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### Replies to supplementary questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Session No. : 12

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-EEB(E)001**

**(Question Serial No. S042)**

Head: (22) Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

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

Programme: (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

1. It is mentioned in the reply that the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has been promoting the theme of "Hiking Etiquette" in recent years through publicising on social media and organising diversified nature education activities. But MacLehose Trail in Sai Kung was repeatedly overcrowded with hikers recently, which has overloaded the traffic and led to potential safety risks. Does the Government have any plan to redeploy resources to carry out publicity and education work targeted at this tourist hot spot? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. Will the Government conduct a study from the perspective of overall tourism to review the tourist receiving capacity in the vicinity of Section 1 and Section 2 of MacLehose Trail as well as its traffic carrying capacity, and formulate corresponding improvement and response measures to specifically tackle the problem of "black taxis" in Sai Kung? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
3. As more people love hiking or participate in trail activities in recent years, it has expedited the wear and tear of trails. But it is mentioned in the reply that the vacancy rates in staff establishment for the construction and maintenance of hiking trails and other recreational facilities in country parks ranged from 35% to 40% in recent years. Has this led to prolonged dilapidation of existing trails?
4. It is mentioned in the reply that the AFCD has employed staff to make up for the insufficient manpower through the Non-Civil Service Contract Staff Scheme and the Post-retirement Service Contract Scheme. But apart from the succession programmes, will the Government launch more volunteer schemes to encourage the public to participate in the maintenance and repair work for trails? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent

Reply:

1. Apart from continuously promoting the hiking etiquette and disseminating safety messages to the public through different channels, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) also redeploys existing resources and collaborates with the Hong Kong Tourism Board and relevant departments to step up its education

and publicity work for MacLehose Trail in Sai Kung in order to remind visitors of hiking safety and using proper trails, as well as promote the messages of caring for the environment and taking away their litter. As far as the High Island Reservoir East Dam is concerned, when there are high volume of visitors and busy traffic to and from the area, the AFCD will issue posts on the social media platform to remind the public to plan their journey in advance and allow enough time to leave, as well as disseminate the message on the enhanced services of the Green Minibus Route No. 9A.

2. The Government has been monitoring the usage of country parks. During recent weekends and public holidays, there were more visitors going to Section 1 and Section 2 of MacLehose Trail for hiking. A relatively greater proportion of the visitors went to spots around High Island Reservoir East Dam via Sai Kung Man Yee Road by taxi, resulting in traffic congestion. To meet visitors' need for public transport services, the AFCD, in collaboration with the relevant government departments, will review the supporting facilities in the vicinity of the East Dam and enhancement measures, including deliberating with the minibus operators about the arrangements for further enhancing the services, carrying out temporary improvement works at suitable locations of Sai Kung Man Yee Road, strengthening the dissemination of traffic information and continuing to carry out publicity and enforcement actions at the East Dam, in order to combat malpractices of overcharging of taxi drivers. In addition, the Government will encourage visitors to visit different country parks by improving the coverage of trail networks and carrying out strategic promotion to prevent individual hot spots from becoming overcrowded.
3. The AFCD has been deploying staff to inspect the trails and recreational facilities in country parks on a regular basis. When maintenance is found required for the trails or other facilities, the AFCD will flexibly redeploy resources to complete the maintenance works as soon as possible, taking into account factors such as the urgency, geographical location, nature and scale of the maintenance works. Even there are vacancies in the establishment, the AFCD will engage contract staff and outsourced contractors to assist with the maintenance work. Currently, the trails in country parks are generally in good condition.
4. The AFCD has launched a public engagement programme named "Repair Our Own Trails" since 2016, which aims to allow the public to understand the principles and methodologies of constructing and maintaining trails in country parks, promote the sustainable use of trails and nurture volunteers for the maintenance of trails in country parks. Since the launch of the programme, 48 workshops have been organised with a total of over 1 500 attendances, enabling volunteers to personally participate in the construction of "handmade trail". Noting the increasing interest of the public in the trails in Hong Kong, the AFCD will continue to take forward the programme in collaboration with different organisations and institutions with a view to further promoting the sustainable use of hiking trails and encouraging more people to participate in the volunteer trail maintenance activities.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SV-EEB(E)001**

