sweeping and at the road junctions of major cemetery areas with the relevant departments (e.g. the Fire Services Department and the Civil Aid Service) to appeal to grave sweepers and hikers to be mindful of fire and safety.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)008

(Question Serial No. 1702)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the seedlings produced and planted, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the average cost of producing each seedling;
2. the ratio of seedlings which had to be replanted due to withering over the past 5 years; and
3. the average cost of each tree transplanted from other projects?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. The average cost for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to produce seedlings at the Tai Tong Forest Nursery is about \$37 per seedling.
2. The AFCD has been carrying out tree planting and afforestation in country parks to provide a vegetation cover at barren hillsides for the improvement of landscape and the prevention of soil erosion, and for enhancing the ecological value of the woodlands. After considering factors such as water and soil conditions of the planting site, seedling survival rate etc., the AFCD will apply a sufficient quantity of seedlings in afforestation to achieve satisfactory outcome. Replanting of seedlings is not required under normal circumstances, except for impacts of unforeseen events (e.g. hill fires) where large-scale tree planting is necessary for restoration of woodland. Therefore, the AFCD does not have information on replanting of seedlings due to withering.
3. When carrying out afforestation work, the AFCD has used seedlings produced by the Tai Tong Forest Nursery under its purview and has not transplanted the trees from other projects. Therefore, information on the cost of tree transplantation is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)009

(Question Serial No. 2698)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The feeding of wild animals and feral pigeons continues, and the environmental and hygiene problem has affected residents in many districts. Since the Government amended the legislation to impose heavier penalties and actively carried out publicity, many people have conveyed that the problem remains serious. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the number of fixed penalty notices issued or convictions for feeding feral pigeons, wild pigs and other animals since the newly amended legislation came into effect, broken down by the 18 administrative districts;
- (2) the measures the Government plans to take in places where large numbers of feral pigeons congregate in order to improve the cityscape of such places and reduce the breeding of feral pigeons;
- (3) further measures the Government will take to combat the ongoing situation of serious illegal feeding of wild animals and feral pigeons?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- (1) The Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) came into effect on 1 August 2024, expanding the territory-wide prohibition on feeding of wild animals to cover feral pigeons, increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding of animals to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year, and introducing a fixed penalty of \$5,000, with a view to further combating illegal feeding activities, thereby mitigating the problems of ecological imbalance and environmental hygiene so caused. To strengthen effective law enforcement, the Amendment Ordinance also expanded the categories of enforcement officers, covering appointed officers of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Housing Department (HD), in addition to officers of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and police officers under the original arrangement.

The relevant departments adopt a risk-based enforcement strategy. Enforcement officers will take resolute enforcement action against any person violating the feeding ban during routine patrols of venues under their purviews or public places. Besides, relevant departments conduct patrols and corresponding enforcement actions against illegal feeding activities at different locations across the territory based on intelligence and public reports received, and will arrange joint enforcement operations when necessary.

The number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued by the relevant departments and convictions by summons in respect of illegal feeding of wild animals and feral pigeons during the period from the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance to February 2025 with a breakdown by district are tabulated below:

District	Number of FPNs	Number of convictions by summons
Islands	6	0
Kwai Tsing	1	0
North	3	0
Sai Kung	11	0
Sha Tin	56	0
Tai Po	15	0
Tsuen Wan	8	0
Tuen Mun	0	1
Yuen Long	26	0
Kowloon City	13	0
Kwun Tong	4	0
Sham Shui Po	3	0
Wong Tai Sin	6	0
Yau Tsim Mong	10	0
Central and Western	3	0
Eastern	2	0
Southern	5	0
Wan Chai	22	0
Total	194	1

- (2) The Government has enhanced the deterrent effect to curb illegal feeding of feral pigeons through legislative amendments. Since the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance, the AFCD has strengthened co-operation with members of the local communities, including participating in publicity and educational activities in various districts with members of the Legislative Council and District Councils, so as to reach out to a wider range of the public across different age groups, and educate the public on the negative impacts of feeding wild animals and feral pigeons from the perspectives of disease control, ecology and animal welfare, etc., as well as explain to the public the latest feeding ban requirement and the related penalties. Besides, the AFCD has been setting up “Mission P.” education booths at feral pigeon congregation

spots throughout the territory to educate the public on the proper concept of not feeding feral pigeons

The AFCD will continue to provide suggestions on bird prevention to the affected persons and the related property management agents or departments, and to work with the relevant departments to prevent and control the nuisance and environmental hygiene problems arising from congregation of feral pigeons. The AFCD has also commenced a survey on feral pigeon population and will analyse complaint figures related to feral pigeon nuisance, so as to continuously monitor the effectiveness of the relevant measures in alleviating feral pigeon nuisance and make timely adjustments to the relevant management measures.

- (3) The AFCD, in collaboration with the FEHD, the LCSD, and the HD, has established an inter-departmental working group on feeding ban enforcement (the Working Group). Through regular meetings, the Working Group reviews and enhances enforcement strategies and implementation of the feeding ban, with a view to continuously enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement. The various departments will maintain close liaison and arrange joint enforcement operations when necessary, for example, at feeding black spots under multiple departments' purviews, or areas where feeding situation is relatively severe or complicated.

On the other hand, the AFCD has proactively adopted technologies to aid in enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement, with a view to further combating illegal feeding activities. For instance, surveillance cameras have been installed at various illegal feeding black spots to detect activities of illegal feeding to help collect information and plan for enforcement operations. In addition, the AFCD has installed closed-circuit television systems equipped with artificial intelligence technology at individual black spots to identify whether illegal feeding activities are involved in human-wildlife interactions. The AFCD is actively exploring the extension of the surveillance system to other feeding black spots.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)010****(Question Serial No. 2732)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the operation and effectiveness of marine parks and country parks, please advise of the following:

- a. the operational expenditure and major expenditure items of the various marine parks, marine reserve and country parks in Hong Kong over the past 3 years;
- b. in view of the ecological conservation and educational values of the marine parks and marine reserve, the number of relevant activities (such as guided tours) organised at the aforesaid locations, the number of participants and the expenditures involved over the past 3 years with a breakdown by districts; how the Government assesses their conservation and educational values; and
- c. the Government's plan and measures for giving full play to the values of the marine parks and country parks (such as whether feasibility studies on suitably allowing additional economic activities have been conducted), the expenditure and manpower involved and the corresponding quantifiable objectives with a breakdown by location.

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

Reply:

- a. The operational expenditure of country parks incurred by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Operational expenditure of country parks (\$ million)
2022-23	392.4
2023-24	428.7
2024-25 (revised estimate)	432.0

Major expenditure items of country parks included cleansing, greening and vegetation management, construction and maintenance of facilities, enforcement and patrol, and promotion of nature conservation and education programmes.

The operational expenditure of marine parks and marine reserve incurred by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Operational expenditure of marine parks and marine reserve (\$ million)
2022-23	71.6
2023-24	76.1
2024-25 (revised estimate)	72.0

Note: South Lantau Marine Park and North Lantau Marine Park were established in June 2022 and November 2024 respectively.

Major expenditure items of marine parks and marine reserve included coastal cleansing, enforcement and patrol, management and maintenance of facilities, ecological monitoring and enhancement, and promotion of conservation and education programmes.

- b. The establishment of marine parks facilitates marine conservation, educational and recreational activities. The AFCD regularly implements ecological monitoring and enhancement measures in various marine parks to conserve important marine life in Hong Kong waters, including Chinese White Dolphins and corals. According to the ecological monitoring conducted by the AFCD, abundant marine resources and biodiversity have been maintained in each marine parks and marine reserve in recent years.

In addition, to further enhance the educational and recreational value of marine parks, the AFCD established Hoi Ha Visitor Centre near Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP) in 2021, which is the first visitor centre in Hong Kong with the theme of promoting marine conservation. The AFCD also launched different recreational, educational and docent activities by phases, as recommended in a consultancy study report, which include organising “Hoi Ha Festival” to promote participation and awareness of marine conservation by the fisheries sector and community and launching Citizen Scientist Programme for conserving marine life such as corals and fishes. At the same time, the AFCD has promoted sustainable water sports at marine parks, including co-organising marine park kayak eco-tours with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, providing safety support services for water sports participants, organising activities to promote conservation and safety etiquette such as “Kayaking Etiquette”, “Snorkelling Etiquette” and “Sustainable Recreational Water Activities Etiquette”, etc. The AFCD regularly organises different educational activities for schools and the public on a regular basis, including guided eco-tours in various areas, field studies and seminars, to educate the next generation about marine conservation and marine parks. Results of the surveys showed that the aforesaid activities were well-received by the participants. The number of participants between 2022 and 2024 were 11 000, 14 000 and 11 000 respectively.

