

Head 22 — AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Controlling officer: the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2025–26 **\$2,279.7m**

Establishment ceiling 2025–26 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 2 326 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2025 reducing by 15 posts to 2 311 posts as at 31 March 2026..... **\$1,011.3m**

In addition, there will be an estimated eight directorate posts as at 31 March 2025 and as at 31 March 2026.

Commitment balance..... **\$2,225.6m**

Controlling Officer’s Report

Programmes

- | | |
|--|---|
| Programme (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets | This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Environment and Ecology). |
| Programme (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks | This programme contributes to Policy Area 5: Travel and Tourism (Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism) and Policy Area 23: Environmental Protection, Conservation, Power and Sustainable Development (Secretary for Environment and Ecology). |
| Programme (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services | This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Environment and Ecology), Policy Area 22: Buildings, Lands, Planning, Heritage Conservation, Greening and Landscape (Secretary for Development) and Policy Area 32: Environmental Hygiene (Secretary for Environment and Ecology). |

Detail

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

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Original)	2024–25 (Revised)	2025–26 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	455.3	586.6	517.9 (–11.7%)	618.4 (+19.4%)
				(or +5.4% on 2024–25 Original)

Aim

- 2 The aim is to facilitate agricultural and fisheries production and improve productivity.

Brief Description

- 3 The Department’s work in pursuit of its aim involves:
- the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen;
 - the conduct of adaptive and technical studies, as well as introduction of modern technology and practices to local farmers and fishermen to facilitate their efficient production and improve the quality of their products;
 - the planning and implementation of effective management activities and services for promoting sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries;
 - the provision of administrative and technical support to the operation of the Vegetable Marketing Organization and the Fish Marketing Organization; and
 - the management of government fresh food wholesale markets.

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4 The key performance measures in respect of agriculture, fisheries and fresh food wholesale markets are:

Targets

	Target	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Plan)
<i>Agriculture</i>				
accredited vegetable farms (total no.).....	305#	305	305	305
(total hectares).....	2 439β	2 477	2 439	2 439
<i>Fisheries</i>				
accredited fish farms (total no.).....	185α	168	175	185

The target is revised from 318 to 305 as from 2023.

β The target is revised from 2 569 ha to 2 439 ha as from 2025.

α The target is revised from 178 to 185 as from 2025.

Indicators

	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Estimate)
<i>Agriculture</i>			
composite productivity index (100 in 1985).....	164	145	145
production			
vegetables (tonnes).....	15 800	15 300	15 300
(\$m).....	201.0	196.0	196.0
livestock (tonnes).....	22 200	18 500	18 500
(\$m).....	628.0	536.0	536.0
throughput at Vegetable Marketing Organization market			
(tonnes).....	53 163	45 741	43 500
(\$m).....	464.3	372.4	354.0
new loans			
(no.).....	50	52	52
(\$m).....	6.1	6.5	6.5
new grants			
(no.).....	22	63	70
(\$m).....	14.7	18.4	56.0
<i>Fisheries</i>			
production			
capture (tonnes).....	86 578	92 253	92 300
(\$m).....	2,353.0	2,404.0	2,404.0
culture (tonnes).....	1 647	2 089	2 100
(\$m).....	96.0	119.4	120.0
throughput at Fish Marketing Organization markets			
(tonnes).....	39 471	38 211	38 200
(\$m).....	3,349.3	3,114.0	3,100.0
new loans			
(no.).....	204	152	152
(\$m).....	106.4	69.1	90.0
new grants			
(no.).....	169	694	250
(\$m).....	19.0	13.3	132.0
<i>Government fresh food wholesale markets</i>			
annual throughput (tonnes).....	392 000	383 000	383 000
rental market stall space occupied (%).....	98.6	98.0	97.2
area of wholesale markets managed (m ²).....	287 984	287 984	287 984
requests for assistance handled (no.).....	14 908	13 419	14 000
inspections conducted daily (no.).....	215	215	215
recovery of rentable revenue in Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market and Western Wholesale Food Market (%).....	99	99	99

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Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

5 During 2025–26, the Department will continue to take forward the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries to promote the upgrading and transformation, modernisation and sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries, which includes:

- assisting fishermen in switching to sustainable fisheries operations and fish farmers in developing sustainable aquaculture through technical support services and credit facilities, including assisting Hong Kong fishermen to develop deep-sea mariculture in the new fish culture zones; developing modernised pond fish culture; promotion of leisure fisheries; and provision of food processing and food and beverage facilities at the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market;
- supporting the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture, such as operation of Agricultural Park Phase 1, preparatory work for Agricultural Park Phase 2 First Stage development, rehabilitation of quality farmland, and promotion of urban farming and leisure farming;
- administering the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund under the enhanced mechanism and expanded scope, to help farmers/fishermen adopt a sustainable and high value-added operation mode and subsidise relevant programmes and research so as to enhance the overall competitiveness of the industries;
- facilitating livestock farmers to develop and adopt modernised and environmentally friendly operation in multi-storey buildings; and
- enhancing the promotion and marketing of local agricultural and fisheries products by diversifying sale and marketing channels as well as establishing local brand, so as to raise public awareness of and demand for local premium products and strengthen their overall competitiveness.

Programme (2): Nature Conservation and Country Parks

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Original)	2024–25 (Revised)	2025–26 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	981.8	1,056.9	1,039.0 (-1.7%)	1,078.4 (+3.8%)
				(or +2.0% on 2024–25 Original)

Aim

6 The aim is to conserve flora, fauna and natural habitats; designate and manage country parks, special areas, marine parks and marine reserve; and control international trade in endangered species of animals and plants in Hong Kong.

Brief Description

7 The Department's work in pursuit of its aim involves:

- the management and protection of country parks, special areas, marine parks and marine reserve under the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208) and the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476) for the purpose of nature conservation, recreation, nature-based tourism and education;
- the conservation of biodiversity and promotion of compatible use of country and marine parks;
- the identification of sites of high scientific value for listing as Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- the provision of nature conservation advice on development proposals, planning studies and environmental impact assessments;
- the monitoring and auditing of ecological mitigation measures for development projects approved under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499);
- the conservation and management of wild animals;
- the licensing control of international trade in endangered species and curbing of illegal trade in endangered species in Hong Kong;
- the conservation and management of the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site and Sha Lo Tung;
- the planning and implementation of the Wetland Conservation Parks System;
- the management of the Hong Kong Wetland Park and Long Valley Nature Park;
- the management and operation of the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark; and
- the promotion of public awareness of nature conservation and enforcement of nature conservation legislation.

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8 The key performance measures in respect of nature conservation and country parks are:

Targets

	Target	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Plan)
country parks and special areas managed (hectares)	44 842 λ	44 312	44 842	44 842
marine parks and marine reserve managed (hectares)	8 517 γ	6 117	8 517	8 517
no. of Sites of Special Scientific Interest listed.....	67	67	67	67
issue of certificates in respect of endangered species (working days).....	2	2	2	2

λ The target is revised from 44 312 ha to 44 842 ha as from 2024.

γ The target is revised from 6 117 ha to 8 517 ha as from 2024.

Indicators

	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Estimate)
seedlings produced	236 500	239 800	230 000
seedlings planted	231 000	232 000	220 000
ecological impact assessment applications and studies handled.....	163	163	160
participants in educational activities	270 000	250 000	250 000
visitors to country parks (million).....	13	11	12
hill fires attended to.....	22	22	22
endangered species licences/certificates	13 906	13 609	13 600
endangered species inspections	23 141	22 901	22 900
endangered species prosecutions.....	60	54	55

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

9 During 2025–26, the Department will focus on:

- updating the Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan;
- taking forward the development of the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park;
- implementing measures to enhance the education and recreation functions of country parks;
- the management and operation of the new North Lantau Marine Park;
- strengthening promotion, conservation and education of geological and cultural heritages of the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark;
- strengthening the control of trade in endangered species and combatting their illegal trade and smuggling;
- strengthening co-operation with the Mainland on conservation of cross-boundary habitats and species;
- reviewing effectiveness of measures for enhanced management and protection of wild animals, including the enforcement, education and publicity of the feeding ban on wild animals and feral pigeons, and preparation for the legislative amendments to enhance protection of marine animals; and
- the promotion of public education and publicity on nature conservation and compatible use of country parks and marine parks.

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

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Original)	2024–25 (Revised)	2025–26 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	559.5	592.4	565.6 (–4.5%)	582.9 (+3.1%)
				(or –1.6% on 2024–25 Original)

Aim

10 The aim is to safeguard the welfare of animals, and control the diseases in animals and plants through the enforcement of relevant legislation; protect public health; protect and regulate fisheries; and provide technical services.

