

Head 22 — AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

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

Estimate 2017–18 **\$1,521.8m**

Establishment ceiling 2017–18 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 2 145 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2017 rising by 22 posts to 2 167 posts as at 31 March 2018..... **\$711.5m**

In addition, there will be an estimated eight directorate posts as at 31 March 2017 and as at 31 March 2018.

Commitment balance..... **\$1,680.5m**

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

Detail

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

	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Original)	2016–17 (Revised)	2017–18 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	268.0	313.5	301.2 (–3.9%)	453.0 (+50.4%)
				(or +44.5% on 2016–17 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	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Plan)
<i>Agriculture</i>				
accredited vegetable farms				
(total no.)	316#	308	312	316
(total hectares)	3 074β	2 989	3 073	3 074
<i>Fisheries</i>				
accredited fish farms				
(total no.)	125Ω	119	121	125

The target is revised from 312 to 316 as from 2017.

β The target is revised from 3 054 to 3 074 as from 2017.

Ω The target is revised from 123 to 125 as from 2017.

Indicators

	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Estimate)
<i>Agriculture</i>			
composite productivity index (100 in 1985)	148	147	151
production			
vegetables (tonnes)	15 000	14 200	15 000
(\$m)	123.0	158.0	135.0
livestock (tonnes)	18 200	18 400	18 800
(\$m)	636.0	699.0	716.0
throughput at Vegetable Marketing Organization market			
(tonnes)	122 476	106 591	105 000
(\$m)	939.0	889.0	843.0
new loans			
(no.)	66	57	65
(\$m)	6.0	5.1	5.9
new grants ^Ψ			
(no.)	—	—	1 000
(\$m)	—	—	60.0
<i>Fisheries</i>			
production			
capture (tonnes)	145 000	143 000	143 000
(\$m)	2,338.4	2,564.7	2,565.0
culture (tonnes)	3 421	3 704	3 700
(\$m)	163.0	151.9	152.0
throughput at Fish Marketing Organization markets			
(tonnes)	46 430	45 990	46 000
(\$m)	3,214.6	3,392.1	3,390.0
new loans			
(no.)	256	230	450
(\$m)	380.3	212.8	354.0
new grants			
(no.)	—	5@	8
(\$m)	—	10.5@	26.1
<i>Government fresh food wholesale markets</i>			
annual throughput (tonnes)	490 000	470 000	470 000
rental market stall space occupied (%)	99.6	99.4	99.8
area of wholesale markets managed (m ²)	295 645	295 645	295 645
requests for assistance handled (no.)	16 980	18 236	17 800
inspections conducted daily (no.)	202	203	203

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	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Estimate)
recovery of rentable revenue in Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market and Western Wholesale Food Market (%)	96.3	97.5	97.9

Ψ New indicators as from 2017 as the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund including the Farm Improvement Scheme has called for applications since December 2016.

@ Five approved projects under the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund have commenced. Disbursement of the grants is made by instalments according to the progress of the projects. Eight more approved projects are expected to commence in 2017 and the amount of grants to be disbursed to all projects in operation is estimated at \$26.1 million in the year.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017–18

5 During 2017–18, the Department will focus its work on:

- implementing the new agriculture policy to proactively support the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture, including preparing for the establishment of the Agricultural Park, processing applications for the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and commissioning a consultancy study on agricultural priority areas;
- taking follow-up actions on the implementation of the legislation to ban trawling and better regulate fishing activities in Hong Kong waters, and continuing to implement other recommendations of the Committee on Sustainable Fisheries, with the aim of conserving and restoring marine resources;
- preparing legislation for implementing the requirements of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources in Hong Kong, including the Catch Documentation Scheme for toothfish and other relevant conservation measures;
- assisting farmers to capture high-value market niches by providing technical advice on organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production;
- administering the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund to help 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 industry;
- assisting fishermen to switch to sustainable fisheries operations and fish farmers to develop sustainable aquaculture through technical support services and credit facilities, including offering free training on sustainable fisheries operations; and
- promoting good aquaculture practices as well as stepping up monitoring of aquaculture environment and fish health management.