The expenditure on promoting conservation and educational activities as well as ecological monitoring and enhancement in marine parks and marine reserve over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	8.7
2023-24	14.4
2024-25 (revised estimate)	12.4

- c. To enhance the values of country parks, the AFCD commissioned a consultancy study on enhancing the recreation and education potential of country parks and special areas in 2017 to explore opportunities for enhancing the recreation and education potential of country parks and special areas, enriching visitors' experience and meeting the demand for countryside recreation from the public, as well as collect views from the public so as to put forth enhancement proposals. The study was completed in 2019 and the expenditure incurred was \$2.68 million.

The AFCD is progressively implementing a number of projects in country parks as recommended in the report, which include providing more campsites, viewing platforms and water filling stations; improving hiking trails using natural materials; enhancing physically handicapped and able-bodied sites and supporting facilities; introducing an advance booking system for popular campsites and organising more thematic guided tours, etc. Moreover, the Government has set aside a provision of \$500 million in the 2021-22 Budget for implementing various enhancement works for country park facilities. The AFCD is taking forward the projects in phases with the relevant works departments. The expenditures involved and the planned completion dates are set out in **Table 1**.

Table 1 List of Enhancement Projects for Country Park Facilities

Name of project	Estimated expenditure (\$ million)	Progress	Completion/ planned completion date
Public toilets			
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Bride's Pool Road within Pat Sin Leng Country Park	23.8	In progress	1st half of 2026
Provision of a new public toilet at Pak Kung Au within Lantau South Country Park	24.3	In progress	1st half of 2026
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Tai Tam Tuk within Tai Tam Country Park	26.6	In progress	1st half of 2026
Reconstruction of the public toilet and refreshment kiosk at Aberdeen Country Park physically handicapped and able-bodied barbecue site	47.4	In progress	1st half of 2026

Name of project	Estimated expenditure (\$ million)	Progress	Completion/ planned completion date
Provision of a new public toilet at Long Ke Wan Campsite within Sai Kung East Country Park	29.8	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2026
Provision of a new public toilet at Twisk Campsite within Tai Lam Country Park	29.4	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2027
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Lau Shui Heung within Pat Sin Leng Country Park	24.8	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027
Provision of a new public toilet at Tung Lung Chau Campsite within Tung Lung Fort Special Area	25.0	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Hok Tau Campsite within Pat Sin Leng Country Park	25.5	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Tai Tong Barbecue Area Site No. 6 within Tai Lam Country Park	29.7	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027
Provision of a new public toilet at Quarry Bay Tree Walk within Tai Tam (Quarry Bay Extension) Country Park	28.0	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2028
Other projects			
Provision of a viewing platform overlooking Po Pin Chau and associated hiking facilities near East Dam within Sai Kung East Country Park	12.3	Completed	2nd half of 2024
Revitalisation of Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave within Robin's Nest Country Park	34.1	Completed	2nd half of 2024
Provision of a viewing platform overlooking Aberdeen Upper Reservoir and associated physically handicapped and able-bodied recreation facilities within Aberdeen Country Park	15.0	In progress	1st half of 2026

Name of project	Estimated expenditure (\$ million)	Progress	Completion/ planned completion date
Provision of an outdoor free exploration field at Lions Nature Education Centre within Tsiu Hang special area, Sai Kung	26.4	In progress	1st half of 2027
Provision of new type of camping facilities at Tai Tong Barbecue Area Site No. 7 within Tai Lam Country Park	26.5	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2028
Provision of centre for historical relics interpretation in Shing Mun Country Park	27.5	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2028
Historical relics conservation works of Shing Mun Redoubt in Shing Mun Country Park	28.7	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2028
Provision of tree top adventure facility at Pak Tam Chung in Sai Kung West Country Park	29.4	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2028

Regarding the values and economic activities of marine parks and marine reserve, the AFCD commissioned consultancy studies on “Enhancement of the Recreation and Education Potential of Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park” and “Study on Visitors Management for Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park” in 2019 and 2021 respectively, and consulted the Marine Parks Committee with the aim of enhancing the recreation and education potential of the HHWMP and adjacent areas so as to broaden and diversify visitors’ experience in nature appreciation and outdoor leisure activities and encourage them to participate in and learn about marine conservation. The studies were completed in 2021 and 2023 respectively and the total expenditure incurred was \$2.6 million. The AFCD has implemented the recommendations of the studies (see part b above for details), and will continue to implement relevant education and publicity programmes, including expanding the Citizen Scientist Programme to other marine parks and organising a series of promotional activities for marine parks and marine conservation. In addition, the AFCD will continue to conduct various ecological monitoring and implement enhancement measures, including coral restoration studies, deployment of artificial reefs and restocking exercises to continue to enhance the ecological resources of marine parks.

The above tasks form part of the AFCD’s regular operational work. Apart from the expenditure of individual projects listed above, the AFCD does not keep a separate breakdown for the manpower and expenditure of other individual projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)011

(Question Serial No. 2740)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (c) the number of operations conducted by the Government; 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (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 wild pigs over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (e) the number of arrests made and successful prosecutions instituted in relation to illegal feeding of wild pigs over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25), and whether the Government has conducted African Swine Fever (ASF) testing on the said wild pigs; and
- (g) whether the Government will implement any new measures to strengthen the work on prevention of ASF.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has launched a study to estimate the number of wild pigs since 2019. By using infrared camera and spatial analysis models, the population density of wild pigs in the countryside is estimated for the projection of the number of wild pigs across the countryside in Hong Kong, with a view to monitoring their population trend in the long term. Over the past 3 years, the

number of wild pigs across the countryside in the territory decreased from about 1 830 in 2022 to about 1 360 in 2023 and about 900 in 2024.

- (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
2022-23	1 183
2023-24	1 093
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	1 033

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

- (c) The AFCD suspended the operations of the civilian hunting teams in 2017 and formally terminated the wild pig hunting operations in 2019. The AFCD carried out the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) for wild pigs from late 2017 to November 2021. However, the AFCD's investigation revealed that the effectiveness of these operations was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, after wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food even after being relocated to countryside. To effectively control wild pig nuisance issue in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has implemented a new measure since November 2021 to capture wild pigs which pose potential danger or cause nuisance to members of the public to replace the CCRP for wild pigs. During the relevant operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of drug.

The numbers regarding the CCRP for wild pigs and wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations conducted by the AFCD over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of CCRP operations against wild pigs	Number of wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations	Number of wild pigs captured	Number of wild pigs humanely dispatched*
2022-23	The CCRP has ceased	187	378	361
2023-24		307	540	525
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)		315	643	630

* 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)	Expenditure on management work (\$ million)
2022-23	34	22.3
2023-24	33	21.8
2024-25 (revised estimate)	33	22.8

As mentioned above, the AFCD formally terminated the wild pig hunting operations in 2019 and the CCRP for wild pigs in November 2021, hence there is no relevant expenditure over the past 3 years.

- (e) Intentional feeding is the main cause of the wild pig nuisance issue. To step up the efforts in curbing wild pig feeding activities and resolve the wild pig nuisance issue at source, the Government amended the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) twice in 2022 and 2024 to expand the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong, increase the maximum penalty for illegal feeding of animals to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year, and introduce a fixed penalty system of \$5,000, with a view to strengthening the deterrent effect.

The AFCD will arrange patrols at wild animal feeding black spots from time to time and take prosecution actions against anyone who has fed wild animal illegally, based on availability of sufficient evidence. The AFCD will also review and adjust the patrol and enforcement arrangements in accordance with the actual circumstances, including stepping up blitz and enforcement operations, as well as conducting joint enforcement operations with relevant departments where necessary.

The number of prosecutions instituted, the number of successful prosecutions and the penalties imposed against illegal feeding of wild pigs over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of prosecutions instituted for illegal feeding of wild pigs^{+#}	Number of successful prosecutions for illegal feeding of wild pigs^{+#}	Fine (\$)
2022-23	12	3	300 to 800 (Average: 633)
2023-24	23	19	450 to 1,000 (Average: 621)
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	5	13	300 to 5,000 (Average: 1,439)

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

[#] Each case of prosecution involved 1 person only.

Besides, since the \$5,000 fixed penalty system came into operation on 1 August 2024 to February 2025, the AFCD issued a total of 20 fixed penalty notices for illegal feeding of wild pigs.

- (f) The number of wild pig carcasses collected by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25) is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pig carcasses[@]
2022-23	523
2023-24	757
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	852

[@] 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 for ASF testing.

