

Index Page

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

File Name: AFCD_e1_2425.pdf

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.
EEB(F)009	2459	EEB(F)030	0981	EEB(F)145	3489
EEB(F)010	2460	EEB(F)031	0982	EEB(F)146	3492
EEB(F)011	2461	EEB(F)032	0983	EEB(F)147	3493
EEB(F)012	2462	EEB(F)033	0984	EEB(F)148	3609
EEB(F)013	3125	EEB(F)034	3292	EEB(F)149	3864
EEB(F)014	3263	EEB(F)035	0047	EEB(E)001	0893
EEB(F)015	0894	EEB(F)036	1316	EEB(E)002	2396
EEB(F)016	0948	EEB(F)037	1741	EEB(E)003	0979
EEB(F)017	0949	EEB(F)038	2161	EEB(E)004	1382
EEB(F)018	0950	EEB(F)039	1692	EEB(E)005	1306
EEB(F)019	0951	EEB(F)040	0029	EEB(E)006	1492
EEB(F)020	0952	EEB(F)041	0030	EEB(E)007	2561
EEB(F)021	0953	EEB(F)042	0031	EEB(E)008	2652
EEB(F)022	0955	EEB(F)043	0494	EEB(E)009	2653
EEB(F)023	0956	EEB(F)044	0747	EEB(E)010	0738
EEB(F)024	0957	EEB(F)045	1969	EEB(E)011	0739
EEB(F)025	0958	EEB(F)140	3477	EEB(E)012	1963
EEB(F)026	0959	EEB(F)141	3480	EEB(E)221	3486
EEB(F)027	0961	EEB(F)142	3481	EEB(E)222	3490
EEB(F)028	0966	EEB(F)143	3483	EEB(E)223	3607
EEB(F)029	0980	EEB(F)144	3488	EEB(E)224	3608

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.
EEB(E)225	3610				
CSTB268	1498				

**Replies to written questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-25**

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

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Session No.	Programme
EEB(F)009	2459	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)010	2460	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)011	2461	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)012	2462	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)013	3125	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)014	3263	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)015	0894	Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)016	0948	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)017	0949	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)018	0950	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)019	0951	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)020	0952	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)021	0953	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)022	0955	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)023	0956	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)024	0957	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)025	0958	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Session No.	Programme
EEB(F)026	0959	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)027	0961	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)028	0966	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)029	0980	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)030	0981	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)031	0982	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)032	0983	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)033	0984	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)034	3292	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)035	0047	Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)036	1316	Hon KWOK Wai-keung	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)037	1741	Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis	9	(-) Not specified
EEB(F)038	2161	Hon LEUNG Man-kwong	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)039	1692	Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)040	0029	Hon SHIU Ka-fai	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)041	0030	Hon SHIU Ka-fai	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)042	0031	Hon SHIU Ka-fai	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)043	0494	Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)044	0747	Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)045	1969	Hon YIU Pak-leung	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Session No.	Programme
EEB(F)140	3477	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)141	3480	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)142	3481	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services
EEB(F)143	3483	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(F)144	3488	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(-) Not specified
EEB(F)145	3489	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)146	3492	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)147	3493	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)148	3609	Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(F)149	3864	Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward	9	(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets
EEB(E)001	0893	Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)002	2396	Hon CHAN Siu-hung	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)003	0979	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)004	1382	Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)005	1306	Hon KWOK Wai-keung	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)006	1492	Hon LAU Kwok-fan	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)007	2561	Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)008	2652	Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)009	2653	Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)010	0738	Hon SHIU Ka-fai	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Session No.	Programme
EEB(E)011	0739	Hon SHIU Ka-fai	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)012	1963	Hon YIU Pak-leung	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)221	3486	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)222	3490	Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)223	3607	Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)224	3608	Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
EEB(E)225	3610	Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward	10	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks
CSTB268	1498	Hon LUK Chung-hung	17	(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)009

(Question Serial No. 2459)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the 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 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 AFCD;
- (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 Government's reply to the Committee last year that amendments would be made to require licensees to maintain records of the source of all the cats for sale and implant a microchip in all the cats for sale, etc?

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)
2021-22	17.4	30
2022-23	20.0	30
2023-24 (revised estimate)	22.7	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
2021	309	11	23	1
2022	340	12	22	0
2023	343	9	18	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
2021	2 585
2022	2 536
2023	2 245

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

- (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 permits issued by AFCD for import of cats and dogs over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of permits issued* (Cats and dogs)
2021	2 703
2022	2 452
2023	3 644

* A permit may cover more than one animal. AFCD does not have a breakdown on the number of cats and dogs imported.

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)
2021	8 917
2022	11 939
2023	8 624

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

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

Year	Cats/Dogs	Other mammals	Birds	Pet reptiles	Food poultry	Food reptiles
2021	14	24	191	2 028	0	0
2022	0	3	0	1 096	0	0
2023	15	5	757	803	5	6

- (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
2021	4 769	4 453
2022	4 469	4 225
2023	3 598	4 231

- (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 tabulated 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 (\$)
2021	296	21	2,000	31	1,000 to 20,000
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

- (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
2021	4 302
2022	4 261
2023	4 964

- (h) In order to strengthen regulation of the activities of licensed cat traders, AFCD has amended the code of practice and licensing conditions for animal traders (cats) to require licensees, *inter alia*, to maintain records of the source of all the cats for sale and implant a microchip in all the cats for sale, and raised the facility requirements for trading premises. The new requirements have come into effect on 1 April this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)010

(Question Serial No. 2460)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Over the past 3 years, regarding 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 the 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 current progress?

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)
2021-22	2.6	17
2022-23	2.3	17
2023-24 (revised estimate)	3.0	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
2021	256	15	2,000 to 2,500	1 month and 12 days to 5 months
2022	263	20	1,000 to 3,000	8 days to 10 months
2023 (as at Sep)	336	16	5,000 to 6,000	10 days to 1 year

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

- (d) Over the past 3 years, there was no application for review of 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 14 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 is conducting preparatory work for the legislative amendments to the Ordinance and other measures, with a view to further safeguarding animal welfare. Proposed 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. The drafting of the relevant regulations is at its final stage, we will introduce the proposed legislative amendments to the Legislative Council for scrutiny as soon as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)011

(Question Serial No. 2461)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the provision of subventions to local animal welfare organisations (AWOs) and animal shelters, 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 number of partner AWOs of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) over the past 3 years and whether AFCD has taken the initiative to invite more AWOs to become partner AWOs;
- (c) the number and details of collaboration with AWOs in each of the past 3 years and the plans for collaboration in the forthcoming 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 number of partner AWOs of AFCD over the past 3 years (2021, 2022 and 2023) was 17. AFCD welcomes applications from AWOs to become its partner AWOs and has uploaded the application details to the thematic website (<https://www.pets.gov.hk>).
- (c) Over the past 3 years, AFCD and AWOs jointly organised a total of 8 events (3 in 2021, 3 in 2022 and 2 in 2023), such as pet adoption days and carnivals, to promote animal welfare and rehoming. In 2024, 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 [*]
2021	348 (46.3%)	72 (35.8%)	210 (8.6%)
2022	348 (47.9%)	151 (49.0%)	159 (11.0%)
2023	319 (38.3%)	174 (50.0%)	123 (2.1%)

⁺ 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 in the course of assessing their 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 setting up rehoming centres on 2 government sites in Ko Po San Tsuen, Kam Tin and 1 government site in San Ping Circuit, Tuen Mun respectively. Two of the rehoming centres with a capacity of about 50 animals and about 150 animals have commenced service in late 2021 and early 2024 respectively. Another rehoming centre with a capacity of about 125 animals is expected to commence construction works within 2024. 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 95 premises were holding valid animal boarding establishment licences issued by AFCD under the Public Health (Animals) (Boarding Establishment) Regulations (Cap. 139I), of which 15, 31 and 49 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 2020-21 and released in 2021-22*)

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

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

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

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

* Not eligible for application for subvention for AWOs.

(iii) Subvention from AFCD to AWOs (applied for in 2022-23 and released in 2023-24)

	AWOs	Projects under application	Amount sought (\$)	Amount granted (\$)
1	Cheung Chau Animal Care	Management of stray animals in Cheung Chau and promotion of animal welfare	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.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)012****(Question Serial No. 2462)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expensesProgramme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical ServicesControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the 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) the number of animals caught each year and their respective types;
- (b) the number of animals received by each animal management centre each year and their sources;
- (c) the number of animals neutered, rehomed and euthanised 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; and
- (g) the number of dog training courses organised for dog owners, and the details and number of participants?

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

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

Year	Stray animals caught			Total
	Dogs	Cats	Other Animals ¹	
2021	430	165	895	1 490
2022	326	129	724	1 179
2023	463	184	995	1 642

¹ Including small mammals (rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rats), reptiles, pigs/cattle and poultry/birds.

- (b) The number of animals received and kept by AMCs over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

AMC	2021			2022			2023		
	Dogs	Cats	Others ²	Dogs	Cats	Others ²	Dogs	Cats	Others ²
AMC/HK	112	40	32	70	65	34	105	76	2 208 ³
AMC/K	164	88	27	160	90	33	164	109	69
AMC/NTS	223	47	68	199	69	211	265	105	67
AMC/NTN	544	134	2 245	472	155	1 100	517	134	3 389 ³
Total	1 043	309	2 372	901	379	1 378	1 051	424	5 733

² Including small mammals (rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rats), reptiles, pigs and poultry/birds.

³ Mainly including animals confiscated which were suspected to be illegally imported and failed to meet the import requirements.

Most animals received and kept were stray animals caught by AFCD, animals surrendered by owners and seized animals. A breakdown of animals received by each AMC by source is not available.

- (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
2021	105	30	4
2022	91	37	2
2023	100	70	4

The number of animals rehomed over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of animals rehomed		
	Dogs	Cats	Others ⁴
2021	348	72	210
2022	348	151	159
2023	319	174	123

⁴ Including small mammals (rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rats), reptiles and birds.

The number of animals euthanised over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of animals euthanised		
	Dogs	Cats	Others ⁵
2021	338	59	1 439 ⁶
2022	280	54	496 ⁷
2023	372	90	821

⁵ Including small mammals (rabbits, hamsters, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rats), reptile, pigs/cattle and poultry/birds.

⁶ Mainly including turtles illegally imported.

⁷ Excluding 2 512 small mammals seized by AFCD and euthanised in order to minimise the risks of COVID-19 infection.

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

Year	Total number of posts in the 4 AMCs ⁸		Turnover rate	
	Veterinary Officer	Technical/ Frontline staff	Veterinary Officer	Technical/ Frontline staff
2021-22	4	187	0%	4.3%
2022-23	4	187	0%	3.2%
2023-24	4	187	0%	4.8%

⁸ 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
2021-22	27.5	19.1	22.8	19.5
2022-23	28.7	19.9	23.8	20.4
2023-24 (revised estimate)	28.8	20.0	23.8	20.5

(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
2021	5 374	23
2022	5 195	11
2023	6 206	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
2021	6*	157*
2022	5*	103*
2023	9	253

* The number of sessions and participants of the Dog Obedience Training Course were lower than those in previous years due to the COVID-19 epidemic 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.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)013

(Question Serial No. 3125)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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
- (e) whether the Government will consider regulating pet food in the market; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

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 (kg)
2021	62 742 867
2022	62 677 454
2023	57 882 602

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

- (b) AFCD received 11, 5 and 7 complaints in 2021, 2022 and 2023 respectively, which were mainly related to the quality of pet food and business practices of the sellers. 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, inform the complainant of the appropriate follow-up actions.

- (c) and (e) AFCD commissioned a consultancy study in October 2017 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 results of all samples tested are within the limits permitted by major pet food producing countries/places. AFCD will continue to keep in view the local situation and latest international development on the safety of pet food products.
- (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)014

(Question Serial No. 3263)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding 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 (set out by speciality);
- (c) the change in the ratio of the number of pets to that of 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; and
- (g) given the view that there is presently a lack of regulation of pet grooming services by the Government, whether the Government will step up regulation and consider making it compulsory for the persons concerned to attend eligible courses?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 42)

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 qualifications, is tabulated as follows:

Country/region where they acquired their qualifications	Number of newly registered veterinary surgeons		
	2021	2022	2023
Australia	11	15	41
Brazil	0	0	1
Belgium	0	1	1
Canada	2	0	2
Chile	0	0	1
Europe*	2	3	10
Hong Kong, China	0	0	11
Italy	2	0	0
Japan	0	1	0
New Zealand	5	3	3
South Africa	2	3	7
Taiwan, China	4	9	30
United Kingdom	17	13	32
United States	4	1	4
Total	49	49	143

* Holder of a veterinary specialist qualification recognised by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation

- (b) According to VSB, there were 54, 64 and 73 registered veterinary surgeons who were granted authorisation to advertise as, or profess to be, specialists in Hong Kong in 2021, 2022 and 2023 respectively. Some of these veterinary surgeons have more than one speciality. Details of the specialities (showing position as at 31 December 2023) are tabulated as follows:

Speciality	Number of veterinary surgeons
Anesthesia and Analgesia	6
Avian Practice	2
Canine and Feline Practice	6
Companion Animals (Internal Medicine)	1
Dental Practice	3
Dermatology	3
Emergency and Critical Care	2
Equine Practice	1
Equine Surgery	1
Exotic Companion Mammal Practice	4
Feline Medicine	4
Internal Medicine (Cardiology)	5
Internal Medicine (Oncology)	9
Laboratory Animal Medicine	1
Large Animal Surgery	2
Neurology	4
Ophthalmology	5
Poultry Practice	1
Reptile and Amphibian Practice	2
Small Animal Internal Medicine	8
Small Animal Surgery	8

Speciality	Number of veterinary surgeons
Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging	2
Veterinary Pathology	7
Veterinary Preventive Medicine	1
Zoological Medicine	5

- (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 2023, and the number of local registered veterinary surgeons has increased from 988 in 2018 to 1 208 in 2023, representing an increase rate of 22%.
- (d) According to VSB, there were 1 090, 1 105 and 1 208 local registered veterinary surgeons in 2021, 2022 and 2023 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 is 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 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
2021	40	36	1	3	14	11
2022	59	51	6	2	8	6
2023	52	18	34	0	14	12

* 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	73%
Communication with clients	8%
Medical records	5%
Charges	7%
Others	7%

Over the past 3 years, ICs completed 36 inquiry cases, 29 of which were found substantiated, involving 30 veterinary surgeons. Orders made by ICs in respect of these veterinary surgeons are tabulated as follows:

Relevant Order	Number of people involved
Removal of names of relevant veterinary surgeons from the register for three and six months respectively, reprimand and compulsory participation in continuing professional development programme or professional seminar	2
Reprimand in writing and compulsory participation in continuing professional development programme or professional seminar	19
Reprimand in writing	9
Total	30

- (f) Amongst the cases received and processed over the past 3 years, the average processing time was around 7 months and the shortest and longest processing time was about 2 and 17 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) Currently, operating pet grooming business does not require any licence from AFCD. To prevent illegal animal trading or acts of cruelty to animals, AFCD conducts 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. It will institute prosecutions subject to sufficient evidence.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)015****(Question Serial No. 0894)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical ServicesControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Please advise this Committee in each of the past 5 years:

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

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)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 will also carry out relevant inspections where necessary.

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 (%)
2019-20	3.3	0.2
2020-21	2.9	0.2
2021-22	2.6	0.1
2022-23	2.3	0.1
2023-24 (revised estimate)	3.0	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 (%)
2019-20	18.2	1.1
2020-21	25.9	1.4
2021-22	23.8	1.3
2022-23	21.3	1.1
2023-24 (revised estimate)	17.9	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
2019	288	29	38	25	25	2,000 to 8,000	14 days to 10 months
2020	285	15	51	14	14	N/A	14 days to 8 months
2021	256	21	55	15	16	2,000 to 2,500	1 month and 12 days to 5 months
2022	263	21	32	20	24	1,000 to 3,000	8 days to 10 months
2023 (as at Sep)	336	18	43	16	16	5,000 to 6,000	10 days to 1 year

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)016****(Question Serial No. 0948)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Please advise of the number of Hong Kong fishermen, the number of their fishing vessels, and their production values (both within and outside Hong Kong) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24).

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

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

Year (as at the end of the year)	Number of local fishing vessels registered with MD [#]	Number of local fishing vessels registered with AFCD	Number of local capture fishermen [^]	Production value (\$ million) [^]	
				From Hong Kong waters	From waters outside Hong Kong
2021	6 376	4 321	10 510	1,055	1,712
2022	6 139	4 343	10 324	1,081	1,089
2023	6 260	4 340	10 239	1,008	1,345

[#] 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)017

(Question Serial No. 0949)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the loans currently provided by the Government to the agriculture and fisheries industries respectively;
- (b) the number of applications for the above loans, the number of loans approved, the total amount of the fund(s) and the total loans granted in each of the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) (please set out by loans);
- (c) the maximum amount of the above loans granted in each of the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); and
- (d) the number of deferred repayment and bad debt cases among the loans mentioned in (a) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24).

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

Reply:

- (a) Currently, the Government provides credit facility to farmers, fish farmers and fishermen through 6 loan funds administered by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. They are the J.E. Joseph Trust Fund (JEJTF), the Vegetable Marketing Organization Loan Fund (VMOLF), the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund (KAALF), the Fisheries Development Loan Fund (FDLF), the Fish Marketing Organization Loan Fund (FMOLF) and the World Refugee Year Loan Fund.
- (b) The total capital of the above loan funds, the number of applications, the number of loans and the amount of loans issued over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

JEJTF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2021	20.5	6	6	1.2
2022	20.7	6	6	1.1
2023	21.5	5	5	1.0

VMOLF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2021	13.3	19	19	1.6
2022	13.5	16	16	1.4
2023	14.0	26	26	2.0

KAALF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2021	15.7	24	24	3.4
2022	15.9	21	21	3.1
2023	16.3	23	21	3.5

FDLF

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2021	1,100	7	0	6.9
2022	1,100	2	1	5.6
2023	1,100	7	7	33.8

FMOLF (including normal loans and special fishing moratorium loans)

Year	Capital	Number of loans		Loans issued
	(as at 31 Dec) (\$ million)	Applications	Issued*	Amount [#] (\$ million)
2021	398.0	250	245	92.1
2022	397.3	232	224	83.6
2023	396.3	193	195	74.0

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

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

Over the past 3 years, the World Refugee Year Loan Fund received no application for loans. Its capitals stand at some \$2 million.

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

Loan Funds	2021 (\$)	2022 (\$)	2023 (\$)
JEJTF	200,000	200,000	200,000
KAALF	200,000	200,000	500,000
VMOLF	140,000	200,000	200,000
FDLF	5,000,000	5,000,000	8,000,000
FMOLF	450,000	450,000	450,000

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

Number of deferred repayment cases

Loan Funds	2021 (number of cases)	2022 (number of cases)	2023 (number of cases)
JEJTF	0	0	0
KAALF	2	3	2
VMOLF	4	5	2
FDLF [^]	1	33	21
FMOLF	525	546	532

[^] The figures of FDLF do not include the granting of a deferral of loan repayment and waiving of interests for 1 year to borrowers of FDLF in view of the COVID-19 epidemic in 2022.

