

Head 22 — AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

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

Estimate 2016–17 **\$1,318.1m**

Establishment ceiling 2016–17 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 2 073 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2016 rising by 72 posts to 2 145 posts as at 31 March 2017..... **\$672.6m**

In addition, there will be an estimated eight directorate posts as at 31 March 2016 and as at 31 March 2017.

Commitment balance..... **\$1,209.4m**

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

	2014–15 (Actual)	2015–16 (Original)	2015–16 (Revised)	2016–17 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	257.7	320.8	281.4 (–12.3%)	313.5 (+11.4%)
				(or –2.3% on 2015–16 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	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Plan)
<i>Agriculture</i>				
accredited vegetable farms				
(total no.)	312#	305	308	312
(total hectares)	3 054β	3 012	2 989	3 054
<i>Fisheries</i>				
accredited fish farms				
(total no.)	123Ω	116	119	123

The target is revised from 314 to 312 as from 2016.

β The target is revised from 3 414 to 3 054 as from 2016.

Ω The target is revised from 120 to 123 as from 2016.

Indicators

	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Estimate)
<i>Agriculture</i>			
composite productivity index (100 in 1985)	149	148	151
production			
vegetables (tonnes)	15 500	15 000	15 000
(\$m)	116.0	123.0	123.0
livestock (tonnes)	18 200	18 200	19 000
(\$m)	534.0	636.0	620.0
throughput at Vegetable Marketing Organization market			
(tonnes)	129 164	122 476	126 500
(\$m)	967.0	939.0	959.0
new loans			
(no.)	73	66	73
(\$m)	6.7	6.0	6.6
<i>Fisheries</i>			
production			
capture (tonnes)	161 000	145 000	145 000
(\$m)	2,531.0	2,338.4	2,338.0
culture (tonnes)	3 377	3 421	3 420
(\$m)	169.0	163.0	163.0
throughput at Fish Marketing Organization markets			
(tonnes)	45 430	46 430	46 400
(\$m)	2,934.3	3,214.6	3,214.0
new loans			
(no.)	282	256	290
(\$m)	177.2	380.3	550.0
new grants			
(no.)	—	—@	9
(\$m)	—	—@	24.3
<i>Government fresh food wholesale markets</i>			
annual throughput (tonnes)	500 000	490 000	500 000
rental market stall space occupied (%)	98.0	99.6	99.6
area of wholesale markets managed (m ²)	295 645	295 645	295 645
requests for assistance handled (no.)	20 165	16 980	17 800
inspections conducted daily (no.)	198	202	202
recovery of rentable revenue in Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market and Western Wholesale Food Market (%)	96.0	96.3	96.3

@ Six applications under the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund involving a total amount of \$28.3 million have been approved in principle. Upon signing of the funding agreements, the grants are expected to be disbursed starting from the first quarter of 2016 by instalments.

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Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2016–17

- 5 During 2016–17, 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 and the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund;
 - 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

	2014–15 (Actual)	2015–16 (Original)	2015–16 (Revised)	2016–17 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	578.8	608.9	600.4 (–1.4%)	669.1 (+11.4%)
				(or +9.9% on 2015–16 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;
 - 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 Global Geopark of China.

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

Targets

	Target	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Plan)
country parks and special areas managed (hectares).....	44 300	44 300	44 300	44 300
marine parks and marine reserves managed (hectares).....	2 430	2 430	2 430	2 430
no. of Sites of Special Scientific Interest listed.....	68 [^]	67	68	68
issue of certificates in respect of endangered species (working days).....	2	2	2	2

[^] The target is revised from 67 to 68 as from 2016 due to the newly designated Site of Special Scientific Interest on Sunshine Island.

Indicators

	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Estimate)
seedlings produced.....	549 900	410 900	400 000
seedlings planted.....	555 900	410 900	400 000
ecological impact assessment applications and studies handled.....	159	161	160
participants in educational activities.....	280 600	365 800	330 000
visitors to country parks (million).....	11.2	13.2	12.0
hill fires attended to.....	26	13	21
endangered species licences/certificates.....	25 894	23 475	23 000
endangered species inspections.....	33 357	30 963	31 000
endangered species prosecutions.....	266	179	180

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2016–17

9 During 2016–17, the Department will focus its work on:

- the implementation of a territory-wide survey programme to collect information required for maintaining and updating an ecological database,
- 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 Global Geopark of China for the promotion of geo-conservation,
- the inclusion of selected country park enclaves into country parks,
- the preparation and 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 Brothers Marine Park.