- (g) The AFCD has been closely monitoring the epidemic situation of ASF and taking corresponding measures in a timely manner. In response to the outbreaks of ASF in local pig farms in recent years, new measures which have been implemented by the AFCD include:
- (i) amending the licensing conditions of rearing pigs to include testing arrangements for dead pigs and the key biosecurity requirements of local pig farms into the conditions of the Livestock Keeping Licence for local pig farms;
 - (ii) strengthening the testing arrangements for ASF prior to the sale of pigs for early detection of positive cases;
 - (iii) organising talks and providing training for the pig rearing industry on ASF cases and related follow-up matters, as well as advising on preventive and control measures against ASF, with a view to assisting pig farms in implementing biosecurity measures applicable to their farms as soon as possible to curb the spread of ASF in local pig farms;
 - (iv) collaborating with international veterinary experts in conducting epidemiological investigations on outbreaks of ASF in local pig farms, as well as providing the guidelines on biosecurity measures to local pig farms;
 - (v) launching the Guidelines for Reporting ASF Cases to enhance pig farmers' understanding of the symptoms of ASF and assist them in detecting suspected cases for early identification and reporting of abnormality of pig and appropriate follow-up actions;
 - (vi) installing surveillance cameras to strengthen monitoring of wild pig activities in the vicinity of local pig farms, and setting up cage traps to capture wild pigs as necessary;

- (vii) continue working with the FEHD on a regular surveillance programme for ASF in local wild pig carcasses; for early detection of potential cases, collecting samples from humanely dispatched wild pigs for ASF testing under the programme;
- (viii) distributing sampling materials, rapid antigen test kits for ASF virus and protective clothing to all local pig farms in a timely manner to assist pig farmers in stepping up prevention of the disease; and
- (ix) maintaining close liaison with pig farmers via SMS groups to disseminate the latest information on ASF;

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)012

(Question Serial No. 3251)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), 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 for the contravention of the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170), and the number of convictions thereof;
- (b) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25), 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 (2022-23 to 2024-25), the amount of funding 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 in the total area of fish ponds in the Ramsar Site; and
- (e) over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), 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.: 37)

Reply:

- (a) According to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance), any person without authorisation shall not wilfully disturb or hunt any protected wild animal, including all wild birds. Over the past 3 years (as at February 2025), the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) prosecuted a total of 432 cases for contravening the ordinance and a total of 434 cases were convicted. As the processing of some cases straddled across years, the total numbers of cases prosecuted and

convicted may be different over the same period. During the same period, the AFCD received 13 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 2025), the AFCD received 12 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 \$460,000 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 birds in farmland and fish ponds. It 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 birds in their farmland and fish ponds without causing harm to them.

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 the FIS grants under the SADF to purchase the necessary materials.

Regarding fish farmers, the AFCD regularly organised talks and workshops on general fish farming guidelines and good aquaculture practices, including the methods on prevention of predation by birds, such as pond wiring and hanging of reflective materials, 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, namely “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 bird predation in their farmland and fish ponds.

- (d) In the past 3 years, there were 2 Nature Conservation Management Agreement projects conducted in the Ramsar Site and Deep Bay Wetland outside Ramsar Site respectively with funding from the Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme (CCFS). During the period, each of the projects was funded to undertake two phases of the project for 2021-23 and 2023-25. Details of these projects are tabulated as follows:

Project period	Mar 2021 to Feb 2023	Mar 2023 to Feb 2025
(1) Ramsar Site		
Total approved budget (\$)	9,706,158	10,685,870
Number of fish pond operators engaged	82	85
Area of fish ponds engaged (hectares)	268	274
Total area of eligible fish ponds (hectares)*	293	279
Percentage of area of fish ponds engaged in total area of eligible fish ponds (%)	91	98
(2) Deep Bay Wetland outside Ramsar Site		
Total approved budget (\$)	9,347,368	10,296,020
Number of fish pond operators engaged	107	89
Area of fish ponds engaged (hectares)	309	255
Total area of eligible fish ponds (hectares)*	403	303
Percentage of area of fish ponds engaged in total area of eligible fish ponds (%)	77	84

* Eligible fish ponds are those registered under the AFCD's Voluntary Registration Scheme, subject to their actual circumstances.

- (e) The AFCD does not keep information on the quantity of fish preyed on by birds in fish ponds and the production value involved. After participating in the CCFS, fish farmers operating at Deep Bay could continue to fish farming operations. They only needed to drain-down their fish ponds for around 7 days after harvesting the fish of commercial value to provide shallow water habitats for waterbirds to feed on the remaining lower-value of trash fish and invertebrates in the ponds. Other measures (including complete pond drain-down and pond profiling) facilitating feeding and roosting of waterbirds were also taken after the harvest. Based on the past experience gained in co-operating with participating organisations and fish farmers of CCFS, as these measures were taken after the harvest, the impact of CCFS on the production of the fish ponds was insignificant.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)013****(Question Serial No. 1125)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expensesProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

It is stated in the Programme that the aim of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is to conserve flora, fauna and natural habitats; designate and manage country parks, special areas, marine parks and marine reserve; and regulate international trade in endangered species of animals and plants in Hong Kong. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the manpower for managing the Hong Kong Wetland Park and the Long Valley Nature Park and the maintenance costs incurred over the past 5 years;
2. further to the above question, whether the Government has studied the changes and trends in the related expenditure and whether it has formulated related long-term plans to save costs;
3. how the Government will enhance public awareness of nature conservation and relevant legislation, and the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)Reply:

1. and 2. The manpower for managing the Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) and the Long Valley Nature Park (LVNP) and the repair and maintenance costs incurred over the past 5 years are tabulated below:

Year	Manpower for management (Number of staff)	Repair and maintenance costs (\$ million)
HKWP		
2020-21	54	11.5
2021-22	54	12.8
2022-23	54	13.3
2023-24	54	14.7
2024-25 (revised estimate)	54	14.1

LVNP		
2020-21	13	0.7
2021-22	17	1.2
2022-23	25	2.4
2023-24	27	3.8
2024-25 (revised estimate)	30	6.2

The HKWP has a 60-hectare wetland reserve and a 10 000 square-metre visitor centre, providing various facilities (such as Bird Hides, Butterfly Garden, Mangrove Boardwalk and Viewing Pavilion) for visitors to appreciate and learn about wetland. The repair and maintenance costs over the past few years were roughly the same.

The construction works for the LVNP commenced in 2020. Upon completion of the works in phases, it was gradually handed over to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) for management. The LVNP was officially open for public use in November 2024. Thus, the manpower for management and the repair and maintenance costs have been increasing over the past few years.

In the long run, the AFCD will review factors including the repair and maintenance costs, ecological environment and facility conditions of the HKWP and LVNP as well as the visitors' needs, etc., to enhance work efficiency and achieve savings in expenditure by optimising the operation mode and work flow, redeploying resources and applying technology, etc.

3. The AFCD always attaches great importance to the education, promotion and publicity work on nature conservation, and continues to raise public awareness on respecting and caring for nature. In this regard, apart from promoting the message of nature conservation to the public through different channels (such as social media, online video clips, advertisement, educational booths, etc.), the AFCD will organise different publicity and educational activities, such as nature and marine guided tours, ecological conservation exhibitions and workshops, public and school talks, school visits, orienteering, as well as volunteer/marine parks ambassador services to allow members of the public to enjoy nature and participate in the nature conservation work. The relevant estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is about \$48 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)014****(Question Serial No. 2303)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the protection of Hong Kong's natural ecology and environment, would the Government provide the following information:

- (a) the manpower and expenditure involved in nature conservation work over the past 3 years?
- (b) whether the Government has assessed prosecution efforts in relation to endangered species; whether they are effective in protecting endangered species; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?
- (c) the outcomes of implementing the feeding ban on wild animals and feral pigeons since the legislation came into effect; the number of relevant enforcement actions taken; and the number of successful prosecutions?

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

- (a) In the Controlling Officer's Report of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), the aim of Programme (2): Nature Conservation and Country Parks is to conserve flora, fauna and natural habitats; designate and manage country parks, special areas, marine parks and marine reserve; and control international trade in endangered species of animals and plants in Hong Kong. The manpower and expenditure of the AFCD involved in implementing the above work over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	1 365	901.5
2023-24	1 365	981.8
2024-25 (revised estimate)	1 354	1,039.0

- (b) The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586) (the Ordinance) is the local legislation that gives effect to the Convention on International

Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Hong Kong. Under the Ordinance, the import, export, re-export or possession of endangered animals and plants, including their parts and/or derivatives, is subject to control under a licensing system. Since 1 May 2018, the Government has significantly increased the penalties for contravening the Ordinance. Any person who contravenes the Ordinance commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years upon conviction and the specimens will also be forfeited. When handling serious cases, the AFCD will include conservation information of the endangered species concerned and an account of the impact of the case on the species concerned in the relevant brief facts, so as to help the court to fully understand the case and its severity. In previous cases heard in the District Court, the court often cited the conservation information of the species concerned and reiterated the importance of protecting endangered species in sentencing. Besides, in recent years, the sentences imposed by the court for smuggling endangered species have also significantly increased and have a deterrent effect. For example, in a case of illegal import of 50 kilograms of pangolin scales, the sentence was 21 months' imprisonment, whereas in another case of illegal import of 21 live reptiles, the sentence was 30 months' imprisonment.