Number of bad debt cases

Loan Funds	2021 (number of cases)	2022 (number of cases)	2023 (number of cases)
JEJTF	0	0	0
KAALF	1	0	0
VMOLF	0	0	0
FDLF	0	0	0
FMOLF	0	0	0

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)018****(Question Serial No. 0950)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

- (a) the respective numbers of pair trawlers, stern trawlers, shrimp trawlers, hang trawlers, purse seiners with light, purse seiners, liners and gillnetters, fish carriers, other fishing vessels and industry-related vessels over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (b) the number of fishing vessels registered in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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.: 3)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		
	2021	2022	2023
Fish carrier	21	19	23
Fishing sampan "C7"	1 861	1 832	1 829
Fishing vessel	1 626	1 384	1 486
Outboard open sampan "P4"	2 868	2 904	2 922
Total	6 376	6 139	6 260

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 4 321, 4 343 and 4 340 fishing vessels registered under the Ordinance in 2021, 2022 and 2023 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		
	2021	2022	2023
Purse seining/purse seining with light	44	42	41
Long lining/hand lining	34	31	33
Gill netting	521	521	515
Cage trapping	52	43	42
Mixed fishing methods	3 670	3 706	3 709
Total	4 321	4 343	4 340

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)019****(Question Serial No. 0951)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

- (a) the annual total and daily average wholesale quantities, as well as the highest and lowest figures thereof for different kinds of marine fish (including Golden thread, Horse-heads, Yellow croakers, Big-eyes, Scads, Breems, Hair-tails, Mackerels, Croakers, Filefish, etc.) and freshwater fish (including Grass carp, Big head, Mud carp, etc.) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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, Breems, Hair-tails, Mackerels, Croakers, Filefish, etc.) and freshwater fish (including Grass carp, Big head, Mud carp, etc.) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24).

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

- (a) 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)
2021	47 313	130	180	18
2022	34 419	94	169	6
2023	38 544	106	157	8

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
2021	25,610 [^]	26,230	26,922	27,200	28,354	29,378	30,184	30,218 [*]	29,964	29,565	29,276	28,870
2022	29,036 [^]	29,403	31,873	32,965	33,943 [*]	33,203	33,867	32,096	31,286	31,736	30,205	30,992
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 [^]

* Highest monthly average price in the respective year

[^] Lowest monthly average price in the respective year

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

Wholesale quantity of marine fish from 2021 to 2023

Year	Fish	Total quantity (tonnes)	Daily average quantity (tonnes)	Highest daily quantity (tonnes)	Lowest daily quantity (tonnes)
2021	Golden thread (紅衫)	2 787.5	7.6	9.1	6.4
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	2 976.0	8.2	9.4	6.5
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	2 045.8	5.6	7.1	3.5
	Big-eyes (木棉)	2 200.0	6.0	6.5	4.6
	Scads (池魚)	868.4	2.4	3.1	1.2
	Breams (立魚)	2 205.9	6.0	6.7	5.3
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	1 374.2	3.8	4.6	2.7
	Mackerels (鮫魚)	1 686.2	4.6	5.2	3.2
	Croakers (鰺魚)	440.4	1.2	1.5	0.8
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 (鮫魚)	1 378.7	3.8	4.6	2.1
	Croakers (鰺魚)	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 (鮫魚)	1 277.0	3.5	4.1	2.4
	Croakers (鰺魚)	456.3	1.3	2.1	0.6

Data on Filefish (沙鯪) are not readily available.

Monthly average wholesale price of marine fish from 2021 to 2023

Year	Fish	Monthly average wholesale price (\$/kg)											
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2021	Golden thread (紅衫)	75.76	77.88*	71.41	65.96 [^]	67.76	72.23	74.14	74.94	73.92	72.40	75.55	73.34
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	60.97	62.44*	59.91	54.84	54.36	57.46	59.43	60.15	57.98	53.90	51.72 [^]	54.78
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	100.39	86.73	101.01	77.07	72.76	73.72	73.91	71.68 [^]	81.48	87.03	94.77	102.87*
	Big-eyes (木棉)	82.43	78.42	82.99	84.64	84.69	88.64	89.70*	88.31	69.09 [^]	79.56	89.20	85.58
	Scads (池魚)	29.18*	28.13	25.47	22.21 [^]	23.18	25.75	25.89	26.70	22.25	24.24	24.51	23.39
	Breams (立魚)	79.20	79.58*	74.85	71.47	72.89	78.29	78.45	77.58	68.22 [^]	69.69	75.81	77.86
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	47.45	52.17	49.62	44.68 [^]	49.42	56.95	60.07	61.16*	50.69	53.25	54.48	57.71
	Mackerels (鮫魚)	73.96	82.31*	74.42	66.64	68.16	71.57	70.92	70.71	64.05 [^]	64.28	67.42	68.45
	Croakers (鰻魚)	35.03	33.00	35.30*	27.19	29.72	32.06	31.05	30.17	28.53	27.06 [^]	29.96	27.66
2022	Golden thread (紅衫)	77.06 [^]	87.08	92.99	97.89	98.87	104.06	108.55*	105.05	100.94	92.73	90.99	87.51
	Horse-heads (馬頭)	53.64 [^]	56.63	68.54	67.60	65.29	67.80	69.84*	68.29	64.83	56.46	55.31	55.97
	Yellow croakers (黃花)	93.70	110.75*	75.33	73.22	73.01 [^]	75.19	76.31	74.36	71.87	73.27	85.28	87.46
	Big-eyes (木棉)	91.80	94.25	108.19	109.92	108.32	111.72	117.41*	115.30	105.17	89.06 [^]	101.92	101.99
	Scads (池魚)	24.40	24.51	27.05	27.73	29.41	33.09	36.10*	33.78	24.47	21.56 [^]	23.06	23.36
	Breams (立魚)	75.31	78.37	87.33	88.06	86.93	89.36*	88.34	83.80	71.67	70.95 [^]	76.52	78.23
	Hair-tails (牙帶)	61.05	52.33 [^]	68.76	74.30	76.25	78.86	80.67*	77.56	61.78	55.72	53.76	58.30
	Mackerels (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 (鰻魚)	30.90	31.67 [^]	33.45	35.56	37.81	41.67	47.13*	45.75	36.89	36.13	39.74	37.04
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 (鰻魚)	38.61	38.97	36.23	39.02	43.07*	41.44	42.91*	38.72	36.89	35.35 [^]	37.87	36.19

Data on Filefish (沙魷) are not readily available.

* Highest monthly average wholesale price in the respective year.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)020****(Question Serial No. 0952)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

- (a) the annual total and daily average wholesale quantities, as well as the highest and lowest figures thereof for different kinds of eggs (including brown-shelled egg (medium) from the Mainland, Grade II brown-shelled eggs from Germany (360/box), brown-shelled eggs (medium) from the USA, etc.) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)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
2021	67 214	184	404	4
2022	68 822	189	368	6
2023	61 336	168	349	3

- (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
2021	15,290	16,036*	15,755	15,220^	15,290	15,433	15,516	15,413	15,460	15,381	15,480	15,381
2022	15,400	15,357^	15,606	15,807	16,206	15,760	15,852	15,858	16,220	17,710	18,140	18,297*
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*

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
2021	15,071^	15,536	15,942*	15,787	15,535	15,627	15,439	15,523	15,680	15,594	15,380	15,394
2022	15,529^	15,607	15,897	15,993	17,742	18,153	18,168	18,161	18,880	19,439*	18,973	19,181
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

* Highest monthly average wholesale price

^ Lowest monthly average wholesale price

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)021****(Question Serial No. 0953)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

- (a) the annual total and daily average wholesale quantities, as well as the highest and lowest figures thereof for different kinds of vegetables (including flowering cabbage, water cress, white cabbage, broccoli, Chinese lettuce, green cabbage, chrysanthemum garland, tomato, Chinese kale, pea shoot, European celery, potato and spinach, etc.) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)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
2021	238 229	653	862	103
2022	217 127	595	721	101
2023	217 173	595	744	53

- (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 (\$/tonnes)											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2021	13,623	14,104	13,057	12,444	12,061 [^]	12,082	12,173	12,100	12,237	13,341	14,505 [*]	13,924
2022	12,986	17,001 [*]	16,640	15,420	13,907	13,740	13,893	13,435	13,964	13,909	12,590 [^]	14,667
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 [^]

* Highest monthly price

[^] Lowest monthly price

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)022

(Question Serial No. 0955)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the wholesale of live chickens, please advise of:

- (a) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported and local live chickens, as well as the largest and the smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (b) the monthly average price, as well as the highest and the lowest monthly prices of imported and local live chickens over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (c) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported minor poultry, as well as the largest and the smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (d) the monthly average price, as well as the highest and the lowest monthly prices of imported minor poultry over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (e) the monthly total quantity and daily average quantity of imported day-old chicks, as well as the largest and the smallest daily wholesale quantities over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); and
- (f) the percentage of live chickens, minor poultry and day-old chicks imported from various places over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24).

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

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
2021	4 334 808	11 876	41 270	3 880
2022	3 929 112	10 765	42 147	6 250
2023	4 023 165	11 022	37 040	6 270

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
2021	353 542	390 537	345 423	344 082	373 933	385 194	331 508	339 902	395 255	340 245	346 047	389 140
2022	432 426	273 778	273 654	319 588	287 661	280 402	316 960	312 857	345 211	353 054	347 729	385 792
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

- (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
2021	83.79	93.06*	77.60	66.31	58.25	53.17	51.09	48.50	48.03	47.85 [^]	47.85 [^]	58.79
2022	84.14	88.10*	76.25	67.65	71.72	80.32	78.45	66.32	55.55	51.15	47.85 [^]	51.81
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

* Highest monthly average price in the respective years

[^] Lowest monthly average price in the respective years

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

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

Year	Quantity (number)			
	Total	Daily average	Highest daily	Lowest daily
2021	3 439 710	9 424	25 700	3 000
2022	2 816 900	7 718	40 000	2 000
2023	3 034 600	8 314	33 000	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
2021	300 900	296 700	314 400	295 500	276 850	283 880	262 600	251 000	278 280	320 100	296 000	263 500
2022	311 200	93 900	62 500	149 100	252 550	281 000	249 300	282 150	281 300	314 800	278 700	260 400
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

- (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)023

(Question Serial No. 0956)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the imports and exports of fresh food as well as agricultural and fisheries products, please advise of the following:
the total values of locally produced fresh food and agricultural and fisheries products for supply to the local market over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

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 2021, 2022 and 2023 were about \$3,170 million, \$2,880 million and \$2,510 million respectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)024

(Question Serial No. 0957)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the situation of deployment of artificial reefs, the number of artificial reefs deployed and the areas concerned over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); and
- (b) whether the Government has assessed the effectiveness of the artificial reefs project in the past year (2023-24).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

- (a) & (b) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has not deployed artificial reefs (ARs) over the past 3 years.

In the past, AFCD has conducted underwater surveys on the fisheries resources in areas with ARs. The results indicated that areas with ARs deployed support higher diversity and abundance of fish species as compared with the natural habitat. Over 200 species of fish, including high-valued species like groupers, breams, snappers and sweetlips, have also been found using ARs as feeding, sheltering, spawning and nursing grounds.

AFCD will conduct underwater surveys as appropriate to monitor and assess the effectiveness of ARs and continue to plan for further deployment of ARs at suitable locations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)025

(Question Serial No. 0958)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding mariculture industry, please advise of the following:

- (a) the expenditure and manpower of the Government for monitoring water quality and red tides respectively over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24) with a breakdown by district in tabular form;
- (c) whether the Government had any statistics on the cases relating to massive fish deaths due to water quality or pollution incidents over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24). Please set out by district;
- (d) whether the Government had any statistics on the cases relating to massive fish deaths due to inclement weather (including typhoons, cold snaps) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24). Please set out by district;
- (e) the number of applications for the Emergency Relief Fund due to items (b), (c) and (d), the number of cases approved and the amount involved;
- (f) the new measures implemented by the Government to support the mariculture industry over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (g) the size and average density of rafts in fish culture zones (FCZs) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) with a breakdown by the 26 FCZs in tabular form;
- (h) the total size of FCZs over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (i) the expenditure and manpower involved in processing matters related to FCZs over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (j) the expenditure and manpower involved in processing matters related to the designation of 4 new FCZs as well as the work progress and timeframe;
- (k) the respective numbers of fish rafts in the 26 FCZs of Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) in tabular form; and
- (l) the manpower and the expenditure involved in conducting inspections at each FCZ over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) and the timeframe for the inspections.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2021-22	18.5	11
2022-23	15.9	11
2023-24 (revised estimate)	16.6	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		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
North	Nil	Nil	1 <i>Chattonella marina</i>
Tai Po	1 <i>Karenia sp.</i> , <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	5 <i>Gonyaulax polygramma</i>	6 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Dictyocha octonaria</i>
Sai Kung	5 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	4 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>	3 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>
Southern	19 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	22 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i> , <i>Scrippsiella trochoidea</i>	7 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i> , <i>Levanderina fissa</i>
Islands	9 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i> , <i>Akashiwo sanguinea</i> , <i>Takayama tuberculata</i>	8 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Dactyliosolen phuketensis</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>	2 <i>Scrippsiella trochoidea</i> , <i>Phaeocystis globosa</i>
Tuen Mun	11 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i> , <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	2 <i>Cerataulina dentata</i>	Nil
Tsuen Wan	8 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	2 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	1 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>
Yuen Long	1 <i>Heterosigma akashiwo</i>	Nil	Nil

District	Number of red tides observed and the causative species involved		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Central and Western	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>	Nil
Wan Chai	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia calliantha</i>	Nil
Eastern	1 <i>Guinardia delicatula</i>	Nil	Nil
Kowloon City	1 <i>Noctiluca scintillans</i>	Nil	1 <i>Pseudo-nitzschia delicatissima</i>
Yau Tsim Mong	2 <i>Guinardia delicatula</i> , <i>Polykrikos geminatum</i>	Nil	Nil

- (c) and (d) There were no confirmed reports of massive fish deaths in fish culture zones (FCZs) due to water quality, pollution or inclement weather over the past 3 years.
- (e) Over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), AFCD received 22 applications for the Emergency Relief Fund in 2021-22 due to red tides affecting marine fish culture farms. Among these applications, 21 were approved, involving an amount of about \$180,000. 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.
- (f) The Government has been promoting the sustainable development of mariculture. Apart from providing technical support services, credit facilities and training, promoting good aquaculture practices and monitoring the aquaculture environment, it has rolled out new supportive measures including: (i) resuming the issuance of marine fish culture licences for existing FCZs with surplus carrying capacity; (ii) establishing a modernised mariculture demonstration farm equipped with a steel truss cage at the Tung Lung Chau FCZ so as to provide an infrastructure for practical training; (iii) designating 4 new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi, outer Tap Mun, Po Toi (Southeast) and Mirs Bay to provide an area of about 590 hectares for mariculture; and (iv) helping fish farmers adopt a sustainable and high value-added mode of operation and funding projects and researches that help enhance the overall competitiveness of the industry through the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund, including developing deep sea mariculture, to support the development of the industry in terms of application of advanced technology and intensification of production, and leveraging the opportunities arising from the Greater Bay Area development.
- (g) The total area and average density of rafts in the FCZs over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

FCZ [#]	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24 (as Feb 2024)	
	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)	Total raft area (m ²)	Raft density* (%)
Ap Chau	255	6.1	255	6.1	255	6.1
Cheung Sha Wan	13 305	6.2	13 289	6.2	13 249	6.2
Kai Lung Wan	5 476	20.2	5 469	20.2	5 417	20.0
Kat O	2 913	9.0	2 872	8.9	2 887	8.9
Kau Lau Wan	1 199	10.7	1 143	10.2	1 143	10.2
Kau Sai	11 787	25.5	11 770	25.5	11 735	25.4
Leung Shuen Wan	5 668	32.8	5 678	32.8	5 597	32.4
Lo Fu Wat	1 122	20.8	978	18.1	978	18.1
Lo Tik Wan	21 630	19.8	21 589	19.8	21 502	19.7
Ma Nam Wat	5 054	12.6	5 052	12.6	5 048	12.6
Ma Wan	13 754	29.7	13 748	29.7	13 818	29.8
O Pui Tong	2 462	2.3	2 321	2.2	2 321	2.2
Po Toi	255	8.5	249	8.3	247	8.2
Po Toi O	3 186	8.3	3 486	9.1	3 484	9.1
Sai Lau Kong	140	1.9	140	1.9	35	0.5
Sha Tau Kok	11 926	6.6	12 015	6.7	12 088	6.7
Sham Wan	12 219	6.8	11 764	6.5	11 491	6.4
Sok Kwu Wan	26 414	18.7	26 491	18.8	26 570	18.8
Tai Tau Chau	12 058	19.2	12 033	19.2	11 951	19.0
Tap Mun	7 694	10.6	7 639	10.6	7 640	10.6
Tiu Cham Wan	131	0.8	131	0.8	132	0.8
Tung Lung Chau	10 703	13.4	10 314	12.9	10 083	12.6
Wong Wan	2 500	11.1	2 500	11.1	2 500	11.1
Yim Tin Tsai	21 231	15.6	21 317	15.6	21 481	15.8
Yim Tin Tsai (East)	20 653	13.8	20 556	13.8	20 397	13.6
Yung Shue Au	36 595	10.7	37 342	10.9	37 422	10.9
Total	250 330	12.0	250 141	12.0	249 471	11.9

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

The new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were commissioned in December 2023 and will come into operation at a later stage.

- (h) The total area of FCZs remained at about 209 hectares in 2021-22 to 2022-23. In 2023-24, due to commissioning of the new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay, the total area of FCZs has increased from 209 hectares to about 650 hectares.
- (i) The expenditure and manpower involved in processing applications related to the marine fish culture licence and conducting patrols and inspections in FCZs over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2021-22	12.0	21
2022-23	12.2	21
2023-24 (revised estimate)	12.8	21

- (j) 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 first commissioned in December 2023. The manpower on designating the 4 new FCZs is absorbed by the existing resources of AFCD.
- (k) The number of fish rafts in the FCZs over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) is tabulated as follows:

FCZ#	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Ap Chau	4	4	4
Cheung Sha Wan	67	65	63
Kai Lung Wan	39	39	39
Kat O	28	28	28
Kau Lau Wan	20	20	20
Kau Sai	59	59	59
Leung Shuen Wan	62	62	61
Lo Fu Wat	19	19	19
Lo Tik Wan	66	65	65
Ma Nam Wat	42	42	42
Ma Wan	94	93	93
O Pui Tong	5	5	5
Po Toi	6	6	6
Po Toi O	35	35	34
Sai Lau Kong	2	2	2
Sha Tau Kok	110	108	108
Sham Wan	161	161	161
Sok Kwu Wan	137	137	135
Tai Tau Chau	101	98	98
Tap Mun	72	72	72
Tiu Cham Wan	2	2	2
Tung Lung Chau	57	55	55
Wong Wan	18	18	18
Yim Tin Tsai	249	245	244
Yim Tin Tsai (East)	195	195	195
Yung Shue Au	282	282	285
Total	1 932	1 917	1 913

The new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were commissioned in December 2023 and will come into operation at a later stage.

- (1) 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)
2021-22	9.6	18
2022-23	10.0	18
2023-24 (revised estimate)	10.5	18

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)026

(Question Serial No. 0959)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

- (a) Please set out the number, size and distribution of vegetable farms, flower farms, organic farms, leisure farms, vegetable marketing co-operative societies, vegetable depots, farms in industrial buildings, fish rafts and licences for marine fish culture, fish ponds and oyster breeding rafts currently in operation.
- (b) What are the number, size and distribution of local pig farms and chicken farms, and the licensed rearing capacity of each farm over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24)? Please set out the information with a breakdown by the 18 districts.

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

Reply:

- (a) As at December 2023, there were about 2 400 crop farms (including the planting of vegetables and flowers, and orchards) with a total cultivated area of about 729 hectares. These farms were mainly located in the North District and Yuen Long. Amongst these crop farms, there were 359 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 103 hectares. It is estimated that there were 115 leisure farms with a total area of about 119 hectares. There were also 16 farms located in industrial buildings in Chai Wan, Kwun Tong, Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Tai Po, Tuen Mun and Sha Tin districts with a total area of 3 hectares.

The number and distribution of vegetable marketing co-operative societies (VMCSs) and vegetable depots by district as at December 2023 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 2023 is as follows:

- (i) There were a total of 910 licensed marine fish culture farms with about 1 913 fish rafts in the Fish Culture Zones (FCZs)*. The size of farms ranged from about 13 to 6 800 m².
- (ii) There were about 351 pond fish farms with about 1 399 fish ponds, mainly in the Northwest New Territories. The size of pond fish farms ranged from about 80 to 425 000 m².
- (iii) There were about 14 600 oyster rafts in Deep Bay, the size of which ranged from about 100 to 300 m².