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

	2014–15 (Actual)	2015–16 (Original)	2015–16 (Revised)	2016–17 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	303.5	303.8	304.7 (+0.3%)	335.5 (+10.1%)
				(or +10.4% on 2015–16 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.

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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	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Plan)
<i>Animal and plant regulation</i>				
prevention				
reported cases of rabies	0	0	0	0
dogs vaccinated in strategic Rabies Control Areas (%)φ	80	80	80	80
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

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	Target	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Plan)
<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

	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Actual)	2016 (Estimate)
<i>Animal and plant regulation</i>			
prevention			
stray animals caught.....	6 886	5 189	5 200
animals vaccinated and quarantined	62 917	66 319	65 670
enforcement			
licences/permits.....	9 691	11 029	11 040
animal and plant health certificates.....	12 208	11 774	11 800
<i>Technical services</i>			
ex-gratia payment assessment			
area assessed for crop ex-gratia			
payment (hectares)Δ.....	90	90	80
area assessed for aquaculture fisheries ex-gratia			
payment (m ²)Δ.....	0	0	0
claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia			
paymentΔ.....	701	1 290	700
licensing of livestock farms			
licences issued.....	22	31	19
control of pesticides			
pesticides registered	6	7	8
licences/permits issued.....	2 026	2 061	2 060
regulation of credit unions and co-operative societies			
accounts examined or audited.....	232	230	226

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 2016–17

14 During 2016–17, 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;
- following through the legislative amendments to the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Animal Traders) Regulations (Cap. 139B) to strengthen regulation of pet trading;
- strengthening measures for stray animals management, including facilitating the implementation of the trap-neuter-return trial programme for stray dogs; and
- strengthening promotion of animal welfare.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2014–15 (Actual) (\$m)	2015–16 (Original) (\$m)	2015–16 (Revised) (\$m)	2016–17 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets.....	257.7	320.8	281.4	313.5
(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks.....	578.8	608.9	600.4	669.1
(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services.....	303.5	303.8	304.7	335.5
	1,140.0	1,233.5	1,186.5 (–3.8%)	1,318.1 (+11.1%)
				(or +6.9% on 2015–16 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2016–17 is \$32.1 million (11.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2015–16. This is mainly due to full-year provision for vacancies filled in 2015–16, provision for new posts in 2016–17, increased expenditure for payments of contractual services relating to the management of wholesales markets and increased cash flow requirement for the administration of the Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund. There will be a net increase of 13 posts in 2016–17.

Programme (2)

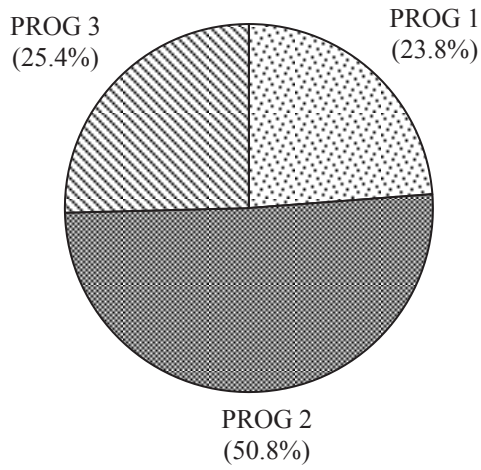
Provision for 2016–17 is \$68.7 million (11.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2015–16. This is mainly due to full-year provision for vacancies filled in 2015–16, provision for new posts in 2016–17, increased expenditure for the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, increased expenditure for works in country parks and increased expenditure for plant, vehicles and equipment. There will be an increase of 40 posts in 2016–17.

Programme (3)

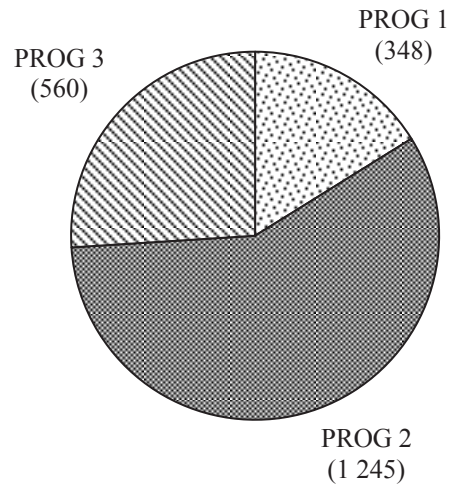
Provision for 2016–17 is \$30.8 million (10.1%) higher than the revised estimate for 2015–16. This is mainly due to full-year provision for vacancies filled in 2015–16, provision for new posts in 2016–17 and increased expenditure for plant, vehicles and equipment. There will be an increase of 19 posts in 2016–17.