The AFCD and the relevant law enforcement departments will also consider the feasibility of applying for an enhancement of sentence for serious cases under the Organized and Serious Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 455). The AFCD successfully invoked Cap. 455 to appeal to the court for enhanced sentences in two cases of illegal export of incense trees, increasing the sentences in the two cases by 25% from 24 to 30 months of imprisonment. Meanwhile, the AFCD has stepped up its publicity work, issuing press releases on major seizure cases and the sentences imposed, and reporting the relevant information on social media platforms to strengthen public understanding of the determination of the Government to combat wildlife crimes, as well as the serious consequences they would face for contravening the Ordinance.

With increased prosecution efforts and heavier sentences, the number of smuggling cases involving some of the highly endangered species which were more common in the past (e.g. elephants, pangolins and rhinos) has dropped significantly. Since 2021, Hong Kong has not intercepted any major smuggling cases of ivory or pangolin scales, while there has been only 1 case involving 6.3 kilograms of rhino horns over the past 5 years, which demonstrates the effectiveness of the relevant work.

- (c) The Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) came into operation on 1 August 2024, expanding the territory-wide prohibition on feeding of wild animals to cover feral pigeons, increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding of animals to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year, introducing a fixed penalty of \$5,000, and expanding the categories of enforcement officers to cover appointed officers of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Housing Department (HD), in addition to officers of the AFCD and police officers under the original arrangement.

During the period from the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance to February 2025, relevant departments have conducted a total of 5 062 times of patrol and enforcement actions in response to reports of illegal feeding, in addition to regular patrols of venues or public places under their purviews. As at February 2025, a total

of 194 fixed penalty notices were issued by the relevant departments regarding illegal feeding, 45 of which involved feeding of monkeys, 20 involved feeding of wild pigs, 33 involved feeding of wild birds, and 96 involved feeding of feral pigeons. In addition, during the same period, the AFCD successfully prosecuted 1 case involving illegal feeding of wild birds by summons and the person concerned was fined \$5,000.

As far as the effectiveness is concerned, through the combatting illegal feeding and the capture and humane dispatch operations on wild pigs that pose potential danger or cause nuisance to members of the public, the wild pig nuisance issue in Hong Kong has gradually improved in recent years. The number of wild pig nuisance black spots was 15 by the end of 2024, a decrease of about 64% from 42 in 2022; and the number of injury cases caused by wild pigs was 7 in 2024, a significant drop of about 80% from 36 in 2022.

As for feral pigeon congregation, before the Amendment Ordinance came into operation, the AFCD, in consultation with the FEHD, the LCSD and the HD, listed 42 locations across the 18 districts in Hong Kong as monitoring points of feral pigeon congregation for indicative reference, in accordance with factors including complaints on feral pigeon nuisance received in the past, number of feral pigeons congregating and environmental hygiene conditions, etc. The AFCD conducted inspection of the abovementioned 42 monitoring points of feral pigeon congregation in August 2024, and reviewed again the latest conditions of the 42 monitoring points in December 2024. The preliminary assessments found that the number of feral pigeons in more than half of these locations had decreased and the overall environmental hygiene of most of these locations was generally satisfactory. To further monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the feeding ban in alleviating feral pigeon nuisance, the AFCD has commenced a survey of feral pigeon population since 2025.

Wild animals (such as wild pigs and monkeys) and feral pigeons can forage for food on their own, but they may require time to look for and adapt to new habitats and foraging areas. More time is required to observe the effectiveness of the Amendment Ordinance in reducing the nuisance caused by wild animals and feral pigeons. The Government will assess the effectiveness of the feeding ban by monitoring the population of wild animals and feral pigeons, evaluating the latest situations of feeding black spots, and analysing the number of relevant complaints. The Government will also report to the Panel on Environmental Affairs of the Legislative Council on the implementation of the feeding ban regulations in the second half of this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)015****(Question Serial No. 0793)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the management of country parks and hiking trails, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of visitors to country parks and hiking trails in each of the past 3 years;
2. the manpower and expenditure on the repair and maintenance of country parks and hiking trails incurred by the Government in each of the past 3 years; the estimated manpower and expenditure for this year;
3. the expenditure incurred by the Government on the installation and maintenance of water filling stations in each of the past 3 years; whether it has any plan to increase the number of water filling stations this year; if yes, the relevant details and expenditure;
4. the volume of litter collected in country parks and hiking trails each month in each of the past 3 years; the manpower and expenditure on cleansing of country parks and hiking trails each year; the estimated manpower and expenditure for this year;
5. the number of enforcement actions taken by the Government against littering in country parks and hiking trails and the number of related prosecutions over the past 3 years;
6. the measures taken by the Government to promote messages of hiking etiquette and nature conservation; the related expenditure in each of the past 3 years; the estimated expenditure for this year?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

1. The number of visitors to country parks over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of visitors (million)
2022	12
2023	13
2024	11

2. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) provides various visitor facilities in country parks, including hiking trails, picnic sites, barbecue areas,

rain shelters, viewing points, etc., and will conduct regular inspections, maintenance and repair work of such facilities for public use. The AFCD's expenditure on the repair and maintenance of the relevant facilities and hiking trails over the past 3 years and the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	76.7
2023-24	84.4
2024-25 (revised estimate)	89.1
2025-26 (estimated expenditure)	80.2

Currently, there are about 540 staff members at the various ranks under the AFCD whose duties involve the daily management of country parks, including the construction and maintenance of hiking trails and recreational facilities, prevention of hill fires, tree care, litter disposal, cleansing, etc. The AFCD does not have a breakdown of the staff establishment for repairing and maintaining the facilities only.

- Currently, the AFCD has installed a total of 37 water filling stations in different country park areas. The expenditure on the installation and maintenance of water filling stations over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	0.8
2023-24	0.2
2024-25	0.3

The AFCD will continue to review the operation of water filling stations and visitor demand. We will identify suitable sites and discuss with the relevant departments on the installation of water filling stations on the condition of stable supply of drinking water and electricity, with a view to encouraging countryside visitors to bring their own water bottles.

- The AFCD is responsible for daily cleansing work in country parks. Such work is executed by the AFCD staff members and cleansing service contractors, and includes collecting litter from AFCD-managed barbecue areas, campsites, picnic sites, hiking trails, toilets, etc. As the duties of such departmental staff include not only cleansing services, but also the construction and maintenance of hiking trails and recreational facilities, hill fire prevention and control, tree care, etc., the AFCD is not able to provide a breakdown of the departmental staff establishment for handling litter only. On the other hand, there are about 140 to 180 cleansing workers engaged under service contracts and the number of workers may vary based on the manpower requirement in different seasons, and on weekdays or weekends. The total amount of litter collected in country park areas and the expenditure involved over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Table 1: Total amount of litter collected in country park areas

Year	Total amount of litter (tonnes)
2022	2 054
2023	2 700
2024	2 309

Table 2: Expenditure and estimated expenditure involved in litter management and environmental hygiene work in country parks

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	80.7
2023-24	79.9
2024-25(revised estimate)	87.8
2025-26 (estimated expenditure)	79.0

5. According to the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations (Cap. 208A), littering in country park or special area is not allowed. Any person who contravenes the requirement commits an offence and is liable to prosecution. The number of prosecutions instituted by the AFCD for the above offence over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of prosecutions
2022	14
2023	8
2024	7

6. The AFCD continues to promote messages of hiking etiquette and care for nature to the public through various channels. In recent years, the AFCD has been promoting the messages of “Respect Nature”, “Hike Safely”, “Reduce Waste”, “Take Your Litter Home”, etc. under the theme of “Hiking Etiquette”, by publicising through social media and organising diversified nature education activities, such as nature interpretations, excursion tours, experiential activities, etc., with a view to promoting proper outdoor etiquette and practice during hiking.

The expenditure involved in the promotion of nature conservation and education programmes for country parks by the AFCD over the past 3 years and the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	21.8
2023-24	33.4
2024-25(revised estimate)	31.9
2025-26 (estimated expenditure)	30.4

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)016

(Question Serial No. 2096)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In August 2024, the legislative amendment which expands the prohibition on feeding of wild animals to cover feral pigeons came into operation in Hong Kong. In addition to police officers and officers of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), appointed officers of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Housing Department (HD) can issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs). In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the number of FPNs issued by the above departments throughout the territory from the commencement of the legislative amendment in August 2024 to end-February 2025;
2. the respective numbers of appointed officers of the FEHD, LCSD and HD who can enforce the aforesaid legislation throughout the territory at present;
3. apart from police officers and AFCD officers, whether officers of the other departments had to receive relevant training on law enforcement before they were appointed to enforce the legislation, and the details?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

1. The Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) came into operation on 1 August 2024, expanding the territory-wide prohibition on feeding of wild animals to cover feral pigeons, increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding of animals to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year, introducing a fixed penalty of \$5,000, and expanding the categories of enforcement officers to cover appointed officers of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Housing Department (HD), in addition to officers of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and police officers under the original arrangement. During the period from the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance to February 2025, the number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued by the relevant departments is tabulated below:

Department	Number of FPNs issued
AFCDD	97
FEHD	74
LCSD	4
HD	19

In addition, during the same period, the AFCDD successfully prosecuted 1 case involving illegal feeding of wild birds by summons and the person concerned was fined \$5,000.