* The 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 (the new FCZs at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay were commissioned in December 2023 and will come into operation at a later stage).

- (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 2023 are tabulated as follows:

Pig farms

	2023		
	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

	2023		
	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	3 699.22	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		104 310.35	74 640

Chicken farms

	2023		
	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)027

(Question Serial No. 0961)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the latest progress of the epidemic prevention work, and the work plan, estimated expenditure and manpower involved over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (b) the type of pig and poultry vaccines introduced into the local industry and the expenditure involved respectively over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (c) the total expenditure involved in vaccinating pigs and poultry respectively over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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.: 14)

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)
2021-22	70.2	72
2022-23	74.7	74
2023-24 (revised estimate)	78.9	74

- (b) Over the past 3 years, AFCD continued to require 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 for the relevant work was absorbed by AFCD's resources for prevention and control of animal diseases, there was no breakdown in this regard.
- (c) Apart from the mandatory H5/H7 AI vaccination programme for chickens in local chicken farms, pig or chicken farmers may decide on their own whether other vaccines should be used for better protection of their farm animals against various diseases. Commonly used vaccines include those against porcine circovirus, foot and mouth disease, porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome in pigs, and those against Newcastle disease, infectious bronchitis and Gumboro disease in poultry. All the vaccines used in local farms are purchased by farmers at their own cost. AFCD does not have information on the total expenditure and the average costs involved in vaccinating pigs and poultry.
- (d) Over the past 3 years, African Swine Fever (ASF) cases were detected in 11 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
2021-22	0	0
2022-23	1	107
2023-24 (as at March 2024)	10	17 457

- (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 collecting chicken samples and environmental samples for AI virus testing for early detection of potential cases.

- (f) AFCD has been closely monitoring the epidemic situation of ASF and taking corresponding measures in a timely manner. Major measures which have been implemented include:
- (i) devising surveillance and contingency plans for detecting ASF, including stepping up inspections to all local pig farms and collecting pig samples for ASF virus testing when necessary;
 - (ii) amending the licensing condition of rearing pigs to include requirements for pig farms to implement and strictly abide by the biosecurity measures applicable to their pig farms, and take samples for ASF virus testing in accordance with relevant guidelines to obtain a negative result before disposing pig carcasses; collaborating with international veterinary experts to explain and provide training to each of the local pig farms on biosecurity measures and providing assistance and loans to farmers to facilitate purchase of appropriate facilities to enhance biosecurity of their pig farms;
 - (iii) requesting all local pig farms to step up cleansing and disinfection of vehicles and personnel entering and leaving pig farms;
 - (iv) suspending the import of breeders from places infected by ASF;
 - (v) imposing a total ban on the storage or use of kitchen waste, catering waste or other food wastes of pork origin as pig feed;
 - (vi) strengthening the regulation of local pig-carrying trucks, including restricting each local pig-carrying truck to carry live pigs from a single licensed pig farm to the slaughterhouse per trip to reduce the risk of cross contamination between local pig farms and setting spillage prevention standard for local pig-carrying trucks to minimise the spread of diseases arising from spillage or leakage of pig wastes;
 - (vii) commissioning contractors to thoroughly cleanse and disinfect all local pig-carrying trucks at designated positions every time before they leave the Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse and Tsuen Wan Slaughterhouse;
 - (viii) liaising with relevant government departments regarding improvement in the collection arrangements for pig waste and pig carcasses;
 - (ix) providing financial assistance to the City University of Hong Kong through the SADF to provide free veterinary consultation services for local pig farms with a view to improving the overall animal health conditions of local pig farms;
 - (x) maintaining close communication with the pig farming sector, including setting up SMS groups and organising meetings and seminars with the trade representatives in a timely manner, as well as enhancing local pig farmers' knowledge of preventing ASF through launching the Guidelines for Reporting ASF Cases and producing various publicity materials on information about ASF, such as posters, videos and guidelines on the procedures of cleansing and disinfecting pig-carrying trucks, so as to provide local pig farmers with information about the disease, its infection as well as the prevention and control measures that pig farms should heed;

- (xi) 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;
- (xii) conducting a regular surveillance programme for ASF in local wild pig carcasses (including humanely dispatched wild pigs);
- (xiii) working with international veterinary experts to conduct detailed investigation into cases of ASF outbreaks in local pig farms and formulate response plans to cope with low virulent strains of ASF virus; and
- (xiv) devising an action plan and providing the necessary equipment for culling of pigs.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)028

(Question Serial No. 0966)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding co-operative societies, please advise of

- (a) the 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24).

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

Reply:

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

Industry	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
	Number of co-operative societies*	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)	Number of co-operative societies*	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)	Number of co-operative societies#	Expenditure (revised estimate) (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
Agriculture	54	1.8	3	54	2.0	3	54	2.1	3
Fisheries	54	2.7	4	54	2.8	4	54	2.8	4
Others	56	5.7	9	54	6.0	9	53	6.5	9
Total	164	10.2	16	162	10.8	16	161	11.4	16

* As at end of the year

As at February 2024

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)029

(Question Serial No. 0980)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the surveys on fisheries resources, please advise of:

- (a) the manpower and the expenditure involved over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) and the timeframe for the surveys;
- (b) the area of the waters involved in, the number of and the mechanism put in place for the surveys (please show with a map);
- (c) the ways that the Department currently uses to inform the fishing vessels operating in relevant waters; and
- (d) during the surveys, the frequency of contractor monitoring as well as measures taken by the Department's staff on board the subject vessels to ensure compliance with the contract terms.

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

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)
2021-22	11.2	5
2022-23	11.3	5
2023-24 (revised estimate)	9.1	4

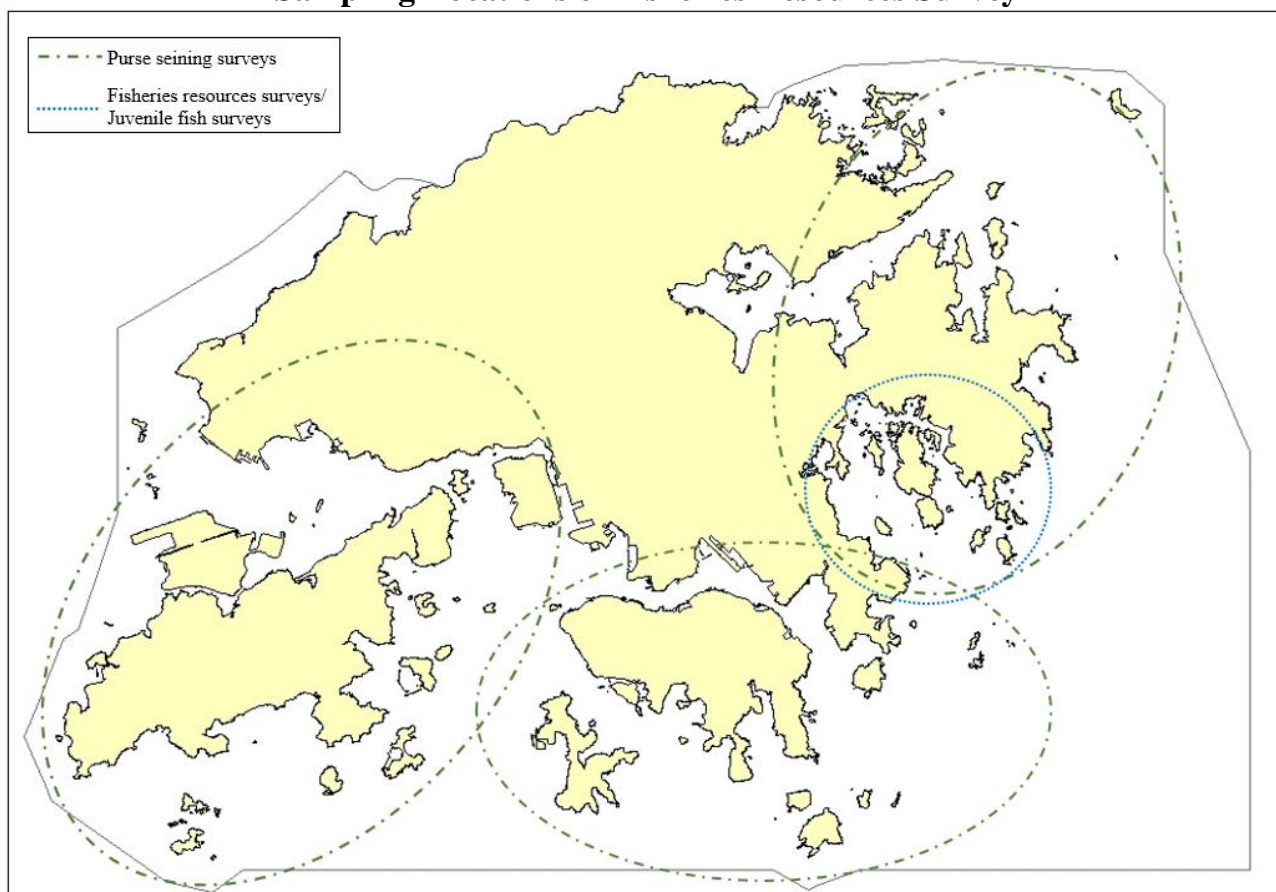
- (b) The surveys mentioned in part (a) above include:
 - (i) purse-seining surveys conducted 3 to 5 times a month to study the operation of local purse seiners and to collect data on fish catch at sampling stations in the eastern, southern and western coastal waters of Hong Kong;

- (ii) juvenile fish surveys conducted 9 times per season at sampling stations at the spawning and nursery grounds in Port Shelter; and
- (iii) fisheries resources surveys undertaken almost once a month by fishing methods such as cage-trapping, long-lining, gill-netting and hand-lining at sampling stations in Port Shelter.

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

- (c) All fisheries resources surveys conducted by AFCD at present employ non-trawling methods such as cage-trapping, long-lining, gill-netting and purse-seining. The surveys are conducted in a way similar to regular fishing operations and are carried out by fishermen with relevant experience, which do not 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 68 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 Survey



- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)030

(Question Serial No. 0981)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the details, expenditure and manpower involved in promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (b) the expenditure and manpower involved in the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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.: 34)

Reply:

- (a) The Government has been promoting the sustainable development of the fisheries industry through (i) implementing a series of fisheries management measures (such as the ban on trawling and the introduction of a registration system for local fishing vessels) to help conserve and restore depleted marine resources; (ii) assisting fishermen in switching to sustainable fisheries operations and helping fish farmers develop sustainable aquaculture through 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; and (vi) administering the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (SFDF) to help fishermen adopt a sustainable and high value-added mode of operation, and fund projects and research that help enhance the overall competitiveness of the industry, including developing deep water cage mariculture, offshore fishing, leisure (please check if it is consistent with other replies) fishing and ecotourism, with a view to supporting the development of the industry in terms of application of advanced technology and intensification of production, and leveraging the opportunities arising

from the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area).

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 presents the visions and work targets of the Government and the industries for the sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries and proposes 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 Greater Bay Area, thereby enhancing the quality, quantity and value of local agricultural and fisheries products in the long run.

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)
2021-22	143.8	105
2022-23	254.8*	107
2023-24 (revised estimate)	111.8	101

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

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2021-22	4.5	9
2022-23	5.3	11
2023-24 (revised estimate)	8.9#	11

The increase in the expenditure for the relevant item is mainly due to the expanded coverage of SFDF.

- (c) As at February 2024, 23 SFDF projects (including the Equipment Improvement Projects) were completed, benefitting around 3 640 in-service fishermen. Upon completion of more projects, more fishermen will benefit.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)031****(Question Serial No. 0982)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical ServicesControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

- (a) the respective numbers of (i) patrols and (ii) joint operations conducted in each of the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) in the marine parks/marine reserve set out in the table below;

Year		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
The Brothers Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
South Lantau Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			
Southwest Lantau Marine Park	Patrol			
	Joint operation			

- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24): (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		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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 (2021-22 to 2023-24) in Hong Kong waters (except in various marine parks/marine reserve) set out below;

		Year		
		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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 (2021-22 to 2023-24): (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		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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)			

	Year		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24); and
- (h) the illegal fishing practices detected during patrols or joint operations over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), and the respective numbers and percentages involved.

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

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		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park	Patrol	726	603	589
	Joint operation	24	31	23
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park	Patrol	544	541	475
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park	Patrol	325	367	383
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park	Patrol	392	401	327
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve	Patrol	450	410	425
	Joint operation	0	0	0
The Brothers Marine Park	Patrol	362	375	380
	Joint operation	0	0	0
Southwest Lantau Marine Park	Patrol	486	487	446
	Joint operation	0	0	0
South Lantau Marine Park [#]	Patrol		226	197
	Joint operation		0	0

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

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

Item	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Number of complaints received	17	17	10
Number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was successfully made)	16 (6)	27 (16)	30 (18)
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)	10 (10)	11 (11)	12 (12)
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)	5 (5)	11 (11)	3 (3)
The minimum and maximum penalties imposed	A fine of \$800 to \$2,000	A fine of \$800 to \$2,000	A fine of \$500 to \$1,000
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		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
The entire Hong Kong waters	(i)	1 834	2 038	2 116
	(ii)	137	145	124
The waters around Cheung Chau, Shek Kwu Chau and Soko Islands	(i)	346	317	275
	(ii)	49	49	35
The waters off The Brothers	(i)	254	252	207
	(ii)	24	25	24
The waters off Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau	(i)	254	252	207
	(ii)	24	25	24

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

Item	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Number of complaints received	128	162	193
Number of illegal fishing cases found during patrols or joint operations (number of cases in which no arrest was successfully made)	81 (74)	65 (58)	91 (83)
Number of successful arrests (number of persons arrested)	7 (15)	7 (16)	8 (23)

Item	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Number of successful prosecutions (number of persons successfully prosecuted)	7 (15)	6 (11)	7 (20)
The minimum and maximum penalties imposed	A fine of \$1,000; imprisonment for 2 to 6 weeks	A fine of \$1,000 to \$10,000	A fine of \$2,000 to \$4,000; imprisonment for 2 to 6 weeks
Number of repeat offences (number of repeat offenders)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

- (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 7 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 to 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 the Department obtain more information on illegal fishing to formulate more effective and targeted enforcement operations, with a view to enhancing the efficiency of enforcement actions at sea. AFCD has also conducted a feasibility study on the use of artificial intelligence for analysing information such as satellite positioning and videos and the use of unmanned aircraft for detecting illegal fishing activities.

- (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)
2021-22	24.1	34
2022-23	27.0	35
2023-24 (revised estimate)	32.2	43

- (g) AFCD has deployed 7 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	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Shrimp trawling	45	55.5	43	66.2	56	61.5
Hang trawling	2	2.5	4	6.2	15	16.5
Stern trawling	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Pair trawling	8	9.8	3	4.6	8	8.8
Purse seining	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Gill netting	17	21.0	12	18.4	6	6.6
Cage trapping	2	2.5	3	4.6	3	3.3
Long lining	3	3.7	0	0.0	1	1.1
Set netting	2	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Others	2	2.5	0	0.0	2	2.2
Total	81	100.0	65	100.0	91	100.0

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)032

(Question Serial No. 0983)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) the number of birds imported by bird species (in particular those endangered species which require possession licences) and place of import over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (b) the number of shops with animal trader licences over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

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

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

Year	Number of bird trader licences issued
2021	34
2022	38
2023	36

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

origin, requires a possession licence (PL) for each keeping premises if the birds concerned are kept for commercial purposes. A PL can cover more than 1 species/individual. Currently, there are a total of 14 valid PLs issued in respect of live endangered birds, covering 208 individuals of 25 species.

The numbers of PLs issued by AFCD (including licences renewed) covering live endangered birds in 2021, 2022 and 2023 were 3, 4 and 1 respectively.

Birds Imported into Hong Kong from 2021 to 2023

Year	Species	Quantity (head)	Country/place of export
2021 [^]	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	1 336	Malaysia
	<i>Amazona aestiva</i> *	14	Belgium
	<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i> *	12	Belgium
	<i>Ara ararauna</i> *	5	Belgium
	<i>Ara ararauna</i> × <i>Ara chloropterus</i> *	2	Belgium
	<i>Ara chloropterus</i> *	3	Belgium
	<i>Calyptorhynchus banksii</i> *	1	Belgium
	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	1 570	Malaysia
	<i>Eclectus roratus</i> *	3	Taiwan
	<i>Eolophus roseicapilla</i> *	10	Belgium
	<i>Erythrura gouldiae</i>	200	Malaysia
	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>	400	Mali
	<i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>	400	Mali
	<i>Lonchura atricapilla</i>	6 400	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura maja</i>	8 050	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura malabarica</i>	1 200	Malaysia, Mali
	<i>Lonchura malacca</i>	300	Malaysia
	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	10 050	Malaysia
	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	1 070	Malaysia
	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i> *	2	Belgium
	<i>Nymphicus hollandicus</i>	1 145	Malaysia
	<i>Passer luteus</i>	500	Guinea
	<i>Pionites leucogaster</i> *	13	Belgium
	<i>Psittacus erithacus</i> *	7	The Philippines
	<i>Quelea quelea</i>	500	Guinea
	<i>Serinus canaria</i>	350	Malaysia
	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i>	1 300	Guinea, Mali
	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	700	Guinea, Mali
<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	200	Mali	
<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	150	Mali	
2022 [^]	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	320	Malaysia
	<i>Amandava subflava</i>	100	Kenya
	<i>Amazona farinose</i> *	2	Belgium
	<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i> *	2	Belgium
	<i>Ara ararauna</i> *	2	Belgium
	<i>Ara ararauna</i> × <i>Ara chloropterus</i> *	1	Belgium
	<i>Ara chloropterus</i> *	3	Belgium
	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>	150	Kenya
	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	730	Malaysia

Year	Species	Quantity (head)	Country/place of export
	<i>Eolophus roseicapilla</i> *	18	Belgium
	<i>Erythrura gouldiae</i>	200	Malaysia
	<i>Euplectes orix</i>	100	Kenya
	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>	100	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis iris</i>	16	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>	16	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>	16	Kenya
	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	780	Malaysia, Uzbekistan
	<i>Neochmia ruficauda</i>	40	Malaysia
	<i>Nymphicus hollandicus</i>	768	Malaysia, Uzbekistan
	<i>Poephila acuticauda</i>	50	Malaysia
	<i>Psittacus erithacus</i> *	3	Singapore
	<i>Pyrrhura molinae</i> *	30	Taiwan
	<i>Serinus canaria</i>	109	Belgium, Malaysia
	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i>	6 240	Guinea, Singapore, Kenya
	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	4 160	Guinea, Kenya
	<i>Taeniopygia bichenovii</i>	20	Malaysia
<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	130	Guinea	
2023	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	20	Belgium
	<i>Amandava subflava</i>	510	Kenya
	<i>Amazona aestiva</i> *	37	Belgium
	<i>Amazona farinosa</i> *	3	Belgium
	<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i> *	22	Belgium, Thailand
	<i>Ara ararauna</i> × <i>Ara chloropterus</i> *	8	Belgium
	<i>Ara ararauna</i> *	18	Belgium, Thailand
	<i>Ara chloropterus</i> *	14	Belgium
	<i>Cacatua alba</i> *	2	Thailand
	<i>Cacatua galerita</i> *	3	Belgium, Thailand
	<i>Cacatua leadbeateri</i> *	17	Belgium
	<i>Calyptorhynchus banksii</i> *	1	Belgium
	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>	20	Kenya
	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	870	Malaysia
	<i>Crithagra flaviventris</i>	200	Lebanon
	<i>Crithagra mozambicus</i>	8 100	Mozambique
	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	4	Malaysia
	<i>Eclectus roratus</i> *	3	Belgium
	<i>Eolophus roseicapilla</i> *	29	Belgium
	<i>Eolophus roseicapillus</i> *	15	Belgium
	<i>Euplectes afer</i>	50	Kenya
	<i>Euplectes orix</i>	50	Kenya
	<i>Lagonosticta larvata</i>	70	Kenya
<i>Lagonosticta rubricata</i>	100	Kenya	
<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>	150	Kenya	

Year	Species	Quantity (head)	Country/place of export
	<i>Lamprotornis caudatus</i>	10	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis iris</i>	40	Kenya
	<i>Lamprotornis splendides</i>	20	Kenya
	<i>Lonchura bicolor</i>	150	Kenya
	<i>Mandingoa nitidula</i>	160	Kenya
	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	20	Belgium
	<i>Musophaga violacea</i>	6	Kenya
	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i> *	221	Belgium
	<i>Neopsephotus bourkii</i> *	8	Belgium
	<i>Pionites leucogaster</i> *	19	Belgium, Thailand
	<i>Pionites melanocephalus</i> *	1	Thailand
	<i>Pionus chalcopterus</i> *	3	Belgium
	<i>Ploceus olivaceiceps</i>	30	Kenya
	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i> *	1	Belgium
	<i>Pteroglossus aracari</i> *	1	Belgium
	<i>Pyrenestes sanguineus swainson</i>	210	Kenya
	<i>Quelea erythrops</i>	50	Kenya
	<i>Serinus atrogularis</i>	400	Kenya
	<i>Serinus canaria</i>	120	Belgium
	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i>	6 400	Kenya
	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	5 900	Kenya, Lebanon
	<i>Serinus sulphuratus</i>	400	Kenya
	<i>Spermophaga haematina</i>	110	Kenya
	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	600	Kenya
	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>	100	Kenya
	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	150	Kenya
	<i>Zosterops xanthochroa</i>	50	Kenya

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

^ Updated figures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)033****(Question Serial No. 0984)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical ServicesControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Fish farmers shall obtain permits issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) before temporarily relocating their fish rafts out of the fish culture zones (FCZs). Regarding this matter, please advise of the number of applications and the permits concerned that were issued by AFCD over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24). Please set out the numbers with a breakdown by the fish raft in various FCZs.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)Reply:

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

Year	Permits for temporary relocation of fish rafts		
	Number of applications	Number of permits issued	FCZ involved
2021-22	3	3	Kau Sai FCZ
2022-23	6	6	Kau Sai FCZ
2023-24 (as at end Feb 2024)	3	3	Kau Sai FCZ

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)034

(Question Serial No. 3292)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (c) the number of fishing vessels applying for Mainland deckhands with a breakdown by type over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24).