Programme (2): Nature Conservation and Country Parks

	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Original)	2016–17 (Revised)	2017–18 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	591.4	669.1	659.2 (–1.5%)	715.5 (+8.5%)
				(or +6.9% on 2016–17 Original)

Aim

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

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 reserves 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;

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- the monitoring and auditing of ecological mitigation measures for development projects approved under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499);
 - the promotion of public awareness of nature conservation and enforcement of nature conservation legislation;
 - 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;
 - the management of the Hong Kong Wetland Park; and
 - the management and operation of the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark.
- 8 The key performance measures in respect of nature conservation and country parks are:

Targets

	Target	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Plan)
country parks and special areas managed (hectares).....	44 300	44 300	44 300	44 300
marine parks and marine reserves managed (hectares).....	3 400‡	2 430	3 400‡	3 400
no. of Sites of Special Scientific Interest listed.....	67 [^]	68	67	67
issue of certificates in respect of endangered species (working days).....	2	2	2	2

‡ The increase in the total area of the marine parks and marine reserves managed is due to the designation of The Brothers Marine Park on 30 December 2016. The target is revised from 2 430 to 3 400 as from 2017.

[^] The target is revised from 68 to 67 as from 2017 due to the delisting of the Yim Tso Ha Egret Site of Special Scientific Interest on 8 March 2016.

Indicators

	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Estimate)
seedlings produced.....	410 900	403 600	400 000
seedlings planted.....	410 900	403 600	400 000
ecological impact assessment applications and studies handled.....	161	156	160
participants in educational activities.....	365 800	351 400	350 000
visitors to country parks (million).....	13.2	13.0	13.0
hill fires attended to.....	13	13	17
endangered species licences/certificates.....	23 475	19 935	20 000
endangered species inspections.....	30 963	29 963	30 000
endangered species prosecutions.....	179	154	150

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017–18

- 9 During 2017–18, the Department will focus its work on:
- the promotion of public education and publicity on nature conservation and compatible use of country parks and marine parks,
 - overseeing the implementation of management agreement projects for nature conservation,
 - strengthening publicity and education of the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark for the promotion of geo-conservation,
 - the inclusion of selected country park enclaves into country parks,
 - the implementation of the first Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Hong Kong,
 - strengthening the control of trade in endangered species in particular ivory and combating their illegal trade and smuggling, and
 - the preparation for the designation of the proposed Robin's Nest Country Park.

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

	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Original)	2016–17 (Revised)	2017–18 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	305.1	335.5	325.1 (–3.1%)	353.3 (+8.7%)
				(or +5.3% on 2016–17 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	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (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	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Plan)
enforcement				
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

	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Actual)	2017 (Estimate)
<i>Animal and plant regulation</i>			
prevention			
stray animals caught.....	5 189	4 289	4 200
animals vaccinated and quarantined	66 319	62 003	62 000
enforcement			
licences/permits.....	11 029	11 787	11 600
animal and plant health certificates.....	11 774	14 147	14 100
<i>Technical services</i>			
ex-gratia payment assessment			
area assessed for crop ex-gratia payment (hectares)Δ.....	90	80	70
area assessed for aquaculture fisheries ex-gratia payment (m ²)Δ.....	0	0	4 906
claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia paymentΔ.....	1 290	0	700
licensing of livestock farms			
licences issued.....	31	19	22
control of pesticides			
pesticides registered	7	6	7
licences/permits issued.....	2 061	2 124	2 100
regulation of credit unions and co-operative societies			
accounts examined or audited	230	226	224

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

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017–18

14 During 2017–18, the Department will focus its work on:

- preparing regulations under the Veterinary Surgeons Registration Ordinance (Cap. 529) to provide for the election of members of the veterinary profession to the Veterinary Surgeons Board;
- building up its capacity for testing of a number of equine diseases to facilitate the movement of competition horses between Hong Kong and the Conghua Equine-Disease Free Zone;
- promoting the safe and proper use of pesticides, including measures to review the safety of registered pesticides and strengthen education and publicity work;

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- implementing the new regulatory regime on the strengthened regulation of animal trading and dog breeding activities for enhancing animal health and welfare;
- strengthening measures for stray animals management, including facilitating the implementation of the trap-neuter-return trial programme for stray dogs;
- strengthening promotion of animal welfare; and
- conducting antimicrobial resistance surveillance and testing on food animals on local farms.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2015–16 (Actual) (\$m)	2016–17 (Original) (\$m)	2016–17 (Revised) (\$m)	2017–18 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets.....	268.0	313.5	301.2	453.0
(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks.....	591.4	669.1	659.2	715.5
(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services.....	305.1	335.5	325.1	353.3
	1,164.5	1,318.1	1,285.5 (–2.5%)	1,521.8 (+18.4%)
				(or +15.5% on 2016–17 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2017–18 is \$151.8 million (50.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to increased cash flow requirement for the administration of the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund, increased cash flow requirement for the one-off assistance package to trawler vessel owners, local deckhands and fish collector owners affected by trawl ban, and full-year provision for vacancies filled in 2016–17. There will be an increase of five posts in 2017–18.