2. As at 1 March 2025, the number of officers of the FEHD, the LCSD and the HD appointed to enforce the feeding ban on wild animals and feral pigeons under the Amendment Ordinance is as follows:

Department	Number of appointed officers
FEHD	About 3 000
LCSD	About 1 400
HD	About 2 800

3. Before the Amendment Ordinance came into operation, the AFCDD already jointly formulated enforcement guidelines with relevant departments, which will be updated and enhanced from time to time to ensure consistent enforcement standards. The AFCDD has also provided a total of 9 training sessions to frontline law enforcement officers of the relevant departments, and will continue to arrange training on a regular basis to help enhance enforcement efficiency. In addition, the AFCDD has set up an inter-departmental working group on feeding ban enforcement with the relevant departments to review and discuss enhancement of enforcement operations against illegal feeding on a regular basis, and will arrange joint enforcement operations when necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)017

(Question Serial No. 3174)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

1. Since the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) came into operation, a) regarding the prohibition on feeding wild animals and feral pigeons, has the Government conducted joint-departmental enforcement operations? If yes, please provide the following data: i) the total number of actual enforcement operations; ii) the number of enforcement operations conducted by various departments (e.g. the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Police, etc.); iii) the distribution of enforcement operations in different areas (e.g. Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, New Territories, etc.). b) Is there any plan to introduce more high-tech means to assist law enforcement in future, such as surveillance cameras, drone patrols, etc.? If yes, please specify the concrete plan and the relevant arrangement of expenditure.
2. Regarding the series of publicity and education activities with the theme of "All For No Feeding", what was the amount of funding allocated? What were the specific expenditure items? How can the effectiveness of these publicity and education activities be evaluated? Have relevant quantitative indicators been set?
3. Since the Amendment Ordinance came into operation, how much has the number of illegal feeding of wild animals and feral pigeons decreased as compared with before, and has the expected reduction target been achieved? Regarding reducing the nuisance of wild animals and feral pigeons to the public and improving public hygiene, are there any specific figure to prove the effectiveness of the existing measures? For areas with serious situation of feral pigeons congregation, what are the changes in the number and distribution of feral pigeons at present? Is there any long-term monitoring plan to continue to track the situation?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

- 1a. Since the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) came into operation on 1 August 2024, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), in collaboration with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)

and the Housing Department (HD), has established an inter-departmental working group on feeding ban enforcement. Through regular meetings, the Working Group reviews and enhances enforcement strategies and implementation of the feeding ban, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement. The relevant departments have been maintaining close liaison and will arrange joint enforcement operations when necessary (for example, at feeding black spots under multiple departments' purviews, or areas where feeding situation is relatively serious or complicated).

From the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance to February 2025, the relevant law enforcement departments have conducted 23 joint enforcement operations against illegal feeding. The details are tabulated as follows:

Region	Number of joint enforcement operations[#]	Participating departments (Number of times for which the department participated in joint enforcement operations[#])
Hong Kong Island	3	AFCD (3 times) FEHD (3 times)
Kowloon	14	AFCD (12 times) FEHD (11 times) LCSD (4 times) HD (3 times)
New Territories	6	AFCD (5 times) FEHD (6 times) LCSD (1 time) HD (1 time)

[#] Joint enforcement operations were operations in which two or more departments participated together.

- 1b. Regarding the use of technology to aid law enforcement, the AFCD has installed surveillance cameras at various illegal feeding black spots to detect activities of illegal feeding, facilitating the collection of information and planning for enforcement operations. At the same time, the AFCD has also installed closed-circuit television systems equipped with artificial intelligence at individual black spots to identify whether human-wildlife interactions involve illegal feeding activities, with a view to arranging corresponding enforcement operations. The AFCD is actively exploring the extension of the relevant surveillance system to other illegal feeding black spots. The relevant estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is \$880,000.
2. In the first quarter of 2024, the AFCD launched a series of publicity and education activities with the theme of "All For No Feeding", which publicised the adverse impacts of feeding wild animals and feral pigeons and explained the latest feeding ban regulations and the relevant penalties through online and offline channels to engage people of different age groups. The AFCD's total expenditure for the two years 2023-24 and 2024-25 was \$10.6 million, which was used for producing publicity materials; placing advertisements on various types of platforms, including means of transport, television, radio and online platforms; setting up educational booths, displaying banners and distributing publicity materials in various districts (including illegal feeding black

spots); as well as organising talks at schools and centres for the elderly, etc. According to a survey conducted by the AFCD, over 80% of the respondents said that they were aware of the feeding ban regulations.

3. Wild animals and feral pigeons can forage for food on their own, but they may require time to look for and adapt to new habitats and foraging areas. As it has been just over half a year since the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance, more time is required to observe its effectiveness in reducing the nuisance of wild animals and feral pigeons. The Government will assess the effectiveness of the feeding ban regulations by regularly monitoring the numbers of wild animals (including monkeys and wild pigs) and feral pigeons, evaluating the latest situations of the feeding black spots, and analysing the relevant complaint figures. The Government also plans to report the implementation of the feeding ban regulations to the Panel on Environmental Affairs of the Legislative Council in the second half of this year.

To monitor the congregation of feral pigeons, before the Amendment Ordinance came into operation, the AFCD, in consultation with the FEHD, the LCSD and the HD, listed 42 locations across the 18 districts in Hong Kong as monitoring points of feral pigeon congregation for indicative reference, in accordance with factors including complaints on feral pigeon nuisance received in the past, number of feral pigeons congregating and environmental hygiene conditions, etc. The AFCD conducted inspections of the abovementioned 42 monitoring points of feral pigeon congregation in August 2024, and reviewed again the latest conditions of the 42 monitoring points in December 2024. The preliminary assessments found that the number of feral pigeons in more than half of these locations had decreased and the overall environmental hygiene of most of these locations was generally satisfactory.

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the feeding ban regulations in alleviating feral pigeon nuisance, the AFCD has commenced a survey of feral pigeon population since 2025. At the same time, the AFCD will continue to review the latest conditions of each monitoring point of feral pigeon congregation, including regularly deploying staff to monitor the congregation of feral pigeons and the environmental hygiene condition, and review the complaint figures, and will make appropriate adjustments to the relevant management measures as necessary.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)018****(Question Serial No. 0197)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will strengthen the control of trade in endangered species and combat their illegal trade and smuggling. Would the Government advise of the following:

1. the number of travellers who were found carrying endangered species (by species) at the immigration control points, the number of persons prosecuted and penalties imposed on the convicted in each of the past 3 years; and
2. whether publicity efforts targeted at the relevant trade members and tourists have been strengthened to prevent them from unwittingly violating the law over the past 3 years; if yes, what are the details and the breakdown of the expenditure?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)Reply:

1. Over the past 3 years, the numbers of travellers intercepted for carrying endangered species at the immigration control points were 135, 252 and 341 respectively. The number of travellers involved is tabulated by the species they carried as follows:

Species group involved	Number of travellers involved		
	2022	2023	2024
American ginseng	61	155	102
Orchids	28	58	187
Other plants	5	10	13
Mammals	25	16	26
Birds	2	0	4
Reptiles	10	10	20
Fish	12	13	8
Corals	3	1	0
Other animals	0	5	1

As some of the travellers involved were carrying specimens from more than one species group, the sum of travellers involved in all individual species groups is greater than the total number of travellers involved that year.

The relevant figures on prosecution against travellers intercepted for carrying endangered species at the immigration control points over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	2022	2023	2024
Number of persons prosecuted	24	30	26
Maximum term of imprisonment	6 weeks (suspended for 18 months)	30 months	39 months
Maximum fine (\$)	3,000	10,000	12,000

As it takes time to conduct investigation and seek legal advice, some prosecution cases were not initiated in the year of seizure. In addition, some cases of first and minor offences were given warnings instead of prosecution upon seeking legal advice.

- Over the past 3 years, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been issuing circular letters to and organising briefing sessions about the control on the import and export of endangered species for the relevant industry practitioners such as the traders, and maintaining communication with the relevant industry practitioners through regular meetings.