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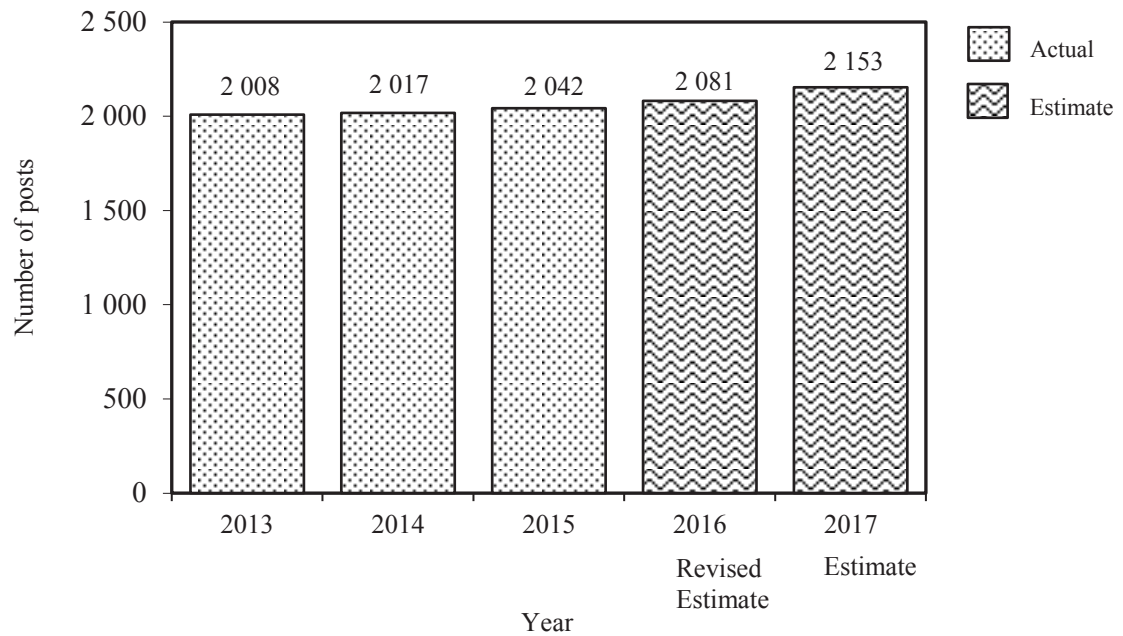
Allocation of provision to programmes (2016-17)



Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2017)



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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2014–15	Approved estimate 2015–16	Revised estimate 2015–16	Estimate 2016–17	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	1,088,626	1,113,969	1,130,808	1,215,301
	Total, Recurrent.....	1,088,626	1,113,969	1,130,808	1,215,301
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent	26,361	71,789	23,760	36,049
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	26,361	71,789	23,760	36,049
	Total, Operating Account	1,114,987	1,185,758	1,154,568	1,251,350
Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
600	Works	3,402	11,370	4,564	7,343
603	Plant, vehicles and equipment.....	3,582	17,052	6,379	11,326
609	Minor irrigation works in the New Territories (block vote).....	823	1,000	992	3,920
610	Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote).....	9,712	10,048	9,956	12,530
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	7,540	8,271	10,067	31,629^η
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	25,059	47,741	31,958	66,748
	Total, Capital Account.....	25,059	47,741	31,958	66,748
	Total Expenditure	1,140,046	1,233,499	1,186,526	1,318,098

^η Provision of \$31,629,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents an increase of \$21,562,000 (214.2%) over the revised estimate for 2015–16. This reflects the updating of the ambit of this block vote subhead as set out in the Introduction to the Estimates and the increased requirement for scheduled replacement of minor plant and equipment.