Brief Description

11 The Department is responsible for the prevention of the introduction and spread of animal and plant diseases, safeguarding animal welfare, regulation of drug use in livestock farms, provision of services to facilitate export of plants, animals and plant/animal by-products, prevention of rabies, and enforcement of regulations pertaining to animal welfare and import requirements, fisheries protection and marine fish culture. The work involves:

- the provision of quarantine services;
- the inspection of animals and plants imported into Hong Kong;
- the prevention and control of rabies and other zoonotic diseases;
- the testing of animal diseases, including zoonotic diseases, and chemical residues in food animals;
- the inspection of farms where food animals are kept;
- the inspection of premises and establishments where animals are kept for exhibition or trading purposes;
- the inspection of marine fish culture farms;
- the control of destructive fishing practices;
- the regulation of fishing activities with the use or aid of vessels; and
- the instigation of prosecution against offenders under relevant legislation.

12 The technical services provided by the Department include:

- managing agricultural weirs;
- licensing livestock farms;
- licensing marine fish culture farms;
- registering local fishing vessels;
- facilitating export trade in plants, animals and their products;
- safeguarding public health through the control of pesticides and drug use in livestock farms;
- assessing ex-gratia payments to primary producers arising from development projects affecting agriculture and fisheries; and
- regulating credit unions and co-operative societies.

13 The key performance measures in respect of animal, plant and fisheries regulation and technical services are:

Targets

	Target	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Plan)
<i>Animal and plant regulation</i>				
<i>prevention</i>				
reported cases of rabies	0	0	0	0
dogs vaccinated in strategic Rabies Control Areas (%)φ	80	80	80	80

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	Target	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Plan)
<i>enforcement</i>				
issue of animal health				
certificates (working days)	2	2	2	2
issue of licences/permits				
(working days).....	3	3	3	3
issue of sanitary certificates for				
products of animal				
origin (working days)	3	3	3	3
<i>Technical services</i>				
management of agricultural weirs				
weirs to be cleansed	205	205	205	205
plant health certification				
issue of phytosanitary				
certificates (working days)	2	2	2	2
control of pesticides				
issue of pesticide				
permits (working days).....	2	2	2	2
<i>Renewal of marine fish culture licence</i>				
in person in 50 minutes (%).....	100	100	100	100

φ The World Health Organization recommends a minimum of 70 per cent.

Indicators

	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Estimate)
<i>Animal and plant regulation</i>			
<i>prevention</i>			
stray animals caught.....	1 642	1 788	1 600
animals vaccinated and quarantined	53 026	53 031	53 300
<i>enforcement</i>			
licences/permits.....	9 633	8 843	8 800
animal and plant health certificates.....	16 383	16 164	16 200
<i>Technical services</i>			
<i>ex-gratia payment assessment</i>			
area assessed for crop ex-gratia			
payment (hectares)Δ.....	108	88	144
area assessed for aquaculture fisheries ex-gratia			
payment (m ²)Δ.....	4 390	0	166 660
claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia			
paymentΔ.....	0	962	0
licensing of livestock farms			
licences issued.....	22	25	25
control of pesticides			
pesticides registered	2	4	4
licences/permits issued.....	2 254	2 197	2 200
regulation of credit unions and co-operative societies			
accounts examined or audited	206	198	196

Δ The figures vary from year to year according to the Government's programme for land clearance and development works.

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Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

14 During 2025–26, the Department will focus on:

- strengthening measures for stray animal management;
- strengthening promotion of animal welfare, including preparing for legislative amendments and other measures to introduce a positive duty of care on persons responsible for animals to enhance animal welfare and further protect animals from unnecessary suffering;
- enhancing surveillance on antimicrobial resistance and diseases in food animals in local farms; and
- implementing risk management measures and shortening the quarantine period for imported dogs and cats from places with rabies risk.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2023–24 (Actual) (\$m)	2024–25 (Original) (\$m)	2024–25 (Revised) (\$m)	2025–26 (Estimate) (\$m)
(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets	455.3	586.6	517.9	618.4
(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks	981.8	1,056.9	1,039.0	1,078.4
(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services	559.5	592.4	565.6	582.9
	1,996.6	2,235.9	2,122.5 (–5.1%)	2,279.7 (+7.4%)
				(or +2.0% on 2024–25 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2025–26 is \$100.5 million (19.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024–25. 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 five posts in 2025–26.