To raise the awareness of the public and travellers of the control on the import and export of endangered species, the AFCD continued to enhance publicity through various channels, including television and radio broadcasts, press releases, press conferences and social media, as well as placing advertisements on public transport, restaurants, websites and mobile applications, and displaying posters at various Government venues. In addition, the AFCD also distributed leaflets, displayed posters and broadcast at boundary control points, as well as placing advertisement on electronic panels at control points in the Mainland, with a view to strengthening publicity and education for travellers.

The AFCD also organised other public education activities on endangered species, including visits and open day at the Endangered Species Resource Centre, education talks and public exhibitions.

The expenditures on publicity and education regarding endangered species over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	1.0
2023-24	0.7
2024-25 (revised estimate)	0.8

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)019****(Question Serial No. 2559)**

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Question:

1. In the 2021-22 Budget, the Government set aside \$500 million to carry out enhancement works on facilities in country parks. Please list out the planned use of the \$500 million provision in the past and in future.
2. Please provide the progress and implementation time of the projects of provision of open museums on historical relics, tree top adventure facilities and new type of camping facilities.
3. Regarding Woodside Biodiversity Education Centre, Ngong Ping Nature Centre, Lions Nature Education Centre, Shing Mun Country Park Visitor Centre, Clear Water Bay Country Park Visitor Centre, Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre and Tai Mo Shan Country Park Visitor Centre, please list out the estimated expenditure and manpower involved, the number of visitors in 2024 (and the proportion of tourists among them), the number of places and attendance of the guided tour services provided, if any.
4. What measures will the Government take in 2025-26 to support the development of eco-tourism as stated in the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

1. In the 2021-22 Budget, the Government set aside \$500 million to carry out enhancement works on country park facilities. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the relevant works departments are taking forward the relevant projects in phases. Information about the projects including the expenditure and progress is tabulated in **Table 1**.

Table 1 List of Enhancement Projects for Country Park Facilities

Name of project	Estimated expenditure (\$ million)	Progress	Completion/Planned completion date
Public toilets			
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Bride's Pool Road within Pat Sin Leng Country Park	23.8	In progress	1st half of 2026
Provision of a new public toilet at Pak Kung Au within Lantau South Country Park	24.3	In progress	1st half of 2026
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Tai Tam Tuk within Tai Tam Country Park	26.6	In progress	1st half of 2026
Reconstruction of the public toilet and refreshment kiosk at Aberdeen Country Park physically handicapped and able-bodied barbecue site	47.4	In progress	1st half of 2026
Provision of a new public toilet at Long Ke Wan Campsite within Sai Kung East Country Park	29.8	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2026
Provision of a new public toilet at Twisk Campsite within Tai Lam Country Park	29.4	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2027
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Lau Shui Heung within Pat Sin Leng Country Park	24.8	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027
Provision of a new public toilet at Tung Lung Chau Campsite within Tung Lung Fort Special Area	25.0	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027

Name of project	Estimated expenditure (\$ million)	Progress	Completion/Planned completion date
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Hok Tau Campsite within Pat Sin Leng Country Park	25.5	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027
Reconstruction of the public toilet at Tai Tong Barbecue Area Site No. 6 within Tai Lam Country Park	29.7	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2027
Provision of a new public toilet at Quarry Bay Tree Walk within Tai Tam (Quarry Bay Extension) Country Park	28.0	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2028
Other projects			
Provision of a viewing platform overlooking Po Pin Chau and associated hiking facilities near East Dam within Sai Kung East Country Park	12.3	Completed	2nd half of 2024
Revitalisation of Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine Cave within Robin's Nest Country Park	34.1	Completed	2nd half of 2024
Provision of a viewing platform overlooking Aberdeen Upper Reservoir and associated physically handicapped and able-bodied recreation facilities within Aberdeen Country Park	15.0	In progress	1st half of 2026
Provision of an outdoor free exploration field at Lions Nature Education Centre within Tsiu Hang special area, Sai Kung	26.4	In progress	1st half of 2027
Provision of new type of camping facilities at Tai Tong Barbecue Area Site No. 7 within Tai Lam Country Park	26.5	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2028

Name of project	Estimated expenditure (\$ million)	Progress	Completion/Planned completion date
Provision of centre for historical relics interpretation in Shing Mun Country Park	27.5	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	1st half of 2028
Historical relics conservation works of Shing Mun Redoubt in Shing Mun Country Park	28.7	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2028
Provision of tree top adventure facility at Pak Tam Chung in Sai Kung West Country Park	29.4	Pre-construction preparatory works in progress	2nd half of 2028

2. The AFCD commissioned feasibility studies on major projects such as the provision of an open museum of historical relics, tree top adventure and new type of camping facilities in country parks in the second half of 2022. The feasibility studies aim to determine the site locations, design, modes of operation, fee levels and operation requirements, etc., of these facilities, and collect the views of the public and relevant stakeholders. The study on the proposed site location and preliminary design was completed in the first half of 2024. The study report recommended the provision of new type of camping facilities at Tai Tong, tree top adventure facility at Pak Tam Chung and a centre for historical relics interpretation at Shing Mun Redoubt as well as conservation works for the historical relics. Having made reference to the recommendations in the study reports, the AFCD will use the provision of \$500 million set aside in the 2021-22 Budget to take forward the projects. Pre-construction surveys and detailed design are scheduled to commence in 2025-26. The progress and planned completion dates of the projects are set out in **Table 1**.
3. The AFCD manages and operates country park visitor centres to provide visitor information and nature education services to visitors, which is the regular education and publicity work of the AFCD in country parks. The expenditure and manpower involved in the overall education and publicity work for country parks incurred by the AFCD in the revised estimate for 2024-25 were \$31.9 million and 36 staff members respectively. The AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the operational expenses and staff establishment of each visitor centre.

Regarding the guided tour services provided by the AFCD, the quota of each tour is around 20 to 30. In 2024, the number of visitors to each visitor/education centre in country parks and the attendance of guided tour services are tabulated as follows. The AFCD does not keep statistics on the proportion of tourists.

Visitor/education centre in country parks[#]	Number of visitors	Attendance of guided tour services
Woodside Biodiversity Education Centre	24 504	1 815
Ngong Ping Nature Centre	25 642	411
Lions Nature Education Centre	348 968	1 689
Clear Water Bay Country Park Visitor Centre	7 334	No guided tour services provided
Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre	38 840	No guided tour services provided
Tai Mo Shan Country Park Visitor Centre	8 602	47

[#] Shing Mun Country Park Visitor Centre was temporarily closed since 2023 for renovation works.

4. Hong Kong has rich green and eco-tourism resources, including hiking trails and country parks throughout the city. With breathtaking great outdoors that are only minutes away from the urban hustles, it attracts numerous tourists each year for hiking and outdoor activities. Further capitalising on Hong Kong's abundant ecological resources for promoting green tourism development, is in fact one of the directions in diversifying tourism products as outlined in the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0. As regards country parks, to promote green tourism, the Tourism Commission, in collaboration with the AFCD, has been taking forward the "Enhancement of Hiking Trails" since 2018 to enhance tourism supporting facilities of 20 hiking trails in country parks which are popular and with tourism appeal, including improvement to existing hiking trail network, control of soil erosion at trails, enhancement of vegetation coverage, addition of lookout points, enrichment of visitor information, etc.. The AFCD has completed the enhancement works on 16 hiking trails. The Tourism Commission, in collaboration with the AFCD, has also enhanced the "Enjoy Hiking" thematic website to provide detailed information on hiking routes and attractions, and provide locals and tourists with information on featured attractions in four languages, namely Chinese, English, Japanese and Korean. As at end-February 2025, there are more than 4.48 million pageviews at the enhanced thematic website.

At the same time, the AFCD seeks to enhance trails, improve the toilets, provide other suitable recreational and basic supporting facilities in country parks and gradually set up large-scale enhancement facilities such as tree-top adventure, new type of camping facilities and open museum of historical relics to enrich tourism experience.

Moreover, Robin's Nest Country Park (RNCP) is part of the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle of the Northern Metropolis. In addition to its beautiful natural landscape and rich biodiversity, Robin's Nest hosts an array of historic and cultural elements and has the potential for low-density and high-quality recreational and tourism development. The AFCD has provided facilities such as two hiking trails, information boards, shelters and viewing points at the RNCP, and has gradually improved other recreational facilities. Also, the revitalised Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine was open to the public in end-2024, showcasing the mining history, wartime history and bat ecology to the public and enriching the experience of visitors to the country park. The AFCD has been maintaining communication with the relevant departments to optimise the rich eco-tourism resources in Robin's Nest and its peripheral areas (such

as Sha Tau Kok, Mirs Bay/Yan Chau Tong) and develop sustainable tourism in the light of the circumstances of the local community and the environment.