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

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)
2021-22	2.6	3
2022-23	2.2	3
2023-24 (revised estimate)	1.9	3

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

Vessel type	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24*	
	Number of [#]					
	Applications	Deckhands involved	Applications	Deckhands involved	Applications	Deckhands involved
Pair trawler	40 (40)	210	114 (112)	740	39 (36)	239
Stern trawler	46 (44)	217	66 (66)	339	37 (37)	188
Shrimp trawler	52 (51)	257	55 (53)	287	44 (44)	237
Hang trawler	23 (23)	137	21 (21)	123	23 (23)	137
Purse seiner with light and purse seiner	55 (54)	415	78 (74)	574	53 (53)	399
Liner and gill netter	80 (77)	524	82 (77)	557	82 (82)	558
Fish carrier	266 (265)	1 798	225 (223)	1 489	193 (192)	1 360
Other fishing vessels	14 (14)	96	19 (18)	129	17 (16)	107
Total	576 (568)	3 654	660 (644)	4 238	488 (483)	3 225

* As at February 2024

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 5, 1 and 6 cases contravening the rules of the Scheme in 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 (as at February 2024) 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)035

(Question Serial No. 0047)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- a. with regard to the number of accredited fish farms as stated in the document that there was an increase of 10 farms in both 2022 and 2023 and the expected increase was also by 10 in 2024, whether the Government would consider a larger year-on-year increase; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;
- b. the details and the expected effectiveness of the promotion of urban farming and leisure farming; and
- c. whether the application guidelines for the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund 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.: 1)

Reply:

- a. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme (the Scheme) in 2005 which is voluntary in nature. The Scheme aims to promote sustainable development of the local aquaculture industry and increase the competitiveness of local fisheries products by enhancing the quality of local fisheries products and setting up a product quality assurance system.

Having assessed the conditions of the industry and considered the numbers of newly added accredited fish farms in the past, AFCD will set the target number of accredited fish farms for each year. During routine activities such as inspection of fish farms and regular talks, AFCD will encourage fish farmers to join the Scheme, so as to enhance the engagement of accredited fish farms and brand promotion. AFCD has also set up dedicated channels for the Scheme on its website and various social media and update information about the Scheme regularly.

- b. The Government's whole concept of promoting urban farming is to integrate commercial agriculture into urban lives, to produce and supply high quality and fresh agricultural products for the public, and to provide green landscapes and modernised farming experience while improving the quality and liveability of urban life. A pilot project on modernised urban farming within the area of Ma On Shan Sai Sha Road Garden will start operation in the latter half of 2024. The Government will also set up modern hydroponic farm-cum-stall on suitable rooftops of public markets and introduce the concept of "harvest-to-sale", the first of which will be set up in the Tin Shui Wai Public Market under construction. Moreover, the Government is planning to introduce urban farming elements into the planning stage of new development areas with a view to developing urban farming through a multi-pronged approach.

To promote the development of leisure farming, AFCD will facilitate the provision of leisure activities by farms engaged in commercial agricultural production as their ancillary business, including co-ordinating with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in setting more lenient food business licence terms for farms selling homegrown products with simple cooking in the first half of 2024. AFCD will provide information of the accredited farms and the associated activities through different channels to facilitate public participation. It will also organise large-scale carnival events to assist local farms in promoting and selling their agricultural products, as well as agriculture-related ancillary activities. AFCD expects that the measures will create diversified room for development for the industry and the public will have more opportunities to experience local farming.

- c. Regarding the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund (the Funds), AFCD implemented a series of enhancement measures in February 2023, which included the establishment of task forces to provide targeted support for all interested applicants before they submit formal applications, including advising them on the refinement of their project proposals and preparation of the necessary documents. The Funds have also further streamlined the application procedures, such as vetting by circulation those general project applications of a simple nature and involving funding of no more than \$2 million, minimising as far as possible the information/documents required from applicants without affecting the vetting requirements, and expediting the financial evaluation 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

(Question Serial No. 1316)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities, etc. to local farmers and fishermen, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) the Government's specific programme, timeframe and estimated establishment arrangement for conducting adaptive and technical studies on the integration of smart farming with modern technology; and
- (b) the details of and the expenditure on the Government's provision of credit support for farmers?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has all along been actively assisting the local agricultural industry in adopting new modes of production and new technologies and steadily promoting mechanised and smart agricultural production. The work includes (i) promotion of organic farming; (ii) development and promotion of new farming techniques, such as multi-layer farming and greenhouse production, to raise productivity; (iii) demonstration of controlled environment hydroponic farming and showcasing the related equipment through the Controlled Environment Hydroponic Research and Development Centre; (iv) introduction of new or improved crop varieties to enhance the quality and competitiveness of local fruits and vegetables; (v) promotion of an integrated pest and disease control management system to reduce crop failure and achieve ecological protection; and (vi) introduction and promotion of the use of various modern farm machinery through the farm machinery and equipment lending services to raise productivity.

AFCD also provides financial support for the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (SADF), which subsidises application-oriented projects with a view to enabling the agricultural industry to enhance their productivity and output or helps farmers switch

to a sustainable or high value-added mode of operations, thereby enhancing the overall competitiveness of the industry. 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, establishment of a seed bank, provision of veterinary consultation services to improve the health and production efficiency of livestock, as well as provision of support to the livestock farming industry in formulating the Guidelines for Architectural Design of Multi-Storey Livestock Farms and conducting feasibility study on the construction of multi-storey livestock farms. The Farm Improvement Scheme set up under SADF provides direct grants to individual farmers for acquisition of small-scale farm machinery, equipment and materials, etc. so as to assist them in using modernised and mechanised equipment and facilities to improve their productivity and operational efficiency.

Moreover, AFCD has established an Agri-Park in Kwu Tung South to help nurture agrotechnology and knowledge of modern farm management. Agri-Park Phase 1 (with an area of about 11 hectares) has progressively commenced operation since late 2022. The remaining agricultural land and infrastructure works are expected to be completed progressively within 2024. The Government is now planning for the development of the first stage of Agri-Park Phase 2 (with an area of about 19 hectares). Meanwhile, to expedite the development of Agri-Park Phase 2, the Government will enable the establishment of a “Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park” (with an area of about 11 hectares) on part of the land in Agri-Park Phase 2, which will be led by a local agricultural organisation through the public-private partnership model and is expected to come into operation in phases starting from late 2024. The Government is also carrying out the consultancy study on Agricultural Priority Areas (APAs) to explore the feasibility of designating relatively large areas of quality agricultural land as APAs and facilitate long-term active farming use through suitable measures, while releasing the remaining agricultural land for other development. The Government plans to consult stakeholders on the recommendations of the consultancy study on APAs in late 2024.

In 2024-25, AFCD estimates that there will be a total of 89 staff members responsible for the work of providing infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice to local farmers. The estimated expenditure is about \$80.12 million.

- (b) The Government provides credit facility to farmers for the purposes of agricultural production and development through 3 loan funds administered by AFCD, namely the J.E. Joseph Trust Fund, the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund and the Vegetable Marketing Organization Loan Fund. As the management of these funds is a part of AFCD’s duty in promoting the sustainable development of the local agricultural industry, there is no separate breakdown of the manpower and expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)037

(Question Serial No. 1741)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Under the legislation of Hong Kong, pets imported from the Mainland to Hong Kong are subject to quarantine of at least 120 days. There are views that the quarantine quota provided by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is in short supply and costly. In this connection, please advise of the following:

- (1) the expenditure on pet quarantine over the past 3 years;
- (2) the revenue generated from pet quarantine for the Government over the past 3 years; and
- (3) whether additional resources will be allocated to optimise the existing measures?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- (1) The expenditure of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) on animal quarantine over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$'000)
2021-22	5,200
2022-23	5,200
2023-24 (revised estimate)	5,000

- (2) The revenue from animal quarantine fees collected by the Government over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Revenue from quarantine fees (\$'000)
2021	680
2022	550
2023	720

- (3) Under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Regulations (Cap. 139A) and the Rabies Regulation (Cap. 421A), AFCD regulates the import of live animals through a permit

system, with a view to safeguarding public and animal health by preventing the importation of animal diseases. Rabies is a contagious disease, causing fatality to mammals (including humans). Since the incubation period can be up to several months, a quarantine period of no less than 120 days is required for cats and dogs imported from places with a higher or uncertain risk of rabies to prevent the transmission of rabies to Hong Kong. AFCD has been closely monitoring and making reference to the announcement of the World Organisation for Animal Health on the latest developments in animal diseases and adjusted the quarantine requirements concerned in a timely manner. As biotechnology has developed in recent years, AFCD is exploring the feasibility of shortening the quarantine period for cats and dogs imported from certain places (including the Mainland) by measures such as rabies vaccination and rabies antibody titer testing, and assessing whether the risk involved is acceptable. The study will soon be completed and we aim to roll out the new measures within this year.

In addition, AFCD's Animal Management and Animal Welfare Building Complex in Kai Tak is expected to come into operation by late 2024. The complex will provide more animal quarantine facilities, thereby shortening the waiting time for quarantine facilities for cats and dogs and enhancing AFCD's quarantine work for imported cats and dogs. AFCD expects to allocate an additional provision of \$1 million to strengthen its quarantine work in 2024-25.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)038

(Question Serial No. 2161)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the operation of the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market (CSWTWPM), please advise of this Committee of the following:

1. the number of stall vendors operating at the CSWTWPM at present, and the annual operational expenses of the market;
2. whether the Government has explored the feasibility of merging wholesale food markets nearby so as to consolidate the resources and reduce operational costs; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons; and
3. given that the Government had intended to relocate the CSWTWPM, whether a relocation schedule is available; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons; and the use of the present site following the relocation.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

1. There are currently 23 wholesalers operating at the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market (CSWTWPM). The revised estimate of the expenditure for market operation is about \$23.82 million for 2023-24.
2. and 3. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is actively working on the consolidation of the CSWTWPM site, with a view to vacating part of the site (about 1.2 hectares) as soon as possible for other purposes. It is expected to be completed within this year. Meanwhile, the Government is considering the relocation of some of the wholesale markets in the urban area (including the CSWTWPM), and is conducting the relevant technical feasibility study. The Government will consider an appropriate relocation plan in the light of the outcome of the study and other factors.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)039

(Question Serial No. 1692)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Among the target items, the target for accredited vegetable farms dropped from 318 to 305 as from 2023; the production volume of culture fisheries dropped from 2 764 tonnes in 2022 to 1 647 tonnes in 2023, and the target for 2024 is 2 300 tonnes, which is still significantly lower than that for 2022. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) the reasons for the decline in the target for accredited vegetable farms, whether the local vegetable production volume will drop as a result, and the projected production volume in the future;
- b) the reasons for the significant decline in the production volume of culture fisheries and the decline in production volume this year as compared to 2022 despite the subsided epidemic; and
- c) the reasons for the continuous decline in the number of new fisheries loan cases over the same period; and whether the decline in the production volume of fish culture farms is related to the labour shortage in the industry; if yes, the details.

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

- a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Vegetable Marketing Organization have jointly run the Accredited Farm Scheme (the Scheme) since 1994, which allows farmers to participate on a voluntary basis. By providing guidance to farmers on the adoption of good horticultural practices and environmentally-friendly production methods as well as proper use of pesticides to improve the quality of vegetables, the Scheme aims to assist the industry in brand-building and promote sustainable development of local agriculture. In recent years, some farmers affected by development plans have closed their farms and withdrawn from the Scheme. Therefore, AFCD has revised the target for accredited farms after assessing the situation of the industry in the coming year.

The Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries formulated by the Government in collaboration with the local agriculture and fisheries industries in 2023 presents the industries' visions for the future sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries. The Government will implement specific measures to enhance the quality, value and productivity of local agricultural and fisheries products. AFCD will progressively promote the adoption of environmentally-friendly and modernised operation modes in local farms and expects the annual production of vegetables to increase significantly to about 60 000 tonnes within 15 years.

- b) and c) The decline in the production volume of culture fisheries in 2023 as compared to 2022 is mainly due to the fact that the production of the industry has not fully recovered after the epidemic. As the gradual recovery of economic activities after the epidemic brings an increase in demand for aquatic products, and the new fish culture zones at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay with a total area of about 440 hectares coming into operation in December 2023, it is believed that the overall production volume of culture fisheries will gradually increase.

The slight decline in the number of new fisheries loan cases in 2023 as compared to 2022 is mainly due to the decrease in the number of applications for fishing moratorium special loans in 2023. The fishing moratorium special loans mainly provide financial support to owners of fishing vessels and ancillary vessels engaging in capture fisheries in Hong Kong to help them prepare for the resumption of operations after the fishing moratorium in the South China Sea. It is believed that the decline in the number of fishing moratorium loan cases in 2023 is due to the high fuel price and other operating costs in recent years, which have caused some Hong Kong fishing vessels to suspend or reduce operations in the South China Sea. Therefore, the demand for fishing moratorium loans, which aim to support the resumption of operations, has decreased.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)040

(Question Serial No. 0029)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In 2024-25, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will focus on strengthening measures for stray animal management. In this connection, would the Government advise of the details of the relevant work and the breakdown of the expenditure?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

In 2024-25, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will implement various measures to strengthen the management of stray animals, which include:

- i) strengthening collaboration with, and providing technical and financial support to animal welfare organisations (AWOs) in rehoming animal and carrying out activities relating to animal management;
- ii) implementing the long-term strategy for the management of stray cattle in collaboration with the relevant AWOs and local communities; and
- iii) liaising with different AWOs to implement preventive management measures for stray animals and proactively promote animal rehoming in new development areas.

In 2024-25, the AFCD has earmarked \$44.6 million for the aforesaid work. A breakdown of the estimated expenditure is tabulated as follows:

Purpose	Expenditure (\$ million)
Management and law enforcement in relation to stray animals (excluding stray cattle)	41.5
Management of stray cattle	3.1

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)041

(Question Serial No. 0030)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Provision for 2024-25 is \$129.2 million (28.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. This is mainly due to the increased provision for operating expenses and the increased cash flow requirement for general non-recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure. There will be a net decrease of three posts in 2024-25. In this connection, would the Government advise of the following:

1. the detailed reasons for the increase of \$129.2 million (28.2%) in the provision and a breakdown of the expenditure; and
2. the annual savings from the net decrease of the 3 posts?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

1. The estimated provision for 2024-25 under Programme (1) is \$129.2 million (or 28.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. This is mainly due to (i) the increased requirement for the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund (\$57.7 million); (ii) the implementation of the project of setting up deep sea cages in new fish culture zones (\$41.3 million); and (iii) the expected filling of some of the vacancies in 2024-25 (\$9.6 million).
2. The net decrease of the 3 posts in 2024-25 will bring annual savings of about \$700,000.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)042

(Question Serial No. 0031)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department conducted 215 inspections daily at government fresh food wholesale markets. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the details relating to the inspection targets, scope and the number of staff members deployed?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) manages 4 wholesale food markets, including Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market, Western Wholesale Food Market, Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market and North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products. Apart from the North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products, the other 3 markets operate on a 24-hour basis. Staff of AFCD and the employees of the security, property management, and cleansing services contractors conduct daily inspections at the markets to ensure smooth operation. The scope of inspections includes market facilities, market stalls, car parks and other common areas, targeting mainly at market users, including tenants and their partners, and car park users. The inspection work at the aforesaid 4 wholesale food markets involves a total of 51 staff members of AFCD. AFCD will monitor the performance of the services contractors' employees and oversee the recycling of food waste, polyfoam, waste paper and plastics in the markets, with a view to ensuring their compliance with contractual requirements.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)043****(Question Serial No. 0494)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale MarketsControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

“Fresh food wholesale markets” have a long history and constitute an integral part of the food supply chain. It is said that the throughput has kept dropping every year. Would the Government advise of the following:

1. the number of “fresh food wholesale markets” managed by the Government and the respective areas;
2. the throughput (in tonnes) of each market and the manpower and expenditure involved in each of the past 3 years; and
3. whether studies and analyses have been conducted to enhance the throughput, improve the facilities of the wholesale markets and promote the application of technology; if yes, the expenditure and additional manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)Reply:

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

Government fresh food wholesale markets	Area (hectares)
Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market	8.8
Western Wholesale Food Market	6.2
Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market	2.6
North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products	1.3

2. The throughputs of the wholesale markets over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Throughput of Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market (tonnes)	Throughput of Western Wholesale Food Market (tonnes)	Throughput of Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market (tonnes)	Throughput of North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products (tonnes)
2021-22	221 566	145 352	7 781	42 792
2022-23	210 376	134 422	7 639	42 946
2023-24 (as at 31 Jan 2024)	185 447	119 761	6 516	35 941

In the staff establishment of AFCD, there are 64 staff members responsible for the management of the 4 wholesale markets. The operational expenditures over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure of Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market (\$ million)	Expenditure of Western Wholesale Food Market (\$ million)	Expenditure of Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market (\$ million)	Expenditure of North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products (\$ million)
2021-22	56.0	53.4	22.3	9.1
2022-23	56.9	54.4	22.0	10.1
2023-24 (revised estimate)	53.4	51.3	23.8	9.6

- The main function of wholesale markets is to provide stalls for renting by fresh food wholesalers and ancillary facilities to enable them to carry out wholesale marketing activities in an effective and orderly manner. Over the past 3 years, the average occupancy rate of stalls in the wholesale markets managed by AFCD reached 99%. AFCD explores how to enhance the management and facilities of the markets with representatives of the tenants regularly. For example, AFCD made use of renewable energy to save energy by installing facilities such as photovoltaic systems and solar water heating systems in Western Wholesale Food Market and North District Temporary Wholesale Market for Agricultural Products in 2022. In addition, AFCD also installed facilities in Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market and Western Wholesale Food Market in 2023 and 2024 respectively, which convert food waste into slurry for electricity generation by the Environmental Protection Department, so as to enhance the efficiency of food waste recycling and reduce the expenditure on food waste transportation. The installation of the renewable energy systems and food waste conversion facilities did not involve additional manpower. The expenditure involved was \$18.21 million and \$2.8 million respectively.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)044

(Question Serial No. 0747)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Government supports the modernisation and sustainable development of the local agricultural industry. Regarding the development of Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) Phase 1, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the current utilisation rate and the types of crops cultivated in Agri-Park Phase 1; whether the Government has adopted measures to enhance the quality and quantity of the agricultural products;
2. with regard to individuals interested in operating in Agri-Park, whether the Government has required the compliance with certain requirements or restrictions; if so, the details; if not, the reasons; and
3. the manpower and expenditure involved in the implementation of Agri-Park Phase 1?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has established an Agricultural Park (Agri-Park) in Kwu Tung South to help nurture agro-technology and knowledge of modernised farm management, as well as promoting agricultural modernisation to enhance productivity. Agri-Park Phase 1 (with an area of about 11 hectares) has progressively commenced operation since late 2022, with the current utilisation rate accounting for about 90% of the area of the arable agricultural land. The remaining agricultural land and infrastructure works are expected to be completed progressively within 2024. At present, there are 15 tenants in Agri-Park Phase 1 engaging in the cultivation of vegetables, including flowering Chinese cabbage, lettuce, Chinese spinach, yard-long bean, bitter cucumber, cabbage, broccoli, corn, pumpkin and modernised greenhouse tomatoes. AFCD provides technical support to farmers in Agri-Park, such as the farm machinery and equipment lending services and relevant training, to encourage them to adopt modernised production modes and technologies, steadily step up to mechanisation and smart agricultural production, produce safe and speciality fresh agricultural products of high quality, and enhance their quality and productivity.