Programme (2)

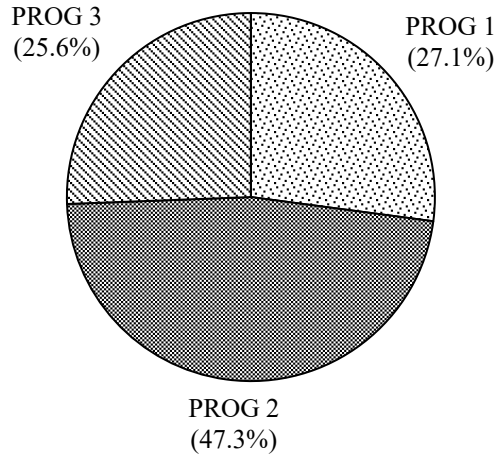
Provision for 2025–26 is \$39.4 million (3.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased provision for operating expenses and the increased cash flow requirement for capital expenditure. There will be a net decrease of seven posts in 2025–26.

Programme (3)

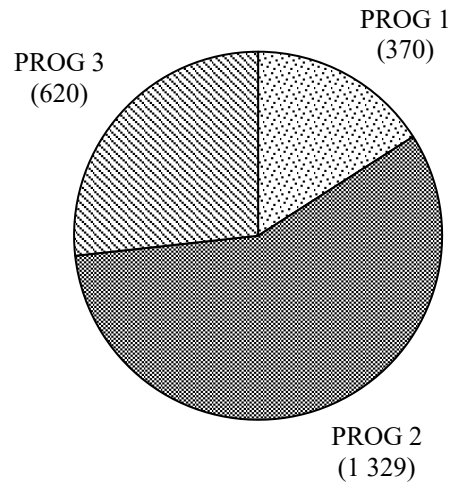
Provision for 2025–26 is \$17.3 million (3.1%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased provision for operating expenses, partly offset by the decreased cash flow requirement for capital expenditure. There will be a net decrease of three posts in 2025–26.

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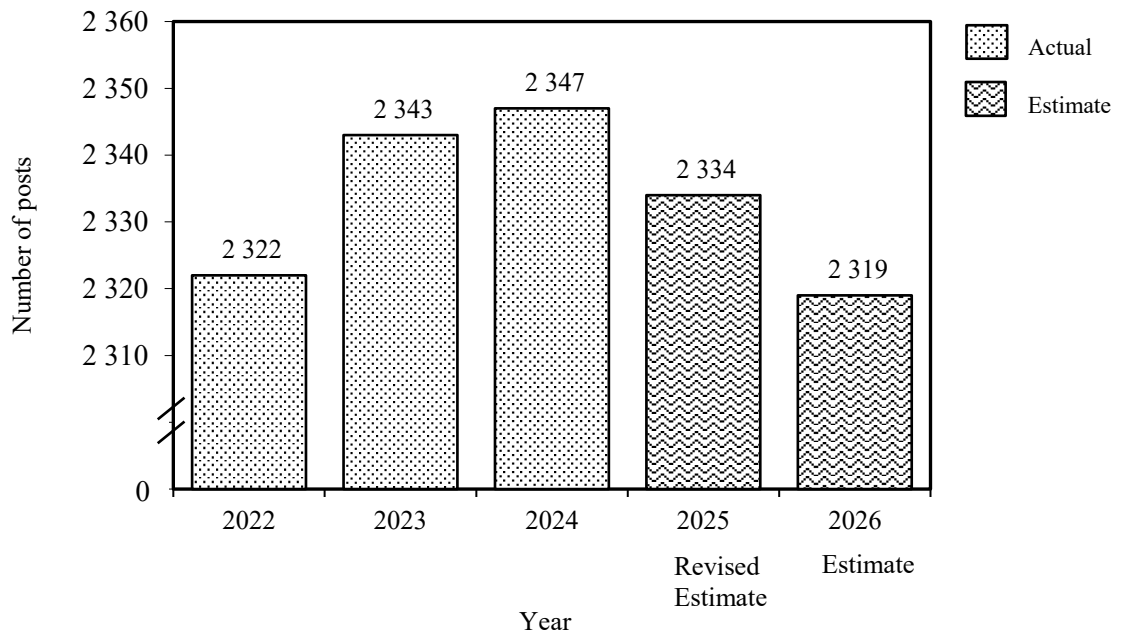
Allocation of provision to programmes (2025-26)



Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2026)



Changes in the size of the establishment (as at 31 March)