Furthermore, the Development Bureau is actively taking forward three eco-tourism projects, including expediting the development of the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor; developing the ex-Lamma Quarry site into an area for resort and outdoor recreational uses; and developing Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai into eco-tourism nodes. The expressions of interest exercises for the 3 projects will commence in April 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)185

(Question Serial No. 3430)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) stated that it would review effectiveness of measures for enhanced management and protection of wild animals, including the enforcement, education and publicity of the feeding ban on wild animals and feral pigeons. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the respective numbers of law enforcement operations conducted and prosecutions instituted by the AFCD against feeding of wild pigs and feral pigeons, as well as the expenditure and manpower involved over the past 3 years;
2. the publicity and education work carried out by the AFCD on the feeding ban of wild pigs and feral pigeons respectively, as well as the expenditure and manpower involved over the past 3 years;
3. regarding the capture and humane dispatch of wild pigs carried out by the AFCD since November 2021 to replace the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme to handle the problem of wild pigs, the numbers of reports on sightings of or nuisance and injuries caused by wild pigs received by the AFCD over the past 3 years, as well as the number of wild pigs humanely dispatched in each year?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

1. The Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Amendment Ordinance) came into operation on 1 August 2024, expanding the territory-wide prohibition on feeding of wild animals to cover feral pigeons, increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding of animals to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year, and introducing a fixed penalty of \$5,000, with a view to further combatting illegal feeding, thereby mitigating the problems of ecological imbalance and environmental hygiene so caused. The numbers of law enforcement operations conducted and prosecutions instituted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) against illegal feeding of wild pigs and feral pigeons over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of law enforcement operations		Number of prosecutions instituted	
	Wild pigs	Feral pigeons	Wild pigs	Feral pigeons
2022-23	300 [^]	Not applicable*	12	Not applicable*
2023-24	1 382		23	
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	1 440	856	5 [#]	0 [#]

[^] The Feeding Ban Area was expanded to cover the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022, and there were only 7 designated locations in Hong Kong at which the feeding of wild animals was prohibited prior to that day.

* Since the Amendment Ordinance was only expanded to cover feral pigeons starting from 1 August 2024, there had been no relevant law enforcement operations or prosecutions against feeding of feral pigeons prior to that date.

[#] Apart from the numbers of prosecutions tabulated above, from the commencement of the Amendment Ordinance on 1 August 2024 to February 2025, the AFCD issued 20 and 22 fixed penalty notices for illegal feeding of wild pigs and feral pigeons respectively.

Since law enforcement is part of the AFCD's work on the management of wild pigs and feral pigeons, a breakdown of the expenditure and manpower involved for law enforcement is not available. The manpower and expenditures of the AFCD's work on the overall management of wild pigs and feral pigeons over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Manpower (number of staff)		Expenditure (\$ million)	
	Management of wild pigs	Management of feral pigeons	Management of wild pigs	Management of feral pigeons
2022-23	34	8	22.3	6.5
2023-24	33	8	21.8	6.0
2024-25 (revised estimate)	33	11	22.8	6.1

- The AFCD has all along been striving to promote to members of the public the concepts about preventing nuisance caused by wild animals (such as wild pigs) and no-feeding of wild animals, including providing eco-educational activities and guided tours at kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, centres for the elderly and communities near feeding black spots, uploading promotional and educational information on social media, and placing advertisements on public transport and at stations. Since the first quarter of 2024, the AFCD has further launched a series of publicity and educational activities with the theme of "All For No Feeding", including extensive advertisements, release of promotional videos, setting up of education booths, display of banners and posters and distribution of leaflets at feeding black spots, so as to inform the public about the latest feeding ban regulations and the negative impacts of feeding animals.

Besides, the AFCD has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to minimise the nuisance caused by feral pigeons and educating the public not to feed feral pigeons

through various publicity channels, including setting up “Mission P.” educational booths at feral pigeon congregation spots in various districts, placing advertisements on various media, and holding talks at schools and housing estates.

The expenditure on the work carried out by AFCD to promote and educate the public not to feed wild pigs and feral pigeons is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	8.1
2023-24	4.6
2024-25 (revised estimate)	4.6

Since carrying out the relevant publicity and education work is part of the AFCD’s work on the management of wild pigs and feral pigeons, the AFCD does not have a breakdown of the manpower involved.

3. The number of reports on sightings of or nuisance and injuries caused by wild pigs received by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated by 18 districts as follows:

District	Number of reports on wild pig sightings or nuisance (Number of reports on injuries)		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)
Islands	9 (0)	8 (0)	6 (0)
Kwai Tsing	28 (0)	22 (0)	15 (0)
North	39 (0)	45 (0)	46 (1)
Sai Kung	216 (5)	164 (2)	154 (2)
Sha Tin	140 (6)	161 (1)	122 (1)
Tai Po	119 (1)	201 (1)	194 (0)
Tsuen Wan	55 (2)	57 (0)	71 (1)
Tuen Mun	60 (0)	37 (0)	46 (0)
Yuen Long	30 (0)	40 (0)	41 (0)
Kowloon City	6 (0)	8 (1)	1 (0)
Kwun Tong	33 (0)	13 (0)	22 (0)
Sham Shui Po	25 (0)	21 (0)	20 (0)
Wong Tai Sin	18 (0)	24 (0)	21 (0)
Yau Tsim Mong	1 (0)	1 (1)	1 (0)
Central and Western	107 (0)	83 (0)	64 (1)
Eastern	83 (6)	46 (0)	64 (0)
Southern	159 (3)	103 (0)	101 (1)
Wan Chai	55 (0)	59 (1)	44 (0)
Total	1 183 (23)	1 093 (7)	1 033 (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
2022-23	361
2023-24	525
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	630

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)186****(Question Serial No. 3768)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: Not SpecifiedControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)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 (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (b) the number of complaints received by the Department about nuisance of or attack by wild monkeys over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25);
- (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 sterilisation treatment to wild monkeys over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- (d) whether the management plan for monkeys has been updated; if yes, the progress, timetable and details involved; if not, the reasons; and the details of the review conducted in 2024-25.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 58)Reply:

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23	3.0
2023-24	4.0
2024-25 (revised estimate)	3.3

- (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 about monkey nuisance/attack
2022-23	279
2023-24	320
2024-25 (as at Feb 2025)	365

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2022-23	11.3	17
2023-24	11.8	17
2024-25 (revised estimate)	11.2	17

The AFCD arranges for a contractor to conduct regular sterilisation operations for monkeys in Kam Shan, Lion Rock and Shing Mun Country Parks, and has expanded the sterilisation operations to the monkey populations causing nuisance to residential areas near country parks since 2018. In each operation, about 10 staff members of the contractor were involved.

- (d) The AFCD completed the review of the existing monkey sterilisation programme in 2023-24, and reported the relevant results to the Nature Conservation Subcommittee (Subcommittee) under the Advisory Council on the Environment in December 2023. Members of the Subcommittee supported the AFCD's ongoing operation on sterilisation of monkeys for controlling the monkey population. The AFCD is conducting a comprehensive review on its management strategies for wild animals (including monkeys) and has engaged an expert to enhance the action plan. During the process, reference will be made to the Mainland and overseas experiences, and relevant experts will be consulted. It is expected that the review will be completed in the first half of 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)187

(Question Serial No. 3452)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Secretary for
Environment and Ecology

Question:

There are 41 campsites at country parks throughout Hong Kong, enabling the public to enjoy the countryside. Setting up tents outside designated campsites may constitute an offence and lead to prosecution. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of camping units provided by the 41 campsites;
2. the annual number of complaints related to prolonged occupation of campsites over the past 3 years;
3. the respective numbers of people warned or prosecuted for illegal camping activities at various country parks over the past 3 years (please set out by country parks);
4. considering the lack of camping units at designated campsites due to the increasing demand for camping, which has indirectly caused some members of the public to illegally camp at non-designated campsites, whether the Department has any plan to increase the campsites or camping units at the existing campsites to respond to the public demand for camping;
5. the number of campsites with a reservation system under the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department;
6. further to the above question, the proportion of wastage of camping units due to no-shows at each campsite with a reservation system in 2024?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has set up 41 campsites in country parks (CPs). The number of camping units that the camp sites can accommodate is subject to the area of space occupied by users' camping tents, cooking utensils and other camping gear. According to factors such as the actual environment of each campsite, the size of a 4-person tent, the required cooking space and the access pathway for campers, the AFCD estimates that all the campsites at CPs can accommodate a total of over 1 000 camping units.

2. The number of complaints received by the AFCD about prolonged occupation of campsites in CPs over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of complaints
2022*	9
2023	6
2024	17

* Campsites at CPs were closed during the pandemic and reopened from 17 November 2022 onwards.