**(Question Serial No. SV026)**

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

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

Programme: (2) Sewage Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (MOK Wing-cheong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the construction of public sewerage systems for unsewered areas in Yuen Long, please provide details of the following:

- (a) the implementation and timetable of the projects concerned (if any);
- (b) apart from historical factors in the locality, the reasons for a relatively slower implementation progress in Yuen Long than in other areas, including whether it is due to (i) a lack of financial resources; (ii) a lack of necessity to carry out the projects concerned; or (iii) a lower priority as compared to the village sewerage projects in other areas / new development areas or other projects;
- (c) whether the Government can confirm that public sewerage systems will still be progressively constructed for unsewered areas in Yuen Long to avoid local residents from relying on individual and simple on-site facilities (e.g. septic tanks) for sewage treatment and disposal; and
- (d) whether and how the implementation of relevant projects can be expedited?

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael

Reply:

(a)

The Government has been striving to plan and develop the sewerage infrastructure in Yuen Long District to continuously improve the environmental hygiene conditions in rural areas. Currently, the construction of public sewerage system has been completed for 17 village areas in Yuen Long District (including recent completion of works for some areas in Kam Tin Shi last year). The Drainage Services Department (DSD) is currently constructing a public sewerage system for Tung Tau Tsuen in Shap Pat Heung. Moreover, the DSD has completed the investigation work relating to sewerage systems for a total of 29 village areas in Shap Pat Heung and Kam Tin Heung. The DSD will commence the next step of work in a timely manner.

The advance work for the village sewerage projects involves various steps, such as planning, feasibility study, detailed design, consultation, gazetting and land resumption, etc. In

particular, it is necessary to communicate with various stakeholders in reaching consensus on the consultation on sewerage schemes and site selection, as well as land resumption matters, before the projects could be taken forward in an orderly manner. Hence, it is difficult to draw up a concrete completion schedule for the remaining village sewerage works.

(b), (c) & (d)

The Environmental Protection Department and the DSD had carried out local consultation regarding the planning and design of trunk sewers and sewerage systems for some villages in Yuen Long, but could not work out a works proposal for some village areas as the stakeholders could not reach a consensus at that time. The Government will continue to strengthen communication with the stakeholders through District Councils, rural committees and village representatives, etc., with a view to reaching a consensus and taking forward the projects.

The Government will take into account various factors holistically, including the level of improvement to the environment by the village sewerage projects, density of village population, preference of residents, technical feasibility, cost effectiveness and financial position, etc. in taking forward the projects concerned, including the village sewerage projects in Yuen Long District, in a timely manner.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SV-EEB(E)002**

**(Question Serial No. SV025)**

Head: (137) Government Secretariat : Environment and Ecology Bureau  
(Environment Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (-)

Programme: (4) Environmental Protection

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Environment)  
(Eddie CHEUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Will the Government consider implementing the trials of methanol-fuelled vehicles to encourage the trade to test out different types of new energy commercial transport through the New Energy Transport Fund? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YICK Chi-ming, Frankie

Reply:

The Government has been encouraging the local transport trade, through the New Energy Transport Fund (NET Fund), to try out various new energy transport technologies adopted in commercial vehicles, with a view to promoting the green transformation of the trade. The subsidy for each commercial vehicle under the NET Fund is 50% of the vehicle price, subject to a ceiling of \$1.5 million. We welcome the trade to submit applications to the NET Fund for trials of methanol-fuelled commercial vehicles. The Steering Committee of the NET Fund will adopt a merit-based approach to assess applications and provide recommendations on priorities for funding support after taking into account various factors, for example, uniqueness of the trials, relative cost-effectiveness of new energy technologies to be tested, contributions of the trials to Hong Kong's green transport development, and how they can help us attain zero vehicular emissions at roadside, etc.

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