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2016–17 for the salaries and expenses of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is \$1,318,098,000. This represents an increase of \$131,572,000 over the revised estimate for 2015–16 and \$178,052,000 over the actual expenditure in 2014–15.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$1,215,301,000 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 2016 will be 2 081 posts. It is expected that there will be a net increase of 72 posts in 2016–17. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2016–17, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$672,576,000.

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

	2014–15 (Actual) (\$'000)	2015–16 (Original) (\$'000)	2015–16 (Revised) (\$'000)	2016–17 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	632,773	663,552	668,733	706,548
- Allowances.....	11,714	15,249	14,441	15,428
- Job-related allowances.....	7,575	8,646	8,411	8,921
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	2,633	2,921	2,437	5,399
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	21,262	25,197	25,324	31,014
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	403,938	389,595	402,653	439,182
Other Charges				
- Minor conservation projects and studies ...	6,447	6,470	6,470	6,470
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	447	500	500	500
	1,088,626	1,113,969	1,130,808	1,215,301

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of \$3,920,000 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 \$10,000,000 for each project. The provision for 2016–17 represents an increase of \$2,928,000 (295.2%) over the revised estimate for 2015–16. This is mainly due to increase in expenditure requirement for projects to be carried out in 2016–17.

6 Provision of \$12,530,000 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 \$10,000,000 for each project. The provision for 2016–17 represents an increase of \$2,574,000 (25.9%) over the revised estimate for 2015–16. This is mainly due to increase in expenditure requirement for upgrading various facilities in country parks in 2016–17.

7 Provision of \$31,629,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents an increase of \$21,562,000 (214.2%) over the revised estimate for 2015–16. This reflects the updating of the ambit of this block vote subhead as set out in the Introduction to the Estimates and the increased 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 31.3.2015	Revised estimated expenditure for 2015–16	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	19,129	50	1,821
	540	Artificial reefs project	80,100	73,195	1,600	5,305
	808	Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund	500,000	—	8,000	492,000
	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	1,059,777	14,110	652,913
			<u>2,327,900</u>	<u>1,152,101</u>	<u>23,760</u>	<u>1,152,039</u>
<i>Capital Account</i>						
600		<i>Works</i>				
	804	Improvement to the mountain bike trail network in Tai Lam Country Park	5,700	4,105	898	697
	840	Construction of two timber boardwalks at the Hong Kong Wetland Park	3,000	1,950	617	433
	853	Minor irrigation works project at Wo Tin	1,199	—	599	600
	854	Minor irrigation works project at Pui O ..	1,523	—	762	761
	882	Reconstruction of rainshelters in country parks - Phase One	9,714	—	1,000	8,714
	883	Reconstruction of forest track in country parks - Phase One	9,350	—	500	8,850
	885	Provision of sitting out area at Sai Wan in Sai Kung East Country Park	9,130	—	188	8,942
			<u>39,616</u>	<u>6,055</u>	<u>4,564</u>	<u>28,997</u>
603		<i>Plant, vehicles and equipment</i>				
	811	Procurement of one patrol vessel¶	13,950¶	—	—	13,950
	828	Procurement of ten boundary light buoys	2,500	—	—	2,500
	835	Replacement of major moving parts for the screening plant at Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market	2,088	375	1,281	432
	836	Development of closed recirculating aquaculture system	4,000	1,395	1,870	735
	837	Replacement of control unit and associated accessories for condenser water pumps at Heat Exchanger Room at Phase One of Western Wholesale Food Market	2,320	522	1,345	453

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Commitments—Cont'd.

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2015	Revised estimated expenditure for 2015–16	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital Account—Cont'd.						
603		<i>Plant, vehicles and equipment—Cont'd.</i>				
839		Replacement of automatic self-cleansing seawater strainer No.3 and its accessories for heat exchangers at Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market.....	2,088	375	1,281	432
851		Acquisition of a medium-sized hovercraft.....	2,700	—	—	2,700
855		Expansion of Biosafety Level 3 Modular Laboratory.....	7,000	—	—	7,000
894		Replacement of three sets of seawater pump for the cooling system of cold storage stalls at Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market.....	5,220	4,415	602	203
			<u>41,866</u>	<u>7,082</u>	<u>6,379</u>	<u>28,405</u>
		Total	<u>2,409,382</u>	<u>1,165,238</u>	<u>34,703</u>	<u>1,209,441</u>

¶ The original commitment for the item, as approved in 2013–14, was \$10,000,000. An increase in the commitment is sought in the context of the Appropriation Bill 2016.