To meet the overall objectives of 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 productivity and quality of agricultural produce. Relevant technical and financial support will be provided by AFCD.

In 2024-25, there are 17 staff members of AFCD responsible for the implementation of Agri-Park and Agricultural Priority Areas, and the estimated expenditure is \$16.21 million. We do not have a breakdown of the relevant expenditure involved in the operation of Agri-Park Phase 1.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1969)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the tourism industry will be encouraged to launch a more diversified portfolio of tourism products. In order to seize the business opportunities in Hong Kong's pet travel services market, the industry often express concerns over the restrictions on the carrying capacity of private aircraft. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of pet flights received, approved and rejected each month over the past 2 years;
2. the number of pets carried by private aircraft received, approved and rejected each month over the past 2 years; and
3. whether consideration will be given to raising the maximum pet carrying capacity per private aircraft flight to promote pet travel; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) regulates the import of live animals through a permit system in accordance with the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Regulations (Cap. 139A) and the Rabies Regulation (Cap. 421A), with a view to safeguarding public and animal health by preventing the importation of animal diseases. Any person who import animals, regardless of whether the animals are carried by private aircraft or not, must first obtain an import permit and comply with the permit terms in addition to making reference to the relevant regulations of the International Air Transport Association, with a view to ensuring that the welfare needs of the animals concerned can be taken care of. The AFCD does not impose additional restrictions on the import of animals by private aircraft. It has established a mechanism jointly with the Hong Kong Business Aviation Centre and other institutions to facilitate customs clearance for animals upon arrival by private aircraft.

As for export, the AFCD does not regulate or restrict the export of animals by private aircraft or otherwise. Nevertheless, before exporting animals, a person must acquire an

understanding of and comply with the requirements and regulations on import of animals stipulated by the destination countries/regions.

The AFCD has not rejected any application for import permit for animals carried by private aircraft in the past 2 years. The number of animals imported by private aircraft and the number of relevant flights over the past 2 years are tabulated as follows:

Year Month	2022		2023	
	No. of imported animals	No. of flights	No. of imported animals	No. of flights
January	0	0	2	1
February	0	0	2	2
March	0	0	14	4
April	0	0	6	1
May	0	0	2	2
June	1	1	4	1
July	2	1	7	1
August	0	0	7	3
September	3	2	3	2
October	0	0	2	1
November	0	0	17	2
December	0	0	8	1
Total	6	4	74	21

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)140

(Question Serial No. 3477)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (1) the distribution of those sites currently designated as (i) livestock waste prohibition areas, (ii) livestock waste control areas and (iii) livestock waste restriction areas (mark the locations and boundaries of such sites in different colours on a map); the respective numbers of (i) pig farms and (ii) chicken farms operating in those 3 types of areas in each of the past 5 years (2019-20 to 2023-24); 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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.: 48)

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:

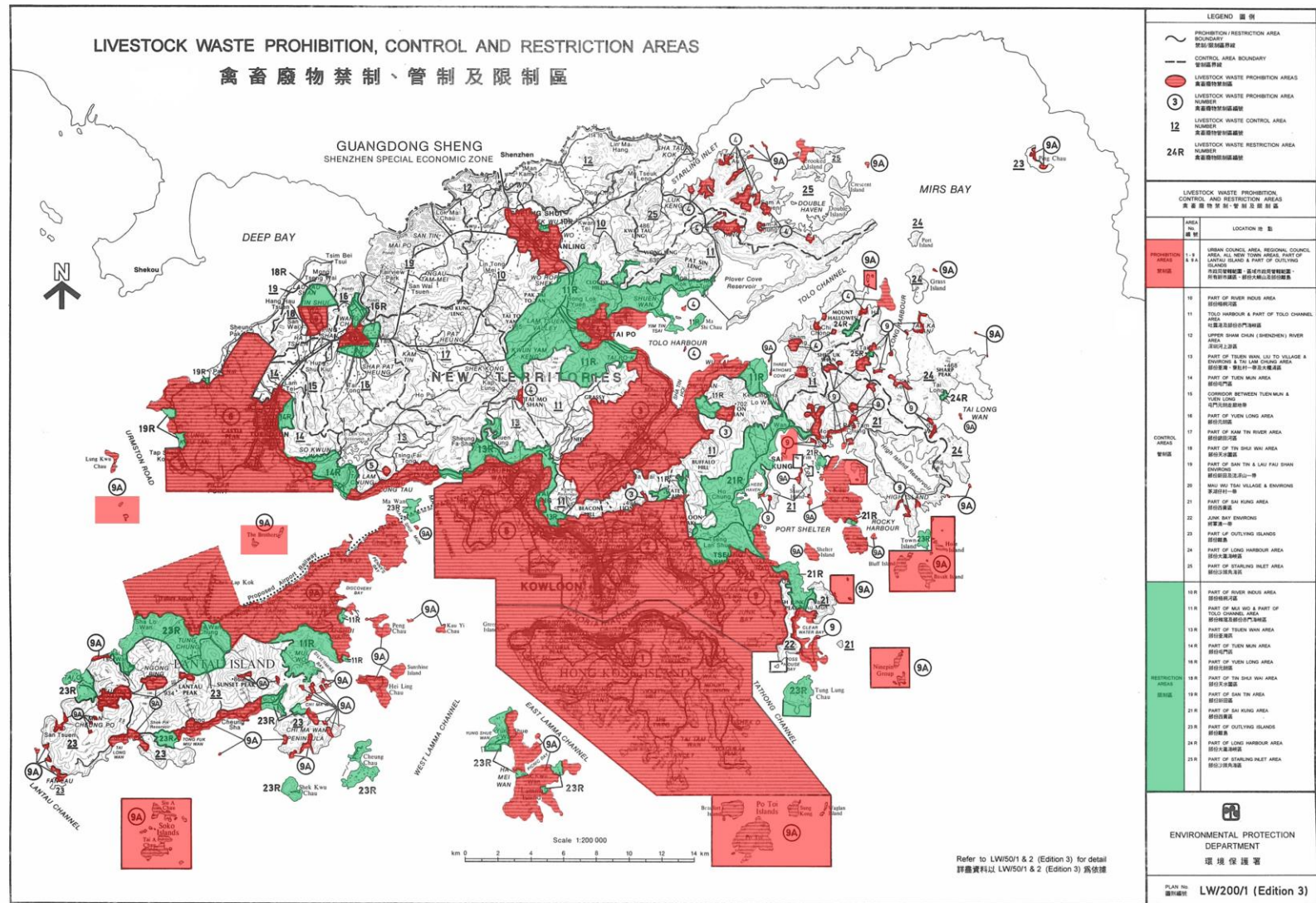
Year	Livestock waste prohibition areas		Livestock waste control areas		Livestock waste restriction areas	
	Pig farms	Chicken farms	Pig farms	Chicken farms	Pig farms	Chicken farms
2019	0	0	42	26	1	3
2020	0	0	42	26	1	3
2021	0	0	42	26	1	3
2022	0	0	42	26	1	3
2023	0	0	42	26	1	3

- (2) and (3) Over the past 3 financial years (2021-22 to 2023-24), no livestock farm was cleared due to government development projects. For persons affected by government development projects, the Government will provide them with 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 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. The size of each site is about 1 to 2 hectares. DEVB will co-ordinate relevant departments in conducting feasibility studies on the infrastructure and formation works for the sites and be responsible for carrying out the relevant works. Upon completion of the works, the sites will be handed over to AFCD for taking forward the reprovisioning arrangement with the industry which involves development of multi-storey livestock farms.

Moreover, the Government enhanced the parameter 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)141****(Question Serial No. 3480)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical ServicesControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

- (a) the details of the work, and the respective expenditure and manpower involved in the Government's regulation and technical services for the flower cultivation industry in each of the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (c) the total value and quantity of local production and import of flowers respectively over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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.: 51)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)
2021-22	10.1	18
2022-23	8.9	18
2023-24 (revised estimate)	9.1	18

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

In 2024-25, AFCD will continue to provide the above services to crop farmers (including flower farmers) with a similar level of resources as in 2023-24.

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

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

Year	Value of local production (\$ million)	Value of net imports (\$ million)
2021	152	284
2022	160	257
2023	173	251

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)142

(Question Serial No. 3481)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The estimated figure of claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia payment is 1 000 in 2024. What are the works projects involved?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 52)

Reply:

The estimated number of claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia payment in 2024 is mainly related to fishermen who are affected by marine works projects in the north-eastern waters of Hong Kong and with vessels not exceeding 15 metres in length. The major works projects involved include the remaining engineering infrastructure works for Pak Shek Kok Development, reconstruction of Sha Tau Kok public pier, development of a bathing beach at Lung Mei, Tai Po, expansion of Sha Tau Kok sewage treatment works, phase 1, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)143

(Question Serial No. 3483)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24), 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 54)

Reply:

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

Name of marine park/ marine reserve	Number of relevant permits			
	First year upon establishment	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve ⁽ⁱ⁾	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP) ^{(ii) (iii)}	409	2	N/A	N/A
Yan Chau Tong Marine Park (YCTMP) ^{(ii) (iii)}	409	2	N/A	N/A
Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (SCLKCMP) ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾	208	1	N/A	N/A
Tung Ping Chau Marine Park (TPCMP) ^{(ii) (iii)}	280	1	N/A	N/A
The Brothers Marine Park ^(iv)	472	1 043	1 419	1 549
Southwest Lantau Marine Park (SWLMP) ^(iv)	742	1 002	1 407	1 543
South Lantau Marine Park (SLMP) ^{(iv) (v)}	1 384	N/A	1 384	1 518

(i) There is no fishing permit issued to fishing vessels for the Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve as commercial fishing is banned in the marine reserve.

(ii) Some fishing permits cover HHWMP, YCTMP and/or TPCMP concurrently.

(iii) Under the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks, commercial fishing in the 4 specified marine parks (namely HHWMP, YCTMP, SCLKCMP and TPCMP) has been fully banned since 1 April 2022. All permit holders have surrendered their fishing permits.

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

(v) SLMP was designated on 30 June 2022.

(c) The number of 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 (\$)
2021-22	5	5,600
2022-23	11	13,200
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	10*	2,500*

* Including 7 cases of prosecution in progress.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) set up a sea enforcement team to focus on combating 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)
2021-22	24.1	34
2022-23	27.0	35
2023-24 (revised estimate)	32.2	43

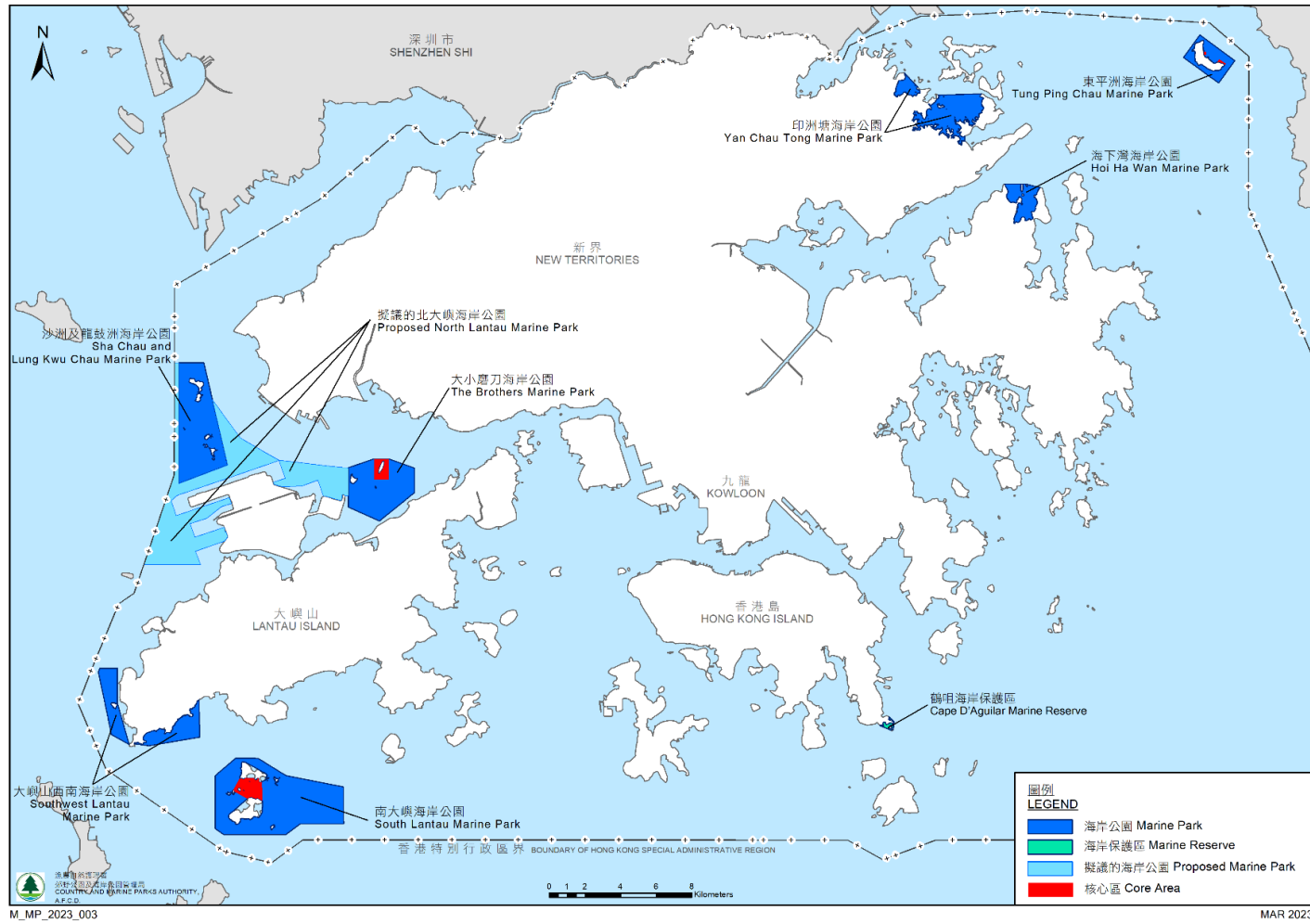
AFCD does not keep a breakdown of the expenditure and manpower involved in combating illegal fishing activities in marine parks.

- (e) Over the past 3 years, the sea enforcement team of AFCD deployed 7 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 is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of patrols
2021-22	3 285
2022-23	3 410
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	3 222

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
Proposed North Lantau Marine Park	Waters enclosing the airport in northern Lantau	2 400	0	Q4 2024 (Tentative)



- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)144

(Question Serial No. 3488)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: Not Specified

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

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

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 59)

Reply:

Hong Kong waters are generally available for fishing with the use of fishing vessels, except in certain areas such as the core areas of marine parks, 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)145

(Question Serial No. 3489)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24) (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24):
 - 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24).

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

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 2023. 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)		
	2021	2022	2023
North	272	248	252
Yuen Long	263	260	250
Tai Po	91	91	90
Tuen Mun	44	44	46
Islands	33	33	33
Sai Kung	24	24	24
Tsuen Wan	19	18	19
Others	17	15	15
Total	763	733	729

- (b) AFCD operates the Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme (ALRS) through bringing owners of agricultural land and interested farmers together to work out leasing agreements for the agricultural land. When rehabilitation begins, AFCD provides cultivation tiller for rehabilitation and farm machinery and equipment lending services, as well as technical 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)
2021-22	0.6	1
2022-23	0.6	1
2023-24 (revised estimate)	0.6	1

Relevant statistics on the cases handled under ALRS

Year	2021	2022	2023
Number of landowners participating in ALRS	27	23	19
Number of new applications/land area involved (hectares)	73/7.8	88/11.7	40/3.0
Number of successful cases	25	16	18
- Total land area involved (hectares)	2.1	1.6	1.3
- Range of annual rent (per dau chung*)	\$1 to \$11,875	\$1 to \$48,000	\$769 to \$105,000
- Average waiting time (year)	2.8	5.3	5.3
Number of applications on the waiting list as at year-end/land area involved (hectares)	525/89.3	516/83.3	479/68.3

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

The Special Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme (SALRS) is a separate scheme introduced by the Government in relation to New Development Area (NDA) projects to provide an additional option to affected eligible farmers to resume farming elsewhere. 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 2024, 8 pieces of agricultural land with a total area of 5 900 m² have been leased to/reserved for individual farmers affected by government development projects, while the 2 remaining pieces of agricultural land are pending allocation. At present, the annual rent of agricultural land in Wa Shan and Ma Tso Lung is about \$810 per dau chung. Lodging and storage units are also available for rent at an annual rate of \$3,265 and \$1,525 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)
2021-22	13.8	22
2022-23	20.6	19
2023-24 (revised estimate)	19.4	24

- (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. The remaining agricultural land and infrastructure works are expected to be completed progressively within 2024. The Government is now planning for the development of the first stage of Agri-Park Phase 2 (with an area of about 19 hectares). Meanwhile, to expedite the development of Agri-Park Phase 2, the Government will enable the establishment of a Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park (with an area of about 11 hectares) on part of the land in Agri-Park Phase 2, which will be led by a local agricultural organisation through a public-private partnership model and is expected to come into operation in phases starting from late 2024. The Government is also carrying out the consultancy study on APAs to explore the feasibility of designating relatively large areas of quality agricultural land as APAs and facilitate long-term active farming use through suitable measures, while releasing the remaining agricultural land for other development. The Government plans to consult stakeholders on the recommendations of the consultancy study on APAs within 2024.
- (e) AFCD promotes the sustainable development of local agriculture through measures such as (i) developing new farming techniques to raise productivity; (ii) introducing new and improved crop varieties for local cultivation; (iii) promoting leisure farming and organic farming; (iv) assisting in 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)
2021-22	77.3	126
2022-23	78.6	118
2023-24 (revised estimate)	80.9	124

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)146

(Question Serial No. 3492)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24) 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24) and the details.

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

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)147

(Question Serial No. 3493)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

What were/will be the Government's work, staff establishment and expenditure for improving marketing of agricultural and fisheries products over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) and in the future?