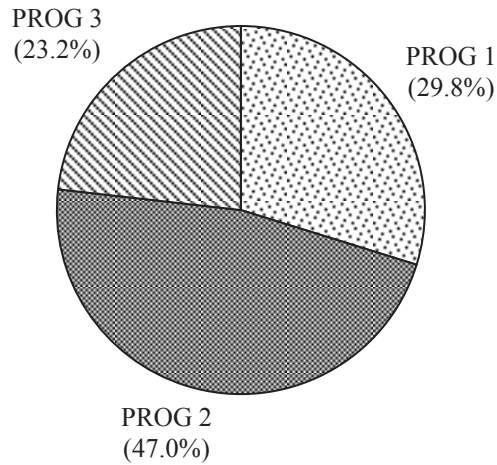
Programme (2)

Provision for 2017–18 is \$56.3 million (8.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to increased expenditure for the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and full-year provision for vacancies filled in 2016–17. There will be an increase of five posts in 2017–18.

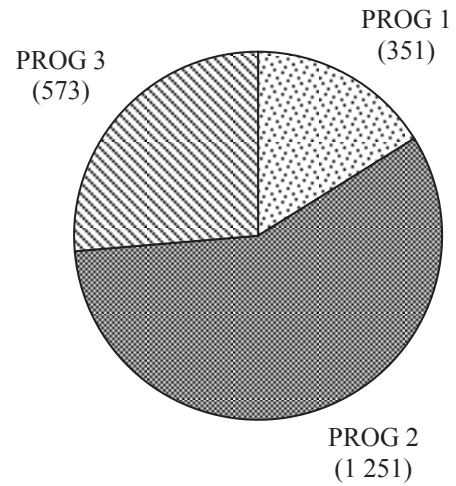
Programme (3)

Provision for 2017–18 is \$28.2 million (8.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to increase in capital expenditure for plant, vehicles and equipment, full-year provision for vacancies filled in 2016–17 and increased expenditure relating to antimicrobial resistance surveillance and testing on food animals on local farms. There will be an increase of 12 posts in 2017–18.

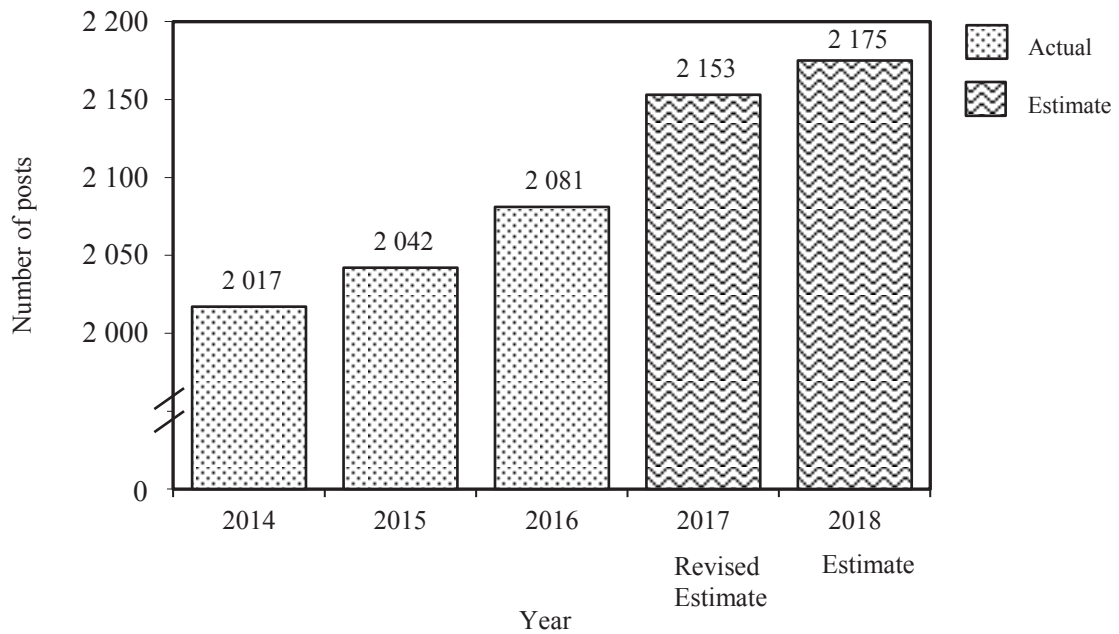
Allocation of provision to programmes (2017-18)



Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2018)