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2023–24	Approved estimate 2024–25	Revised estimate 2024–25	Estimate 2025–26	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	1,842,247	1,909,757	1,906,253	1,955,269
	Total, Recurrent.....	<u>1,842,247</u>	<u>1,909,757</u>	<u>1,906,253</u>	<u>1,955,269</u>
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent	106,423	150,400	110,930	180,690
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	<u>106,423</u>	<u>150,400</u>	<u>110,930</u>	<u>180,690</u>
	Total, Operating Account	<u>1,948,670</u>	<u>2,060,157</u>	<u>2,017,183</u>	<u>2,135,959</u>
Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
603	Plant, vehicles and equipment.....	4,125	69,433	1,600	58,478
609	Minor irrigation works in the New Territories (block vote).....	6,231	5,202	4,569	5,448
610	Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote).....	12,195	24,400	24,400	30,300
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	25,358	76,689	74,766	49,539
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	<u>47,909</u>	<u>175,724</u>	<u>105,335</u>	<u>143,765</u>
	Total, Capital Account.....	<u>47,909</u>	<u>175,724</u>	<u>105,335</u>	<u>143,765</u>
	Total Expenditure	<u><u>1,996,579</u></u>	<u><u>2,235,881</u></u>	<u><u>2,122,518</u></u>	<u><u>2,279,724</u></u>

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2025–26 for the salaries and expenses of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is \$2,279,724,000. This represents an increase of \$157,206,000 over the revised estimate for 2024–25 and \$283,145,000 over the actual expenditure in 2023–24.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$1,955,269,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2025 will be 2 334 posts. It is expected that there will be a net decrease of 15 posts in 2025–26. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2025–26, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$1,011,286,000.

4 An analysis of the financial provision under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is as follows:

	2023–24 (Actual) (\$'000)	2024–25 (Original) (\$'000)	2024–25 (Revised) (\$'000)	2025–26 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries	941,489	991,275	982,269	1,006,283
- Allowances	23,251	23,004	24,072	23,894
- Job-related allowances.....	10,463	12,010	10,959	13,216
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution	4,225	5,563	4,690	4,073
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution	90,879	104,258	100,435	113,246
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	760,593	762,258	772,453	783,182
Other Charges				
- Minor conservation projects and studies	6,214	6,550	6,536	6,536
Subventions				
- Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong).....	1,800	1,500	1,500	1,500
- Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific	78	80	80	80
- Rehabilitation of wild animals	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
- Conservation and management of Ramsar site	759	759	759	759
- Animal welfare organisations.....	1,496	1,500	1,500	1,500
	1,842,247	1,909,757	1,906,253	1,955,269

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of \$5,448,000 under *Subhead 609 Minor irrigation works in the New Territories (block vote)* is for a programme to provide irrigation works to assist agricultural development in the New Territories up to a limit of \$10 million for each project. The provision for 2025–26 represents an increase of \$879,000 (19.2%) over the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for projects to be carried out in 2025–26.

6 Provision of \$30,300,000 under *Subhead 610 Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote)* is for minor works such as construction of fire lookouts, shelters, water filling stations and roads and for building materials for recreational facilities such as barbecue pits, information boards, shelters and outdoor furniture, up to a limit of \$10 million for each project. The provision for 2025–26 represents an increase of \$5,900,000 (24.2%) over the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for projects to be carried out in 2025–26.

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7 Provision of \$49,539,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents a decrease of \$25,227,000 (33.7%) against the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the decreased cash flow requirement in 2025–26.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2024	Revised estimated expenditure for 2024–25	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Operating Account</i>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	536	Setting up a marine sanctuary in the Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau area.....	21,000	19,938	380	682
	801	Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund	1,000,000	148,113	25,900	825,987
	803	Financial commitment for culling of pigs due to African Swine Fever	333,000	123,896	33,000	176,104
	808	Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund	1,000,000	162,701	49,500	787,799
	852	One-off assistance package to trawler vessel owners, local deckhands and fish collector owners affected by the trawl ban and other related measures	1,726,800	1,429,548	2,150	295,102
			4,080,800	1,884,196	110,930	2,085,674
<i>Capital Account</i>						
603		<i>Plant, vehicles and equipment</i>				
	806	Establishment of deep sea cages at new fish culture zones	74,000	—	1,600	72,400
	810	Replacement of Biosafety Level 3 Laboratory.....	27,000	—	—	27,000
	856	To replace one and procure two patrol vessels for management of marine parks/ reserve and sea enforcement	45,000	4,439	—	40,561
			146,000	4,439	1,600	139,961
	Total		4,226,800	1,888,635	112,530	2,225,635