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 64)

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 the annual FarmFest and Local Organic Watermelon Festival, 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). AFCD also co-organised with FMO/VMO an array of carnival activities themed on local agricultural and fisheries delicacies (including Lok Fu Fishermen's and Farmers' Market and National Day Celebration Carnival at Yuen Long FarmKet) between June 2023 and January 2024 to showcase and sell local premium agricultural and fisheries products and promote the sustainable development of the local agricultural and fisheries industries. To facilitate consumers in purchasing local agricultural and fisheries products, AFCD and FMO/VMO have jointly developed the Local Fresh mobile app and set up the corresponding shopping website. In recent years, AFCD and FMO/VMO have also set up Local Fresh stores at suitable locations to provide physical sales platforms for local agricultural and fisheries products and organised holiday bazaars at the store on a regular basis to enable farmers and fishermen to promote their products directly, build their brands and increase their incomes. AFCD also implements the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme and Accredited Farm Scheme to build up a brand name of quality and safety for local agricultural and fisheries products so as to enhance the competitiveness of the industries.

Last year, AFCD and FMO also co-operated with the industry and research institutes in developing a new product "Cherry Wood Smoked Pompano" by utilising local Pompanos and

vacuum skin packaging technology, and favourable market responses were received. AFCD and FMO/VMO will continue to develop locally processed products with characteristics so as to add value to local agricultural and fisheries products. AFCD also strengthens support for fishermen and farmers through funded projects under the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund, such as promoting organic certification, funding the operation of organic farmers' markets, facilitating matching and co-operation between fish farmers and the catering trade and assisting farmers with the grading of agricultural products in marketing, in particular, the promotion of local agricultural and fisheries products in the market through branding, group promotion and advertising.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)148

(Question Serial No. 3609)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Over the years, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has been implementing the Mainland Fishermen Deckhands Scheme (the Scheme) in collaboration with the Immigration Department to alleviate the manpower shortage in the capture fisheries. The Scheme enables a maximum of 7 200 Mainland deckhands to enter Hong Kong on board fishing vessels. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the number of applicants applying for the Scheme to arrange for Mainland deckhands to enter Hong Kong and help the owners of fishing vessels unload fish catches at wholesale fish markets in each of the past 3 years;
2. the number of Mainland deckhands arranged under the Scheme to enter Hong Kong and help the owners of fishing vessels unload fish catches at wholesale fish markets in each of the past 3 years;
3. the number of Mainland deckhands who were found working illegally in Hong Kong in each of the past 3 years; and
4. the number of applicants convicted by court and resulted in the cancellation of the deckhand quota allocated to the vessel owner/master in each of the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 119)

Reply:

1. and 2. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) implements the Mainland Fishermen Deckhands Scheme (the Scheme) in collaboration with the Immigration Department to alleviate the manpower shortage in the capture fisheries. The number of applications and Mainland deckhand quotas approved over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications	Mainland deckhand quota approved
2021-22	576	3 153
2022-23	660	4 223
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	488	3 245

AFCD is mainly responsible for quota approval and does not keep the actual figures of Mainland deckhands entering Hong Kong.

3. and 4. If a Mainland deckhand or a vessel owner/master is found participating in any illegal acts (such as using the vessels for selling marked oil, smuggling, illegal fishing, etc.), upon conviction by the court and confirmation of contravention of the relevant rules of the Scheme, AFCD will cancel the Mainland deckhand quota allocated to the quota holder and will not consider his/her application for Mainland deckhand quota for 1 year. If he/she is found contravening the rules of the Scheme again, AFCD will not consider his/her application for Mainland deckhand quota for 2 years. Over the past 3 years (2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 (as at February 2024)), there were 5, 1 and 6 cases of cancellation of Mainland deckhand quota respectively. In addition, according to the information provided by the relevant law enforcement agency, over the past 3 years, 1 Mainland deckhand was found working illegally in Hong Kong in 2022-23 and the deckhand concerned was prohibited from joining the Scheme, while there were no such cases in 2021-22 and 2023-24 (as at February 2024).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)149

(Question Serial No. 3864)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

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

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In September 2023, the Home Affairs Department set up dedicated help desks at the 18 districts to assist members of the public with financial difficulties distressed by Typhoon Saola and torrential rain to fill in application forms for 5 emergency relief funds provided by government departments and the major charity groups. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. among the applications received at the dedicated help desks specially set up on that occasion, the number of applications for the emergency relief fund approved by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department;
2. among the applications received at the dedicated help desks specially set up on that occasion, the amount of emergency relief fund approved by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department; and
3. during the emergency relief exercise, whether the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has detected any suspected fraud cases which have to be referred to law enforcement agencies for follow-up?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 156)

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) received and approved a total of 161 applications for the primary producer grants under the Emergency Relief Fund which were submitted via the dedicated help desks specially set up by the Home Affairs Department, involving a total amount of about \$1.5 million. In processing the applications, the AFCD has not detected any suspected fraud cases which have to be referred to law enforcement agencies for follow-up.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)001****(Question Serial No. 0893)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

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

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)Reply:

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

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Percentage of the overall departmental expenditure (%)
2019-20	26	14.5	0.9
2020-21	32	17.8	0.9
2021-22	32	19.2	1.0
2022-23	34	22.3	1.1
2023-24 (revised estimate)	33	21.8	1.1

- (2) The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) in late 2017 to administer contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilise wild pigs captured and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. However, the AFCD's investigations revealed that the progress of administering contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food from people even after being relocated to the countryside. To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the AFCD has implemented new measures since November 2021 to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs, which pose potential danger or cause nuisance to members of the public, at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about wild pig sightings in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments. During the capture operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of a 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	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Apr	9	11	13	12	12
May	8	14	16	7	21
Jun	10	16	13	6	11
Jul	21	4	17	11	16
Aug	9	6	21	13	32
Sep	14	16	30	24	20
Oct	16	22	16	28	38
Nov	21	22	22	20	46
Dec	13	14	11	19	28
Jan	7	13	19	10	45
Feb	7	16	8	20	20
Mar	16	24	5	17	Data not yet available
Total	151	178	191	187	289

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	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
District					
Islands	0	0	1	0	0
Kwai Tsing	1	4	4	4	1
North	6	8	10	3	9
Sai Kung	21	27	23	28	39
Sha Tin	20	16	13	17	23
Tai Po	4	16	16	10	25
Tsuen Wan	9	4	7	6	18
Tuen Mun	4	2	1	3	18
Yuen Long	1	4	3	1	4
Kowloon City	1	2	0	0	0
Kwun Tong	1	1	0	6	4
Sham Shui Po	4	0	2	3	10
Wong Tai Sin	3	3	1	4	3
Yau Tsim Mong	0	0	1	0	1
Central and Western	12	19	26	23	37
Eastern	5	24	31	31	24
Southern	50	39	45	40	47
Wan Chai	9	9	7	8	26
Total	151	178	191	187	289

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

Year	Number of wild pigs		
	Captured	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised	Humanely dispatched*
2019-20	293	106	14
2020-21	344	165	26
2021-22	370	109	105
2022-23	378	The CCRP has ceased.	361
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	528		515

* Including wild pigs humanely dispatched due to injury.

(5) The AFCD has all along been striving to educate the public and appeal to them not to feed wild animals. It has commissioned the Hong Kong Ocean Park Conservation Foundation to provide eco-educational activities and guided tours at the place at which the feeding of any wild animal is prohibited (Feeding Ban Area) designated under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance) since 2018, and extended the publicity and educational activities to kindergartens, primary schools and communities near feeding black spots since

2019, with a view to educating public members of various age groups, especially students, on concepts about preventing wild animal nuisance and no-feeding of wild animals. Starting from November 2021, the AFCD has also rolled out a new round of public education and publicity campaign, which includes uploading promotional and educational information on social media, and putting up posters on public transport and at stations and stops, thereby strengthening public education on no-feeding of wild pigs and the risk associated with feeding wild pigs through diverse channels. The expenditure on publicity and education to the public on no-feeding of wild animals by the AFCD over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Percentage of the overall departmental expenditure (%)
2019-20	2.1	0.1
2020-21	3.2	0.2
2021-22	5.0	0.3
2022-23	11.2	0.6
2023-24 (revised estimate)	10.9	0.5

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

Year	Number of reports	Number of prosecutions instituted^{*#}	Number of successful prosecutions[#]	Fine (\$)
2019-20	6	26	28	1,500-2,000
2020-21	32	50	31	300-2,000
2021-22	48	120	90	200-1,500
2022-23	109	106	79	300-1,500
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	187	153	133	250-3,000

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

Each prosecution involved 1 person.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)002****(Question Serial No. 2396)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department indicated that it would implement measures to enhance management and protection of wild animals in 2024-25, including enhancement in education and publicity and review on relevant legislation and codes, to enhance protection of marine animals. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of cetaceans stranding and death cases in Hong Kong waters over the past 3 years;
2. the expenditure of the Government on promoting the protection of marine animals over the past 3 years;
3. how to enhance education and publicity on the protection of marine animals in future and the expenditure to be involved; and
4. whether consideration has been given to adjusting the size of marine protected areas in Hong Kong to enhance protection of marine animals; if yes, the details?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)Reply:

1. The number of cetacean stranding and death cases in Hong Kong waters over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of cetacean stranding and death cases		
	Local species*	Non-local species	Total
2021	26	6	32
2022	22	3	25
2023	24	1	25

* Local species refer to Chinese white dolphins and finless porpoises.

2. The recurrent expenditure of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) involved in promoting marine life protection over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2021-22	5.78
2022-23	7.82
2023-24 (revised estimate)	7.04

3. The AFCD always attaches great importance to the education, promotion and publicity work on marine life protection. In future, the AFCD will continue to raise public awareness of marine life protection through various channels, including marine eco-tours and field trips, exhibitions and workshops on ecological conservation, public and school talks, loan services for marine ecology exhibition panels, school visits, Marine Parks Ambassador services and citizen scientist activities. Between January and March 2024, the AFCD launched the Marine Wildlife Appreciation Festival and conducted a series of activities including panel exhibition, education booths and workshops, education talks and video broadcast at Island House Conservation Studies Centre of World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong, Ocean Park Hong Kong, Hoi Ha Visitor Centre and shopping arcades with a view to disseminating the messages of respect, care and appreciation for marine wildlife to the public. The estimated expenditure to be involved in education and publicity on the protection of marine animals for 2024-25 is about \$7 million.

4. To further protect the important marine animals (including Chinese white dolphins and finless porpoises) in Hong Kong waters, the Government has in recent years designated a number of marine parks in the southwestern waters of Hong Kong to protect their habitats, including the designation of the Southwest Lantau Marine Park and the South Lantau Marine Park in April 2020 and June 2022 respectively. In addition, the Government is now going through the relevant statutory procedures for the designation of the new North Lantau Marine Park (NLMP) and the relevant procedures are expected to be completed within 2024. The NLMP will be connected with the nearby Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park and The Brothers Marine Park to form an interconnected network of marine protected areas in the northern Lantau waters, thereby enhancing the protection of marine animals. Upon establishment of the NLMP, the total size of marine protected areas in Hong Kong (including marine parks and marine reserve) will increase from the existing 6 117 hectares to 8 517 hectares.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)003

(Question Serial No. 0979)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

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

- (a) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24), 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24), 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24), the amount of subventions granted to the management agreement projects under the Environment and Conservation Fund and the number of participating fish farmers as well as the figure and percentage of the fish ponds taken up in the total area of fish ponds in the Ramsar Site; and
- (e) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), 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.: 32)

Reply:

- (a) According to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance), no person shall, except in accordance with a special permit, wilfully disturb or hunt any protected wild animal, including all wild birds. Over the past 3 years (as at February 2024), the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) instituted prosecution in a total of 551 cases for contravening the Ordinance and a total of 458

cases were convicted. During the same period, the AFCD received 20 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 2024), 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 \$400,000 in total. No applications for low-interest loans for installing bird preventive netting or other measures were received.
- (c) The AFCD understood the concern of farmers and fish farmers over their loss due to predation by wild birds in farmland and fish ponds. 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 wild 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 wild 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 wild bird predation in their farmland and fish ponds.

- (d) There were 2 Nature Conservation Management Agreement projects conducted during the period from March 2021 to February 2024 in the Ramsar Site and Deep Bay Wetland outside Ramsar Site respectively with funding from the Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme. Details of these projects in the past 3 years (up to February 2024) 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	81
Area of fish ponds engaged (hectares)	268	267
Total area of eligible fish ponds (hectares)*	293	271
Percentage of area of fish ponds engaged in total area of eligible fish ponds (%)	91	99
(2) Deep Bay Wetland outside Ramsar Site		
Total approved budget (\$)	9,347,368	10,296,020
Number of fish pond operators engaged	107	86
Area of fish ponds engaged (hectares)	309	254
Total area of eligible fish ponds (hectares)*	403	308
Percentage of area of fish ponds engaged in total area of eligible fish ponds (%)	77	82

* Eligible fish ponds are, as per the basic criterion, those registered under the AFCD's Voluntary Registration Scheme, subject to their actual circumstances.

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

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)004

(Question Serial No. 1382)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

As the pandemic subsided, the number of tourists in Hong Kong has been increasing. The remarkable achievements of the country parks in Hong Kong have attracted a large number of incoming visitors who wish to gain first-hand experience in exploring our country parks. But this also brings about challenges to ecological protection, and precautions must be taken to protect against various types of man-made disasters and address outdoor safety concerns. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. whether precautionary efforts will be stepped up and the estimate for expenditure be increased, such as increasing the frequency of hiking trail patrols and staging educational activities at campsites on selected days as appropriate; and
2. given that quite a number of Level 2 mountain craft technicians have been trained up to grasp the concepts of protecting countryside environment and green camping through years of co-operation between the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and Hong Kong Mountaineering Association, whether the Government will make the best use of these talents?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) monitors the use of country park facilities during regular inspection and flexibly deploys manpower to step up patrol and law enforcement at popular locations in country parks as necessary in the light of actual circumstances. In addition, the AFCD attaches great importance to the education, promotion and publicity programmes in relation to country parks. It continues to promote the messages of nature appreciation and care for nature to countryside visitors through various channels. In recent years, the AFCD has been promoting good outdoor behaviour under the theme of "Hiking Etiquette", as well as the messages of "Respect Nature", "Hike Safely", "Reduce Waste" and "Take Your Litter Home", etc., through social media and diversified nature education activities, including nature excursions and in-depth tours, with a view to encouraging countryside visitors to care for the nature. The estimated expenditure on patrol and enforcement

operations as well as publicity and education programmes by the AFCD for 2024-25 is comparable to those for 2023-24.

2. The AFCD has been maintaining communication with different stakeholders in the community on the management of and the publicity and education programmes in relation to country parks. It also organises volunteer services and country park trail clean-up programmes, etc., with a view to engaging interested members of the public to participate in the conservation work of the country parks. The AFCD will regularly explore the possibilities of strengthening co-operation with the relevant organisations in suitable projects, such as co-operation with local organisations in matters relating to hiking, camping, etc., so as to enhance its country park services and achieve the objectives of promotion and education.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)005

(Question Serial No. 1306)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will implement measures to enhance the education and recreation functions of country parks, repair and maintain facilities in country parks and reduce the amount of litter in the countryside. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) the expenditure involved in the repair and maintenance of facilities in country parks in each of the past 3 years;
- (b) the total expenditure involved in providing basic recreational facilities in the newly designated Robin's Nest Country Park and the expenditure earmarked for its future management and operation; and
- (c) the volume of litter collected in the countryside and the manpower and expenditure involved in collecting litter in the countryside in each of the past 3 years; the specific details of work of the manpower involved; and whether they have enforcement powers?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) provides various visitor facilities in country parks, such as hiking trails, picnic sites, barbecue areas, rain shelters, viewing points, etc., and will regularly inspect, maintain and repair the facilities for public use. The recurrent expenditure on the relevant work over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2021-22	80.0
2022-23	76.7
2023-24 (revised estimate)	80.1

- (b) To prepare for the establishment of the Robin's Nest Country Park, the AFCD has progressively constructed some basic recreational facilities including hiking trails,

viewing points and other ancillary facilities in the past few years. Together with the revitalisation project at the Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine site currently underway, the total expenditure involved is about \$43 million. Ongoing management and operation work are required for the Robin's Nest Country Park after its establishment, including construction and maintenance of recreational facilities, implementation of nature conservation measures, litter collection, patrol and enforcement, publicity and education, etc. The AFCD will carry out the work mentioned above by re-deploying its existing manpower and engaging service contractors. The operational expense for 2024-25 is about \$9.5 million.

- (c) 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 mainly includes collecting litter from barbecue areas, campsites, picnic sites, hiking trails and toilets, etc., under the AFCD's management. It also includes classifying the litter collected into general waste and recyclables, for disposal at the landfills or follow-up treatment by the recycling service providers respectively. There are about 560 staff members in the various ranks of the AFCD's staff establishment whose duties involve the routine work of handling litter in country parks. As the duties of such departmental staff involve 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 does not have a breakdown of the departmental staff establishment for handling litter in country parks only. On the other hand, there are about 150-180 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)
2021	1 808
2022	2 054
2023	2 700

Note: The significant increase in total amount of litter collected in 2023 compared to that in 2021 and 2022 is mainly due to the gradual resumption of normal services at barbecue sites and campsites in country parks from October to November 2022 after the epidemic.

Table 2: Expenditure involved in litter management and cleansing of country parks

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2021-22	77.8
2022-23	80.7
2023-24 (revised estimate)	80.5

Upon detection of littering when patrolling country parks, the AFCD staff will take enforcement actions under the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations (Cap. 208A).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)006

(Question Serial No. 1492)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Department will “take forward the development of Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park (WCP)”. At present, the Government plans to carry out the construction works for Sam Po Shue WCP in phases and expects to commence the first phase of the construction works in 2026 to 2027 the earliest for completion in 2031 and completion of the entire Sam Po Shue WCP by 2039, so as to align with the development of the San Tin Technopole. In this connection, please advise of the following:

1. the estimated expenditure for the phased construction of Sam Po Shue WCP and a breakdown of it;
2. the expenditure involved in the environmental assessment of Sam Po Shue WCP; and
3. whether consideration will be given to integrating wetlands without conservation significance within Sam Po Shue WCP for other purposes; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is conducting the Strategic Feasibility Study on the Development of Wetland Conservation Parks System under the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (the Strategic Feasibility Study) to determine the location, boundary, functions and management model, etc., of each of the proposed parks (including the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park (WCP)). In January this year, the AFCD completed part 2 of the public engagement exercise on the preliminary recommendations of the Strategic Feasibility Study, including the establishment of the Sam Po Shue WCP as the first WCP to be developed. Upon analysis and consideration of public opinions received, the consultant is expected to submit the final recommendations of the Strategic Feasibility Study to the Government in the first half of this year. The Government will take into account the recommendations of the Strategic Feasibility Study to take forward the establishment of

the Sam Po Shue WCP, including conducting the next phase of the investigation study within this year.

Regarding the construction cost of the Sam Po Shue WCP, a more accurate estimate will be available upon completion of the investigation study and the detailed design.

2. The Government is drafting the scope of the investigation study on the Sam Po Shue WCP which will take into account the final recommendations of the Strategic Feasibility Study to be completed in the first half of this year. The investigation study will include the environmental impact assessment (EIA) of the park, and the associated cost will be estimated after finalisation of the scope of the study.
3. It is preliminarily proposed in the Strategic Feasibility Study that the Sam Po Shue WCP will cover a total area of about 338 hectares, of which about 328 hectares will be used to enhance the function of its wetlands and fishponds through active conservation, as ecological and fisheries compensation in the statutory EIA report of the San Tin Technopole. Besides, an area of about 10 hectares is proposed to be reserved for other purposes, mainly for the provision of eco-education, recreation and ecotourism facilities, which include a visitor centre, outdoor classrooms, bird hides, visitor trails, restaurants, and open public spaces (e.g. picnic areas). Specific details will be planned and designed in detail in the next phase of the study.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)007

(Question Serial No. 2561)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In recent years, wild pigs have caused nuisance in Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the number of cases received by the Government about wild pig sightings or nuisance in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts over the past 5 years;
- (2) the number of wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations conducted by the Government in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts and the number of wild pigs involved over the past 3 years;
- (3) the number of prosecutions instituted by the Government for illegal feeding of wild animals in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts since the expansion of the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong over the past 2 years and among which, the number of prosecutions involving wild pigs; and
- (4) specific actions taken in the past year to prevent wild pigs from wandering into housing estates and specific actions to be taken in the future.