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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2015-16	Approved estimate 2016-17	Revised estimate 2016-17	Estimate 2017-18	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	1,117,830	1,215,301	1,197,170	1,323,962
	Total, Recurrent.....	1,117,830	1,215,301	1,197,170	1,323,962
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent	15,978	36,049	27,491	145,022
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	15,978	36,049	27,491	145,022
	Total, Operating Account	1,133,808	1,251,350	1,224,661	1,468,984
Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
600	Works	3,364	7,343	7,343	7,544
603	Plant, vehicles and equipment.....	6,575	11,326	2,859	13,010
609	Minor irrigation works in the New Territories (block vote).....	797	3,920	3,920	2,827
610	Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote).....	9,022	12,530	12,530	11,187
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	10,962	31,629	34,210	18,295
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	30,720	66,748	60,862	52,863
	Total, Capital Account.....	30,720	66,748	60,862	52,863
	Total Expenditure	1,164,528	1,318,098	1,285,523	1,521,847

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2017–18 for the salaries and expenses of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is \$1,521,847,000. This represents an increase of \$236,324,000 over the revised estimate for 2016–17 and \$357,319,000 over the actual expenditure in 2015–16.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$1,323,962,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. It represents an increase of \$126,792,000 (10.6%) over the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to increased provision for filling of vacancies and new posts in 2017–18 and increased requirement for departmental expenses mainly for work relating to implementing initiatives and measures of the new agriculture policy, implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the antimicrobial resistance surveillance and testing on food animals on local farms.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2017 will be 2 153 posts. It is expected that there will be an increase of 22 posts in 2017–18. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2017–18, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$711,503,000.

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

	2015–16 (Actual) (\$'000)	2016–17 (Original) (\$'000)	2016–17 (Revised) (\$'000)	2017–18 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	654,428	706,548	695,531	741,090
- Allowances.....	13,558	15,428	15,345	15,644
- Job-related allowances.....	7,600	8,921	9,105	9,225
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	2,461	5,399	3,500	4,381
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	25,424	31,014	30,000	37,714
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	405,686	439,182	433,550	505,899
Other Charges				
- Minor conservation projects and studies ...	6,366	6,470	6,400	6,270
Subventions				
- Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong)	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
- Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific	78	80	80	80
- Subventions for conservation and management of Ramsar site.....	759	759	759	759
- Animal welfare organisations	470	500	500	500
- Biodiversity Education ^ψ	—	—	1,400	1,400
	1,117,830	1,215,301	1,197,170	1,323,962

^ψ To collaborate with environmental non-governmental organisations in delivering education programmes to the public with a view to raising their awareness and understanding for the conservation of biodiversity.

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of \$2,827,000 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 2017–18 represents a decrease of \$1,093,000 (27.9%) against the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to decrease in expenditure requirement for projects to be carried out in 2017–18.

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6 Provision of \$11,187,000 under *Subhead 610 Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote)* is for minor works such as fire lookouts, shelters 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 2017–18 represents a decrease of \$1,343,000 (10.7%) against the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to decrease in expenditure requirement for upgrading various facilities in country parks in 2017–18.

7 Provision of \$18,295,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents a decrease of \$15,915,000 (46.5%) against the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to decrease in expenditure requirement for scheduled replacement of minor plant and equipment.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2016	Revised estimated expenditure for 2016–17	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	19,179	50	1,771
540	Artificial reefs project		80,100	74,765	300	5,035
801	Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund		500,000	—	—	500,000
808	Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund		500,000	2,191	16,900	480,909
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	1,071,943	9,939	644,918
			<u>2,827,900</u>	<u>1,168,078</u>	<u>27,189</u>	<u>1,632,633</u>
<i>Capital Account</i>						
600	<i>Works</i>					
804	Improvement to the mountain bike trail network in Tai Lam Country Park		5,700	4,812	488	400
840	Construction of two timber boardwalks at the Hong Kong Wetland Park		3,000	2,524	303	173
882	Reconstruction of rainshelters in country parks - Phase One		9,714	461	3,300	5,953
883	Reconstruction of forest track in country parks - Phase One		9,350	—	2,335	7,015
885	Provision of sitting out area at Sai Wan in Sai Kung East Country Park		9,130	188	—	8,942
			<u>36,894</u>	<u>7,985</u>	<u>6,426</u>	<u>22,483</u>
603	<i>Plant, vehicles and equipment</i>					
811	Procurement of one patrol vessel		13,950	—	800	13,150
828	Procurement of ten boundary light buoys		2,500	—	—	2,500
851	Acquisition of a medium-sized hovercraft		2,700	—	—	2,700
855	Expansion of Biosafety Level 3 Modular Laboratory		7,000	—	—	7,000
			<u>26,150</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>800</u>	<u>25,350</u>
	Total		<u>2,890,944</u>	<u>1,176,063</u>	<u>34,415</u>	<u>1,680,466</u>