3. Under the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations (Cap. 208A), members of the public can only erect a tent in a designated camping site within a CP or special area (SA) for the purpose of camping, otherwise, it constitutes an offence. Over the past 3 years, the number of prosecutions instituted and written warnings issued by the AFCD for the above offence is tabulated as follows:

Location	Number of prosecutions		
	2022	2023	2024
Shing Mun CP	0	0	3
Aberdeen CP	0	1	0
Tai Tam CP	2	0	0
Sai Kung East CP	73	22	78
Sai Kung West CP	0	2	3
Plover Cove CP	30	6	6
Lantau South CP	4	2	0
Lantau North CP	6	0	0
Pat Sin Leng CP	9	5	4
Tai Lam CP	9	3	11
Tai Mo Shan CP	59	29	16
Lam Tsuen CP	15	1	0
Ma On Shan CP	88	68	40
Clear Water Bay CP	43	16	0
Sai Kung West (Wan Tsai Extension) CP	5	41	53
Tung Lung Fort SA	17	3	0
Tsiu Hang SA	2	0	0
Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve (SA)	2	0	0
Total	364	199	214

Location	Number of written warnings		
	2022	2023	2024
Shing Mun CP	4	1	1
Tai Tam CP	4	0	1

Location	Number of written warnings		
	2022	2023	2024
Sai Kung East CP	31	9	31
Sai Kung West CP	0	3	0
Plover Cove CP	4	16	2
Lantau South CP	5	3	0
Lantau North CP	5	0	0
Pat Sin Leng CP	0	0	4
Tai Lam CP	12	4	4
Tai Mo Shan CP	16	8	9
Lam Tsuen CP	8	3	0
Ma On Shan CP	65	59	44
Clear Water Bay CP	12	6	1
Sai Kung West (Wan Tsai Extension) CP	0	13	23
Tung Lung Fort SA	5	6	0
Tsiu Hang SA	0	3	0
Total	171	134	120

4. In recent years, the AFCD has been carrying out expansion works at suitable campsites (including the Chung Pui Campsite and the Sai Kung Wong Shek Campsite) to provide more camping units, and has planned to convert some barbecue sites with low usage into campsites (e.g. Tai Tong and Tai Mong Tsai). Besides, the AFCD launched the first Pilot Scheme on Advance Booking System for CPs in November 2022, to enhance the management and services of the use of campsites, and is taking forward works projects for provision of a new type of camping facilities at Tai Tong in Tai Lam CP. The AFCD will closely monitor the demand of campers and, subject to the availability of resources, continue to identify suitable sites in CPs for extension or provision of new campsites, so as to cope with the increasing demand for campsites.
5. and 6. In November 2022, the AFCD launched the Pilot Scheme on Advance Booking System at the Twisk Campsite in Tai Lam CP. Members of the public can make free bookings on the internet, or make free registrations on-site on a “first-come, first-served” basis to use vacant camping units. An applicant will be suspended from making a booking for the campsite for 90 days, in accordance with the rules set out in the “Notes to Campers”, if the applicant fails to cancel the reservation in time or fails to attend as scheduled. In 2024, the average ratio of no-shows to the total bookings for camping units was about 16.7%, with a higher ratio of no-shows between April and July, which is believed to be mainly due to unstable weather condition.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**CSTB262****(Question Serial No. 2558)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and TourismQuestion:

1. Please provide the number of visitors to Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) in 2018, 2023 and 2024 and the proportion of tourists.
2. Please provide the operating expenses of the HKWP in 2023-24 and 2024-25.
3. What measures will the Government take to upgrade the facilities in the HKWP and what is the estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)Reply:

1. The number of visitors to the Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) in 2018, 2023 and 2024 and the proportion of tourists are tabulated below:

Year	Number of visitors	Proportion of tourists
2018	458 995	8.5%
2023	410 857	2.0%
2024	258 911 [#]	5.8%

[#] The number of visitors decreased due to the partial or temporary closure of the themed exhibition galleries and some visitor facilities (including Viewing Gallery, Indoor Play Area, Theatre, Multi-function Rooms and Souvenir Shop) for upgrading.

2. The operating expenses of the HKWP in 2023-24 and 2024-25 are tabulated below:

Year	Operating expenses (\$ million)
2023-24	71.2
2024-25 (revised estimate)	79.7 [*]

^{*} Including expenses to support the upgrading programme for the exhibition and visitor facilities.

3. The Tourism Commission and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department are implementing an upgrading project for the exhibition and visitor facilities in the HKWP, including updating the content of all themed exhibition galleries and improving the associated visitor facilities (such as providing new interactive visit-planning kiosks, an audio guide system, etc.), as well as enhancing interactive elements with visitors through the application of technologies, such as augmented reality and virtual reality, to enrich visitors' experience. The funding for implementing the project is around \$142 million. The project started in November 2023 and is expected to complete in 2026.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-EEB(E)001

(Question Serial No. S042)

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
(LAI Kin-ming, Mickey)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

1. It is mentioned in the reply that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been promoting the theme of "Hiking Etiquette" in recent years through publicising on social media and organising diversified nature education activities. But MacLehose Trail in Sai Kung was repeatedly overcrowded with hikers recently, which has overloaded the traffic and led to potential safety risks. Does the Government have any plan to redeploy resources to carry out publicity and education work targeted at this tourist hot spot? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. Will the Government conduct a study from the perspective of overall tourism to review the tourist receiving capacity in the vicinity of Section 1 and Section 2 of MacLehose Trail as well as its traffic carrying capacity, and formulate corresponding improvement and response measures to specifically tackle the problem of "black taxis" in Sai Kung? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
3. As more people love hiking or participate in trail activities in recent years, it has expedited the wear and tear of trails. But it is mentioned in the reply that the vacancy rates in staff establishment for the construction and maintenance of hiking trails and other recreational facilities in country parks ranged from 35% to 40% in recent years. Has this led to prolonged dilapidation of existing trails?
4. It is mentioned in the reply that the AFCD has employed staff to make up for the insufficient manpower through the Non-Civil Service Contract Staff Scheme and the Post-retirement Service Contract Scheme. But apart from the succession programmes, will the Government launch more volunteer schemes to encourage the public to participate in the maintenance and repair work for trails? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent

Reply:

1. Apart from continuously promoting the hiking etiquette and disseminating safety messages to the public through different channels, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) also redeploys existing resources and collaborates with the Hong Kong Tourism Board and relevant departments to step up its education

and publicity work for MacLehose Trail in Sai Kung in order to remind visitors of hiking safety and using proper trails, as well as promote the messages of caring for the environment and taking away their litter. As far as the High Island Reservoir East Dam is concerned, when there are high volume of visitors and busy traffic to and from the area, the AFCD will issue posts on the social media platform to remind the public to plan their journey in advance and allow enough time to leave, as well as disseminate the message on the enhanced services of the Green Minibus Route No. 9A.

2. The Government has been monitoring the usage of country parks. During recent weekends and public holidays, there were more visitors going to Section 1 and Section 2 of MacLehose Trail for hiking. A relatively greater proportion of the visitors went to spots around High Island Reservoir East Dam via Sai Kung Man Yee Road by taxi, resulting in traffic congestion. To meet visitors' need for public transport services, the AFCD, in collaboration with the relevant government departments, will review the supporting facilities in the vicinity of the East Dam and enhancement measures, including deliberating with the minibus operators about the arrangements for further enhancing the services, carrying out temporary improvement works at suitable locations of Sai Kung Man Yee Road, strengthening the dissemination of traffic information and continuing to carry out publicity and enforcement actions at the East Dam, in order to combat malpractices of overcharging of taxi drivers. In addition, the Government will encourage visitors to visit different country parks by improving the coverage of trail networks and carrying out strategic promotion to prevent individual hot spots from becoming overcrowded.
3. The AFCD has been deploying staff to inspect the trails and recreational facilities in country parks on a regular basis. When maintenance is found required for the trails or other facilities, the AFCD will flexibly redeploy resources to complete the maintenance works as soon as possible, taking into account factors such as the urgency, geographical location, nature and scale of the maintenance works. Even there are vacancies in the establishment, the AFCD will engage contract staff and outsourced contractors to assist with the maintenance work. Currently, the trails in country parks are generally in good condition.
4. The AFCD has launched a public engagement programme named "Repair Our Own Trails" since 2016, which aims to allow the public to understand the principles and methodologies of constructing and maintaining trails in country parks, promote the sustainable use of trails and nurture volunteers for the maintenance of trails in country parks. Since the launch of the programme, 48 workshops have been organised with a total of over 1 500 attendances, enabling volunteers to personally participate in the construction of "handmade trail". Noting the increasing interest of the public in the trails in Hong Kong, the AFCD will continue to take forward the programme in collaboration with different organisations and institutions with a view to further promoting the sustainable use of hiking trails and encouraging more people to participate in the volunteer trail maintenance activities.

- End -