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

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

District	Number of wild pig sightings or nuisance cases				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Sha Tin	111	107	119	140	147
Tai Po	82	90	99	119	184

- (2) The number of wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations conducted by the AFCD in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts and the number of wild pigs involved over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

District	Number of wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations (number of wild pigs involved)		
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Sha Tin	3 (3)	17 (40)	23 (45)
Tai Po	4 (9)	10 (21)	25 (43)

- (3) With effect from 31 December 2022, the area of “the place at which the feeding of any wild animal is prohibited” (Feeding Ban Area) under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) has been expanded to the entire territory of Hong Kong with a view to stepping up the efforts to curb the activities of feeding wild animals such as wild pigs. Since the expansion of the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong, as at February 2024, the AFCD has instituted 175 and 2 prosecutions for illegal feeding of wild animals in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts respectively, among which there were 4 and 2 cases involving illegal feeding of wild pigs in Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts respectively.
- (4) The AFCD further deployed resources in 2023 to increase wild pig capture operations and improved operational efficiency by installing Internet Protocol surveillance cameras and new animal traps (including foldable cage traps and fence traps). To step up the efforts to curb the feeding activities, the Government introduced the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Bill 2023 into the Legislative Council in November 2023, which proposed increasing the maximum penalty for feeding wild animals from a fine of \$10,000 to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year, and introducing a fixed penalty system for illegal feeding, with the amount set at \$5,000. The relevant legislative amendments, if passed, will take effect on 1 August 2024. The AFCD will continue to curb illegal feeding activities through stepping up law enforcement, education and publicity. It will also engage wildlife management experts to review the local situation of local wild pig problems and enhance the management action plan for wild pigs by making reference to the experiences of other regions.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)008

(Question Serial No. 2652)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned under the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Department will implement measures for enhanced management and protection of wild animals, including the legislative amendments to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) to effect the prohibition of feeding feral pigeons. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. over the past 3 years, the number of complaints received in relation to nuisances caused by wild animals, and the respective law enforcement situation;
2. over the past 3 years, the manpower and expenditure involved in combating illegal feeding of wild animals;
3. over the past 3 years, the expenditure and details involved in public education and promotion on the prohibition of feeding wild animals; and whether there is any plan to strengthen the relevant publicity and education work in future;
4. the compliances with the "key performance indicators" set by the Department for monitoring the effectiveness of the wild pig management measures; and
5. the manpower and expenditure involved in the "Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons" launched in 2021; and the specific effectiveness of such programme?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. Intentional feeding is one of the main causes of wild animal nuisance. To step up the efforts to curb feeding activities and resolve wild animal nuisance at source, the Government amended the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance) to expand the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022. Any person illegally feeding wild animals shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$10,000.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) arranges patrols at wild animal feeding black spots from time to time and takes prosecution actions against

anyone who is found to be illegally feeding wild animal, subject to sufficient evidence. The AFCD will also review and adjust from time to time the patrol and enforcement arrangements in the light of the actual circumstances, including stepping up blitz and enforcement operations where necessary, as well as collaborating with relevant departments to strengthen combating the activities.

The number of complaint cases received by the AFCD about nuisances caused by wild pigs, monkeys and wild birds over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Wild pigs	Monkeys	Wild birds	Total
2021-22	1 351	207	671	2 229
2022-23	1 183	279	699	2 161
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	926	298	573	1 797

The number of prosecutions instituted by the AFCD and successful prosecutions against illegal feeding of wild animals over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of prosecutions instituted*#	Number of successful prosecutions#
2021-22	120	90
2022-23	106	79
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	153	133

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

Each enforcement case involved 1 person.

Note: Feral pigeons are not included in the above figures since they are classified as domestic animals instead of wild animals as defined under the Ordinance, and are thus not subject to the current feeding ban. Nevertheless, the AFCD received a total of about 2 500 complaints or enquiries in relation to feral pigeons between 2021 and January 2024.

To further combat illegal feeding, the Government introduced the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Bill 2023 to the Legislative Council (LegCo) in November 2023, which proposed expanding the scope of the feeding ban to cover feral pigeons, in addition to the current feeding ban on wild animals; increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding from a fine of \$10,000 to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year; and introducing a fixed penalty system for illegal feeding, with the amount set at \$5,000. The relevant legislative amendments, if passed by the LegCo, will take effect on 1 August 2024.

- Over the past 3 years, there were 64 staff members involved in wild animal conservation work of the AFCD, and the total expenditure on work in relation to wild animal conservation each year is tabulated below. As the investigation and law enforcement work in relation to illegal feeding of wild animals forms part of the wild animal conservation work, the AFCD does not keep the relevant breakdown.

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2021-22	64.6
2022-23	70.0
2023-24 (revised estimate)	77.1

3. The AFCD has been explaining to the public the adverse impact and hazard of feeding wild animals and publicising the prohibition of feeding wild animals through the organisation of various educational activities, such as ecological education exhibitions, guided tours and school talks, as well as various channels such as publicity materials, posters, social media and advertisements. In the future, the AFCD will strengthen the education and publicity programmes, including the extension of these programmes to elderly services centres and more schools, with a view to reaching out to public members of various age groups. In addition, the AFCD will launch new Announcements in the Public Interest to enhance public understanding of the adverse impact of feeding wild animal and the newly amended feeding ban requirements. The expenditure on publicity and education to the public regarding the feeding ban on wild animals by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2021-22	5.0
2022-23	11.2
2023-24 (revised estimate)	10.9

4. On the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the AFCD aims to minimise the nuisances caused by wild pigs to the public in urban areas or the vicinity of residential areas, and review the number and location of wild pig nuisance black spots every year against the key performance indicator of reducing the number of black spots by half each year. The number of wild pig nuisance black spots has been reduced by half from 42 in early 2023 to 21 in early 2024.
5. In 2021, the AFCD launched the “Trial Programme of Using Contraceptive Drug on Feral Pigeons” (the Programme), which aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of feeding feral pigeons contraceptive-drug-coated feed in reducing the nuisances they caused. The AFCD implemented the Programme on a trial basis at 3 locations in the Central and Western District, Kowloon City District and Sai Kung District, where more feral pigeons are congregated, and appointed the City University of Hong Kong as the consultant of the Programme to undertake relevant work such as data collection, study and evaluation, which are expected to be completed in the first half of 2024. The AFCD will take into account various factors, including the analysis and recommendations of the consultant of the Programme, in formulating the next stage of work. Implementation of the Programme involved 4 staff members and an expenditure of about \$4.3 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)009****(Question Serial No. 2653)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding the management and operation of Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark, would the Government inform of the following:

1. the number of visitors to the Geopark over the past 3 years; the percentage of non-local visitors to the Geopark in the total number of inbound visitors;
2. the expenditure involved in the repair and maintenance of the Geopark over the past 3 years;
3. the details of the plan on promotion, conservation and education, and the respective expenditure and manpower involved for the new fiscal year;
4. whether the public transport to the attractions and facilities of the Geopark will be reviewed and enhanced; if yes, the details and estimate; and
5. whether the quality of Hong Kong Geopark is subject to regular reviews to ensure fulfilment of the criteria for UNESCO's quadrennial revalidation process?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)Reply:

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

Year	Number of visitors (million)
2021	1.2
2022	1.5
2023	1.6

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

2. Since most of the area of Hong Kong Geopark overlaps with the existing country parks and special areas, the repair and maintenance of most of its facilities (such as walking trails, signage and recreational facilities) have been covered as part of the work for

management and operation of country parks. The AFCD does not have a separate breakdown of the expenditure on the relevant work.

3. The AFCD's promotion, conservation and education work regarding Hong Kong Geopark in 2024-25 mainly include: (1) supporting the Tourism Commission to organise the Sai Kung Hoi Arts Festival to promote green tourism in the geopark community in Sai Kung; (2) supporting and promoting the development of sustainable tourism at Ap Chau, Kat O, Lai Chi Wo, etc., to tie in with the Government's gradual opening up of the Sha Tau Kok Frontier Closed Area for tourism; (3) launching the Hing Chun Alliance Heritage Trail, which centres at Lai Chi Wo and connects neighbouring villages, and erecting interpretation panels along the route to introduce the village culture and history; (4) preparing for the refurbishment of the exhibits in the Volcano Discovery Centre located in Sai Kung; (5) promoting the attractions of and code for visiting Hong Kong Geopark through social media platforms and the internet; (6) promoting green tourism of Hong Kong Geopark to other places through the Hong Kong Tourism Board; (7) upgrading the skills of geopark guides through implementing the Geopark Guide System in collaboration with non-governmental organisations; (8) training tour operators, local communities and other stakeholders of Hong Kong Geopark; (9) organising science popularisation activities for students through the Geopark School Programme; (10) collaborating with the relevant communities in conserving and promoting the local history, culture and tradition; and (11) promoting exchanges with other geoparks and organising geopark exchange activities and training courses.

In 2024-25, the manpower and estimated expenditure of the AFCD for carrying out the above work are 12 staff members and \$19 million respectively.

4. Over the years, the AFCD and the relevant departments have been striving to enhance the public transport services for accessing to the attractions and facilities of Hong Kong Geopark. The public transport services that have been strengthened in recent years mainly include: (1) kaito ferry services between Sai Kung and Kau Sai Village/High Island; (2) kaito ferry services between Sha Tau Kok/Ma Liu Shui/Tai Shui Hang and Lai Chi Wo/Ap Chau/Kat O; and (3) green minibus (GMB) between Pak Tam Chung and the East Dam (namely New Territories GMB Route No. 9A). The AFCD and the relevant departments will continue to review the usage of the public transport services and strengthen the relevant public transport services where necessary. Since the aforesaid work is part of the management of the Geopark, the AFCD does not have a separate breakdown of the expenditure on the relevant work.
5. Hong Kong Geopark, as a member of the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), needs to be managed in accordance with the GGN guidelines and achieve the relevant objectives (such as organising educational activities to promote earth science and geological conservation, promoting sustainable tourism, promoting the sustainable development of the geopark communities, and promoting exchanges with other global geoparks). The AFCD submits an annual report on Hong Kong Geopark to the UNESCO Global Geopark Secretariat on a yearly basis, and keeps in view if the relevant work follows the GGN guidelines to ensure the fulfilment of the criteria for UNESCO's quadrennial revalidation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)010

(Question Serial No. 0738)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The work of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) involves the promotion of public awareness of nature conservation and enforcement of nature conservation legislation. In this connection, would the Government advise of the specific details of the work, the expenditure involved over the past 3 years and the estimated expenditure for 2024-25?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) always attaches great importance to the education, promotion and publicity work on nature conservation, and continues to strengthen the promotion of the messages of nature appreciation and care for nature to members of the public. 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, BioBlitz, volunteer/marine parks ambassador services and country park hiking trail clean-up programmes, the AFCD aims to allow members of the public to enjoy nature and engage them to participate in the nature conservation work so as to foster an attitude of caring for nature.

In addition, the AFCD is committed to enforcing nature conservation legislation and stepping up efforts to combat illegal activities that damage the natural environment. The AFCD staff conduct patrols in various country parks, special areas, marine parks and the marine reserve to monitor the conditions of the environment and the use of related facilities by visitors, and take enforcement actions against offenders under the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations (Cap. 208A) and the Marine Parks and Marine Reserves Regulation (Cap. 476A). The offences involved mainly include unauthorised possession or riding of bicycles or driving of vehicles, damage of plants, use of fire or camping outside the designated sites, as well as illegal fishing and collection of marine life. At the same time, the AFCD will protect local wild animals and their important habitats by enforcing the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170), and take enforcement actions against acts including illegal destruction

of trees on Government land, and illegal selling, offering for sale, or having in possession, custody or control of the protected plants, etc., under the Forests and Countryside Ordinance (Cap. 96). In 2023, the AFCD instituted a total of 689 prosecutions under the above legislation.

The AFCD's expenditure on promoting nature conservation and enforcing relevant legislation over the past 3 years and the estimated expenditure for 2024-25 are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure on enforcing relevant legislation[#] (\$ million)	Expenditure on promoting nature conservation (\$ million)
2021-22	87.9	28.7
2022-23	89.1	29.6
2023-24 (revised estimate)	91.9	38.8
2024-25 (estimate)	92.4	39.4

[#] Excluding expenditure on enforcing the Forests and Countryside Ordinance (Cap. 96) and the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170). The expenditure on enforcing the above legislation is absorbed by the provision for nature conservation. The AFCD does not keep a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)011

(Question Serial No. 0739)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

In 2024-25, the work of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will focus on strengthening the control of trade in endangered species and combatting their illegal trade and smuggling. In this connection, has the Government provided training and support to frontline enforcement staff of other participating law enforcement agencies, including the Customs and Excise Department and immigration control points, so that they can accurately identify items of endangered species? If yes, what are the details (including the manpower and expenditure involved in each of the past 3 years)? If not, how can one ensure the accurate and effective law enforcement by frontline staff?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) strives to protect endangered species, and has been working closely with the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) to combat illegal trade of endangered species. Over the past 3 years, the AFCD provided a total of 14 sessions of training courses on enforcement and species identification for enforcement staff, including frontline enforcement staff of the C&ED and immigration control points. In addition, the AFCD and the C&ED have also jointly compiled a photo identification guide of commonly encountered endangered species and the content of which will be kept updated from time to time to help enforcement staff identify endangered species of animals and plants and their derivatives. Since the above training and support are part of the regular enforcement work of the AFCD to combat illegal trade of endangered species, the AFCD does not possess the breakdown of the expenditure and manpower involved in the relevant work.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)012

(Question Serial No. 1963)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

1. Has the Government completed the feasibility study for the setting up of open museums on wartime relics, tree top adventure facilities and eco-lodge in country parks? Does the Government have an implementation timetable and an estimate of the relevant expenditure?
2. 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 2023 (and the proportion of tourists among them), the number of places and attendance of the guided tour services provided, if any.
3. What measures did the Government take to explore the tourism appeal of country parks and promote in-depth green tourism to tourists while enhancing the recreation and education potential of country parks?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) commissioned feasibility studies on projects such as the setting up of an open museum of historical relics and the provision of 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 included the organisation of activities to collect the views of the public and relevant stakeholders. The AFCD anticipates to complete the 3 aforementioned studies and estimate expenditure by 2024, and will soon commence the pre-construction investigation and the detailed design of the relevant projects after taking into account the recommendations of the study reports. The Government has earmarked \$500 million in the 2021-22 Budget to carry out enhancement works for facilities in country parks, which include the aforementioned projects.

2. The AFCD manages and operates country park visitor centres to provide visitor information and nature education services to visitors, which is part of the regular education and publicity work of the AFCD in country parks. The expenditure and manpower involved in the relevant work in the revised estimate for 2023-24 were \$31.8 million and 39 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, there are usually about 20-30 places for each tour, and the number of places for the guided tours will be slightly adjusted subject to the actual enrolments on that day. In 2023, 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	29 785	2 152
Ngong Ping Nature Centre	11 563	138
Lions Nature Education Centre	448 560	3 382
Clear Water Bay Country Park Visitor Centre	10 101	No guided tour services provided
Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre	38 710	No guided tour services provided
Tai Mo Shan Country Park Visitor Centre	9 000	238

[#] Shing Mun Country Park Visitor Centre was temporarily closed in 2023 for renovation works.

3. In order to promote green tourism, the Tourism Commission, in collaboration with the AFCD, has implemented 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. The enhancement works mainly include 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 of 12 hiking trails.

As regards the promotion work on hiking trails in Hong Kong, the AFCD enhanced the “Enjoy Hiking” thematic website in 2019 to provide detailed information on hiking trails and green attractions and provide locals and tourists with information on featured attractions in 4 languages, namely Chinese, English, Japanese and Korean. As at end-February 2024, there are more than 4.08 million pageviews at the enhanced thematic website.

In addition, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB)’s website (DiscoverHongKong), social media platforms, as well as visitor centres and visitor hotlines, etc., have been promoting to visitors itineraries and attractions with local characteristics.

In recent years, social media has emerged. In particular, the Mainland’s Xiaohongshu, bilibili, WeChat, etc., have huge traffic and their influence is getting more significant.

Therefore, the HKTB has invited key opinion leaders (KOLs) with a large fan base on the aforementioned social media platforms to visit Hong Kong and experience for themselves the itineraries on different themes, including visiting nature and participating in water activities, with a view to leveraging their online influence to create positive word-of-mouth for Hong Kong tourism.

Riding on the large-scale global promotional campaign “Hello Hong Kong”, the HKTB has invited travel trade partners, celebrities and KOLs to produce more than 330 videos featuring urban oases and other travel experiences to be broadcast on over 3 000 platforms worldwide, reaching out to 200 million viewers all over the world.

Through its year-round promotional platform “Hong Kong Great Outdoors”, the HKTB will continue to introduce in detail and promote Hong Kong’s unique natural scenery and countryside experiences under the themes such as hiking, beaches and outdoor activities, sightseeing and island hopping, and actively promote Hong Kong’s nature-based green tourism products and countryside, including the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark, country parks, marine parks, hiking trails and itineraries featuring outlying islands, as well as guided tours and green tourism products organised by the travel trade or other organisations, so as to encourage visitors to appreciate Hong Kong’s mesmerising natural landscape.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(E)221****(Question Serial No. 3486)**Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country ParksControlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

- (a) the expenditure involved in public education and promotion of the feeding ban by the Department over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (b) the number of complaints received by the Department about nuisance of or attack caused by wild monkeys over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (c) the manpower and expenditure involved in the investigation and study on the control of wild monkeys, as well as the administration of contraceptive and neutering treatment to wild monkeys over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); 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 2023-24.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 57)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)
2021-22	1.8
2022-23	3.0
2023-24 (revised estimate)	4.4

- (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
2021-22	207
2022-23	279
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	298

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

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower (number of staff)
2021-22	8.6	17
2022-23	11.3	17
2023-24 (revised estimate)	12.1	17

In addition, the AFCD arranges regular sterilisation operations for monkeys in Kam Shan, Lion Rock and Shing Mun Country Parks through its contractor (the Ocean Park Conservation Foundation), which involve about 10 staff members of the contractor in each operation. Since 2018, the AFCD has extended the sterilisation operations to the monkey populations causing nuisance to residential areas near country parks.

- (d) The AFCD completed the review of the existing monkey sterilisation programme in 2023-24, and reported the relevant work to the Nature Conservation Subcommittee (Subcommittee) under the Advisory Council on the Environment in December 2023, including the setting of a work target for the sterilisation of monkeys. Members supported the AFCD's action plan on sterilisation of monkeys for controlling the monkey population. The AFCD will also engage wildlife management experts to review the local situation of monkey problems and enhance the management action plan for monkeys by making reference to the experiences of other regions.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)222

(Question Serial No. 3490)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding wild pigs, please advise of the following:

- (a) the projected population of wild pigs in Hong Kong over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (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 (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (c) the number of operations conducted; the number of wild pigs captured, among which the number of female wild pigs injected with contraceptive vaccines and surgically sterilised; the number of wild pigs relocated to the countryside away from residential areas; the number of wild pigs euthanised; and the number of wild pigs hunted over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (d) the expenditure and manpower dedicated to the pilot programme on the contraception/relocation of wild pigs, hunting teams and the work in relation to the wild pigs over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- (e) the number of arrests made and successful prosecutions instituted in relation to the illegal feeding of wild pigs over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) 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 (2021-22 to 2023-24), 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.: 61)

Reply:

- (a) In 2019, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) launched a study to estimate the number of wild pigs in the countryside. By using infrared camera traps 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 3 years, the number of wild pigs across the countryside in the territory decreased from about 2 000 in 2021 to about 1 830 in 2022 and about 1 360 in 2023.

- (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
2021-22	1 351
2022-23	1 183
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	993

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

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

The number of operations in relation to wild pigs conducted by the AFCD over the past 3 years is tabulated below:

Year	Type of operations	Number of operations
2021-22	April 2021 to early November 2021: CCRP	139
	November 2021 to March 2022: Capture and humane dispatch programme	52
2022-23	Capture and humane dispatch programme	187
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	Capture and humane dispatch programme	289

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

Year	Number of wild pigs			Humanely dispatched [^]
	Captured	CCRP		
		Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised*	Relocated to countryside*	
2021-22	370	109	219	105
2022-23	378	The CCRP has ceased		361
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	528			515

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

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

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

Year	Manpower (number of staff)	Total expenditure on wild pig management (\$ million)	Expenditure involved in CCRP in the total expenditure on wild pig management (\$ million)
2021-22	32	19.2	8.6
2022-23	34	22.3	(N/A)
2023-24 (revised estimate)	33	21.8	(N/A)

Since the AFCD formally terminated the hunting operation in 2019, there is no relevant expenditure over the past 3 years.

- (e) Since the main cause of nuisance of wild pigs is intentional feeding, to step up the efforts to curb wild pig feeding activities and resolve the wild pig nuisance at source, the Government amended the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) to expand the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022. Any person feeding wild animals illegally shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$10,000.

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 from time to time the patrol and enforcement arrangements in accordance with the actual circumstances, including stepping up blitz and enforcement operations where necessary, as well as collaborating with relevant departments to strengthen combating the relevant

activities. The number of prosecutions for illegal feeding of wild animals (including wild pigs) over the past 3 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Number of prosecutions instituted ⁺ (Number of cases involving wild pigs)	120 (1)	106 (12)	153 (21)
Number of successful prosecutions ⁺ (Number of cases involving wild pigs)	90 (0)	79 (3)	133 (17)
Fine (\$)	200-1,500 (average: 833)	300-1,500 (average: 601)	250-3,000 (average: 657)

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

[#] Each case of prosecution involved 1 person only.

To further combat illegal feeding, the Government introduced the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Bill 2023 to the Legislative Council (LegCo) in November 2023, which proposed expanding the scope of the feeding ban to cover feral pigeons, in addition to the current feeding ban on wild animals; increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding from a fine of \$10,000 to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year; and introducing a fixed penalty system for illegal feeding with the amount set at \$5,000. The relevant legislative amendments, if passed by the LegCo, will take effect on 1 August 2024.

- (f) The number of wild pig carcasses collected by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24) is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pig carcasses[@]
2021-22	547
2022-23	523
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	718

[@] 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. Major measures which have been implemented include:

- (i) devising surveillance and contingency plans for detecting ASF, including stepping up inspections to all local pig farms and collecting pig samples for ASF virus testing when necessary;
- (ii) amending the licensing conditions of rearing pigs to include requirements for pig farms to implement and strictly abide by the biosecurity measures applicable to their pig farms, and take samples for ASF virus testing in accordance with relevant guidelines and to obtain a negative result before disposing pig carcasses; collaborating with international veterinary experts to explain and provide training to each of the local pig farms on biosecurity measures and providing assistance and loans to farmers to facilitate purchase of appropriate facilities to enhance biosecurity of their pig farms;
- (iii) requesting all local pig farms to step up cleansing and disinfection of vehicles and personnel entering and leaving pig farms;
- (iv) suspending the import of breeders from places infected by ASF;
- (v) imposing a total ban on the storage or use of kitchen waste, catering waste or other food wastes of pork origin as pig feed;
- (vi) strengthening the regulation of local pig-carrying trucks, including restricting each local pig-carrying truck to carry live pigs from a single licensed pig farm to the slaughterhouse per trip to reduce the risk of cross contamination between local pig farms and setting spillage prevention standard for local pig-carrying trucks to minimise the spread of diseases arising from spillage or leakage of pig wastes;
- (vii) commissioning contractors to thoroughly cleanse and disinfect all local pig-carrying trucks at designated positions every time before they leave the Sheung Shui Slaughterhouse and Tsuen Wan Slaughterhouse;
- (viii) liaising with relevant government departments regarding improvement in the collection arrangements for pig waste and pig carcasses;
- (ix) providing financial assistance to the City University of Hong Kong through the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund to provide free veterinary consultation service for local pig farms with a view to improving the overall animal health conditions of local pig farms;
- (x) maintaining close communication with the pig farming sector including setting up SMS groups and organising meetings and seminars with the trade representatives in a timely manner, as well as enhancing local pig farmers' knowledge of preventing ASF through launching the Guidelines for Reporting ASF Cases and producing various publicity materials on information about ASF, such as posters, videos and guidelines on the procedures of cleansing and disinfecting pig-carrying trucks, so as to provide local pig farmers with information about the disease, its infection as well as the prevention and control measures that pig farms should heed;
- (xi) 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;
- (xii) conducting a regular surveillance programme for ASF in local wild pig carcasses (including humanely dispatched wild pigs);
- (xiii) working with international veterinary experts to conduct detailed investigation into cases of ASF outbreak in local pig farms; and formulate response plans to cope with low virulent strains of ASF virus; and
- (xiv) devising an action plan and providing the necessary equipment for culling of pigs.

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

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)223

(Question Serial No. 3607)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department relaunched wild pig capture operations in 2021 and accorded priority to sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the number of wild pig capture operations conducted in each district each year since the relaunch of the programme;
2. the number of wild pigs captured in each district each year since the relaunch of the programme and, among which, the number of wild pigs humanely dispatched;
3. the number of injury cases caused by wild pigs in each of the past five years;
4. the number of wild pigs sterilised by the Department under the 4-year trial Trap-Neuter-Return programme in each of the past five years, and its percentage share in the total number of wild pigs captured; and
5. given the view that the wild pig population was not contained owing to time and manpower constraints on the sterilisation of all the wild pigs captured, whether the Department will consider including sterilisation of all wild pigs throughout the territory as a performance indicator to reduce the controversy over the humane dispatch of them after being captured?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 117)

Reply:

1. To exercise effective control over the wild pig nuisance in Hong Kong, safeguard public safety and maintain public hygiene, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has implemented new measures since 12 November 2021 to conduct regular capture operations against wild pigs, which pose potential danger or cause nuisance to members of the public, at sites with large numbers of wild pig sightings, and those with past injury cases caused by wild pigs or with wild pigs posing risks to members of the public, as well as upon receiving reports about wild pig sightings in residential or public areas from members of the public or other government departments. During the capture operations, veterinary officers will use dart guns on

wild pigs and dispatch them humanely by the injection of a drug. The number of wild pig capture operations conducted by the AFCD since the implementation of the programme with a breakdown by district is tabulated as follows:

District \ Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Islands	1	0	0
Kwai Tsing	0	4	1
North	2	3	9
Sai Kung	6	28	39
Sha Tin	3	17	23
Tai Po	4	10	25
Tsuen Wan	2	6	18
Tuen Mun	0	3	18
Yuen Long	2	1	4
Kowloon City	0	0	0
Kwun Tong	0	6	4
Sham Shui Po	1	3	10
Wong Tai Sin	1	4	3
Yau Tsim Mong	1	0	1
Central and Western	7	23	37
Eastern	9	31	24
Southern	11	40	47
Wan Chai	2	8	26
Total	52	187	289

2. The number of wild pigs captured by the AFCD since the implementation of the programme with a breakdown by district is tabulated as follows:

District \ Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)
Islands	1	0	0
Kwai Tsing	0	4	1
North	4	5	24
Sai Kung	15	49	88
Sha Tin	3	40	45
Tai Po	9	21	43
Tsuen Wan	2	24	32
Tuen Mun	0	14	51
Yuen Long	2	1	4
Kowloon City	0	0	0
Kwun Tong	0	21	3
Sham Shui Po	1	8	12
Wong Tai Sin	1	0	8
Yau Tsim Mong	1	5	1
Central and Western	15	31	50
Eastern	13	56	40
Southern	21	86	93
Wan Chai	2	13	33
Total	90	378	528

With the exception of wild pigs that died of natural causes during the course of rescue operations (the AFCD's wild pig capture operations also included those conducted in response to reports of the trapping of wild pigs), all wild pigs captured have been humanely dispatched.

3. The number of reports on injuries caused by wild pigs received by the AFCD over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Reports of injuries caused by wild pigs (number of cases)
2019-20	7
2020-21	4
2021-22	33
2022-23	23
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	7

4. The AFCD launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme (CCRP) for wild pigs between late 2017 and early November 2021 to administer contraceptive

vaccine or surgically sterilise wild pigs captured and relocate them to the countryside where condition permitted. During the implementation of the CCRP, about 66% of all the wild pigs captured were given contraceptive or sterilisation treatment, among which 93% of the female wild pigs captured were given contraceptive or sterilisation treatment. The number of wild pigs involved in the CCRP over the past 5 years is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of wild pigs	
	Captured*	Administered with contraceptive vaccine or surgically sterilised
2019-20	293	106
2020-21	344	165
2021-22	370	109
2022-23	378	The CCRP has ceased.
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	528	

* Including wild pigs captured in rescue operations. In addition, some wild pigs that had been given contraceptive or sterilisation treatment were recaptured.

- The AFCD's investigation revealed that the progress of administering contraception and sterilisation was far from catching up with the reproduction rate of wild pigs. Moreover, once wild pigs are accustomed to being fed by people, they will return to the urban or residential areas relentlessly to seek food from people even after being relocated to the countryside. Accordingly, the AFCD has conducted wild pig capture and humane dispatch operations in place of the CCRP for wild pigs. On the premises of safeguarding public safety and maintaining public hygiene, the AFCD aims to minimise the nuisances caused by wild pigs to the public in urban areas or the vicinity of residential areas, and review the number and location of wild pig nuisance black spots every year against the key performance indicator of reducing the number of black spots by half each year. Among which, the number of wild pig nuisance black spots has been reduced by half from 42 in early 2023 to 21 in early 2024.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)224

(Question Serial No. 3608)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has implemented a large-scale contraceptive and neutering programme to control the population growth of wild monkeys since 2007. In addition, the designs of rubbish bins were enhanced to prevent wild animals like monkeys from scavenging for food from the bins. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of wild monkeys administered with contraceptive and sterilisation treatment by the AFCD in each of the past 3 years;
2. the average operational and administrative costs for sterilising and releasing each wild monkey;
3. the number of wild monkeys captured with giant trapping cages in each of the past 3 years;
4. the number of complaints received in relation to monkeys in each of the past 3 years;
5. the number of prosecutions for illegal feeding of monkeys in each of the past 3 years; and
6. the effectiveness of the study and tests on improving the designs of rubbish bins commissioned by the AFCD in 2019; and the number of newly designed rubbish bins that have been placed in various districts in Hong Kong so far?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 118)

Reply:

- (1) to (3) Since 2007, the AFCD has commissioned a contractor (the Ocean Park Conservation Foundation) every year to arrange contraceptive and sterilisation operations for monkeys in Kam Shan, Lion Rock and Shing Mun Country Parks, and monitor the changes in monkey populations, with a view to controlling their number in the long run. After being captured with a trapping cage by the contractor, the monkeys are handed over to veterinarians for examination, and upon confirming the monkeys' suitability for surgery, sterilisation operations will be conducted on them. In 2009, the contractor introduced endoscopic technology to perform permanent sterilisation of suitable female monkeys for more effective

control of monkey populations. In 2014, the contractor also started performing endoscopic vasectomy on suitable male monkeys. The surgical procedure only takes 4 to 7 minutes to complete, and the monkeys which have undergone operations can be released to the wild on the same day. Since 2018, the AFCD has extended the sterilisation operations to the monkey populations causing nuisance to residential areas near the fringe of country parks.

The number of monkeys captured with monkey traps (including trapping cages and other trapping devices) by the AFCD and the number of monkeys surgically sterilised over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of monkeys captured with monkey traps (number)	Number of monkeys surgically sterilised (number)*
2021-22	292	99
2022-23	286	102
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	281	95

* Only subadult and adult monkeys which have never been sterilised will undergo sterilisation operations.

The operational cost for sterilising each monkey then releasing to the wild was about \$21,500 on average over the past 3 years. Since the monkey sterilisation programme is part of the work of monkey management, the AFCD does not have the breakdown of the relevant administrative cost.

- (4) 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
2021-22	207
2022-23	279
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	298

- (5) Since intentional feeding is one of the main causes of wild animal nuisance, to strengthen combating feeding activities and resolve the problem of animal nuisance at source, the Government has amended the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) to expand the Feeding Ban Area to the entire territory of Hong Kong with effect from 31 December 2022. Any person illegally feeding wild animals shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$10,000.

The AFCD staff will patrol wild animal feeding black spots from time to time and take prosecution actions against anyone who has fed wild animal illegally, subject to sufficient evidence. The AFCD will also review and adjust the patrol and enforcement arrangements from time to time in accordance with the actual circumstances, including stepping up ad-hoc operations and enforcement where necessary, as well as collaborating with relevant departments to strengthen

combating the relevant activities. The number of prosecution instituted and the number of successful prosecution for illegal feeding of wild animals (including monkeys) over the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of prosecution instituted^{*#} (number of cases involving monkeys)	Number of successful prosecution^{*#} (number of cases involving monkeys)
2021-22	120 (120)	90 (90)
2022-23	106 (95)	79 (77)
2023-24 (as at Feb 2024)	153 (127)	133 (118)

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

Each enforcement case involved 1 person.

To further combat illegal feeding, the Government introduced the Wild Animals Protection (Amendment) Bill 2023 to the Legislative Council (LegCo) in November 2023, which proposed expanding the scope of the current feeding ban on wild animals to cover feral pigeons; increasing the maximum penalty for illegal feeding from a fine of \$10,000 to a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for 1 year; and introducing a fixed penalty system for illegal feeding, with the amount set at \$5,000. The relevant legislative amendments, if passed by the LegCo, will take effect on 1 August 2024.

- (6) In 2019, the AFCD commissioned the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) to design 3 types of refuse collection facilities that can prevent wild animal nuisances based on the characteristics of wild pigs and monkeys, which complied with the general refuse collection procedures of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). According to the survey conducted by the PolyU at the pilot spots, 80% of users considered that the new design could effectively reduce nuisance caused by wild animals. The effectiveness of the new design also depends on whether the public use the facilities concerned correctly, such as not to leave the lid of the rubbish bins opened. The FEHD has posted notices at the relevant facilities to strengthen publicity and education.

Since September 2022, the FEHD has adopted the above newly designed rubbish bins and litter containers that can reduce wild animal nuisance. A total of about 450 such rubbish bins and litter containers have been placed at various locations across different districts affected by wild animal nuisance, including the Central and Western District, Southern District, and Sai Kung District. The FEHD will continue to install these types of rubbish bins and litter containers, with the aim of installing a total of about 990 units throughout Hong Kong by the first half of 2024.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(E)225

(Question Serial No. 3610)

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Any person who commits acts of cruelty or causes any unnecessary suffering to animals, or possesses hunting appliances without permission shall be guilty of an offence. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of prosecutions for the offence of animal cruelty and, among them, the number of persons convicted in each of the past 5 years;
2. the number of reports on possession or suspected possession of hunting appliances received in each of the past 5 years;
3. the number of animal traps, hunting nets, snares and bird limes seized in each of the past 5 years;
4. the number of prosecutions for possession of animal traps, hunting nets, snares and bird limes and, among them, the number of persons convicted in each of the past 5 years;
5. the number of reports on human injuries caused by animal traps, hunting nets, snares and bird limes in each of the past 5 years; and
6. in response to the trend of the aforesaid cases, whether the Government will consider imposing heavier penalties for violations of the relevant legislation, with a view to combating animal cruelty crimes?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 120)

Reply:

1. The details of prosecutions instituted by the Hong Kong Police Force and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of prosecutions instituted	Number of successful prosecutions	Number of persons convicted
2019	29	25	25
2020	15	14	14
2021	21	15	16
2022	21	20	24
2023 (as at September)	18	16	16

2. to 4. The numbers of reports on possession of hunting appliances (including hunting cages, snares and bird nets) or suspected illegal hunting activities received by the AFCD, hunting appliances seized, prosecutions instituted as well as successful prosecutions for illegal possession of hunting appliances over the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of reports	Number of hunting appliances seized	Number of prosecutions instituted for illegal possession of hunting appliances^{*#}	Number of successful prosecutions for illegal possession of hunting appliances[#]
2019	25	183	0	0
2020	33	185	1	1
2021	72	101	3	2
2022	64	152	1	1
2023	71	137	0	0

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

Each enforcement case involved 1 person.

5. Over the past 5 years, the AFCD received 1 report on human injury inflicted by a hunting appliance in 2020.
6. Under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) (the Ordinance), no person shall, without permission, have in his possession of any hunting appliance, or hunt any wild animal by means of any hunting appliance. Offenders are liable to a maximum penalty of a fine of \$50,000 upon conviction. In addition, any person hunts or has in his possession of any protected wild animal specified in the Ordinance is liable to a maximum penalty of a fine of \$100,000 and an imprisonment for 1 year. The Government is of the view that the current penalty levels under the Ordinance have a certain degree of deterrent effect, and it has no plan at present to revise the relevant penalties. Besides, the Government is conducting preparatory work for the legislative amendments of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance (Cap. 169) and other measures, with a view to further safeguarding animal welfare. Proposed 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. The drafting of relevant regulations is at its final stage, and we will introduce the proposed amendments to the Legislative Council for scrutiny as soon as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**CSTB268****(Question Serial No. 1498)**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
(Dr LEUNG Siu-fai)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and TourismQuestion:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Bureau will “upgrade the facilities in Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP)”. At present, the HKWP has temporarily closed the exhibition and visitor facilities in the Visitor Centre for upgrading in phases. In this connection, please advise of the following:

1. the respective numbers of visitors and actual operating expenses of the HKWP over the past 3 years;
2. the construction expenditure and the repair and maintenance costs of various facilities in the HKWP over the past 3 years;
3. the specific details, works schedule and estimated expenditure of the facility upgrading project as well as the expected benefits after facility upgrading; and
4. the number of visitors to the HKWP since its establishment; whether consideration will be given to launching thematic activities related to green tourism to increase the number of visitors in the coming year; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)Reply:

1. and 4. The number of visitors to the Hong Kong Wetland Park (HKWP) over the past 5 years is tabulated below:

Year	Number of Visitors[#]
2019	393 424
2020	192 105
2021	337 883
2022	264 756
2023	410 857

[#] The number of visitors decreased between 2019 and 2022 owing to the social incidents and the COVID-19 epidemic.

In 2024-25, the HKWP will pool resources in upgrading the exhibition and visitor facilities as well as developing new education, community and promotion activities. The HKWP will also organise thematic programmes targeted at family visitors (including small-scale interactive exhibition, workshops, etc.) to attract a wider spectrum of visitors.

The actual operating expenses of the HKWP over the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Actual Operating Expenses (\$ million)*
2021-22	70.9
2022-23	67.8
2023-24 (revised estimate)	72.3

* The actual operating expenses include the repair and maintenance expenditure as well as other recurrent expenditure.

2. The HKWP did not have major facilities constructed in the past 3 years. The repair and maintenance costs of the HKWP over the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Year	Repair and Maintenance Costs (\$ million)
2021-22	12.8
2022-23	13.3
2023-24 (revised estimate)	14.7

3. The Tourism Commission and the AFCD have formulated a plan of upgrading the exhibition and visitor facilities in the HKWP, including updating the content of all themed exhibition galleries and improving the visitor facilities (such as providing new interactive visit-planning kiosks, an audio guide system, etc.) to enrich visitors' experience. The funding for implementing the plan is around \$142 million. The production and installation of the exhibits started in November 2023 and are expected to complete in 2025. The upgraded exhibition and visitor facilities will include new interactive elements with visitors by applying technologies such as augmented reality and virtual reality, etc. Coupled with newly designed education and promotional activities, it is expected that the attractiveness of the HKWP to visitors will be enhanced.

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