

Chapter 18

Environment and Ecology

The government's environmental priorities include improving air quality, implementing a waste-to-resources and waste-to-energy management strategy, improving harbour water quality, promoting energy efficiency, and combating climate change. To enhance food safety, food security and environmental hygiene, it tackles hygiene black spots, updates food safety standards, maintains public markets, facilitates the supply of fresh produce, and promotes the sustainable development of local agricultural and fisheries industries.

The Environment and Ecology Bureau oversees policies on environmental protection, conservation of natural ecology, climate actions, environmental hygiene, food safety, agriculture and fisheries, and animal welfare. It is supported by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), Hong Kong Observatory, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in executing these policies. The Government Laboratory provides analytical and advisory services to support the enforcement of environmental protection and food safety legislation, implementation of the EPD's environmental programmes and routine food surveillance by the FEHD's Centre for Food Safety.

Environmental Protection

Improving air quality and harbour water quality, proper management of municipal solid waste through resources circulation and promoting energy efficiency are important for improving the quality of life. Government spending on the environment in 2024-25 was budgeted at \$27.6 billion, or about 3.3 per cent of total public expenditure.

The bureau works with the Environmental Campaign Committee to encourage the public to contribute to a better environment through publicity campaigns and community programmes. With the theme of carbon neutrality, the 'kNOw Carbon House', under the committee, aims to raise public awareness through interactive experiences and educational activities. Environmental resource and education centres provide the public with access to environmental information.

The government's Environment and Conservation Fund promotes green and low carbon lifestyles by providing funding to organisations undertaking educational, research and other projects on environmental protection and conservation.

The government's \$400-million Green Tech Fund supports research and development projects that help Hong Kong decarbonise and enhance environmental protection. Since its launch in 2020, 39 projects from local universities, public research institutes and private companies have been approved, involving total grants of about \$171 million.

Regulation and Environmental Auditing

The EPD works with the construction, catering, vehicle repair and property management sectors and various other trades to promote environmentally friendly practices and compliance with environmental regulations. Its Customer Service Centre responds to enquiries from businesses on environmental compliance, pollution prevention and environmental management. Departmental inspectors conduct site visits at different locations to enforce controls on air, noise, waste and water pollution and deal with complaints about pollution, resulting in 539 convictions and \$3.25 million in fines in 2025.

Major development projects undergo environmental monitoring and auditing to ensure they meet the performance promised in their environmental impact assessment. These projects are required under their environmental permits to publish the monitoring data and auditing results on dedicated websites or the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance website. In 2025, the department handled 107 environmental monitoring and auditing programmes.

Environmental Assessment and Planning

The EPD assesses and monitors the environmental impact from projects and proposals, and provides technical advice to various planning and land applications to ensure new planning proposals and development projects meet relevant environmental performance requirements, or bring improvements to the existing environment. In 2025, the department handled 63 applications under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance and provided professional advice on 1,809 planning and land applications.

Following the conclusion of a review of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance in 2023, a range of optimisation measures have been implemented to enhance the efficiency of environmental impact assessment. They include simplifying the technical assessment requirements, facilitating direct application for environmental permits, establishing the Hong Kong Environmental Database and updating the list of designated projects. The time required for overall Environmental Impact Assessment projects has been halved.

The Hong Kong Environmental Database integrates diverse environmental data and cutting-edge technologies, such as geographic information systems and 3D visualisation, for efficient environmental planning.

Sustainable Development

The bureau is responsible for promoting the concept of sustainable development in the government and community. All government bureaux and departments are required to conduct sustainability assessments for major new initiatives and present the implications in their submissions to the Policy Committee and Executive Council.

The Sustainable Development Fund provides grants for projects that enhance public awareness of sustainable development and encourage sustainable practices. Since 2003, 82 projects have been approved, involving grants totalling about \$85 million.

The government's Sustainable Development School Outreach Programme and Sustainable Development School Award Programme offer interactive dramas, seminars, workshops and field trips to secondary and primary school students and attendees of the Elder Academy. Schools are also encouraged to promote and implement the concept of sustainable development on campus and in the community. The latest programmes themed 'Nature Conservation and Biodiversity' have engaged about 210,000 participants.

Cross-boundary Cooperation

Hong Kong collaborates with Guangdong and Macao on environmental matters. On air quality, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Guangdong governments work together to improve regional air quality, combat regional ozone problems and forecast air quality.

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Monitoring Network comprises 23 air monitoring stations. Results have shown substantial reductions in most pollutants in recent years. From 2006 to 2024, the average annual concentrations of sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and respirable suspended particulates (RSP) decreased by

86, 48 and 51 per cent respectively. The concentration of fine suspended particulates (FSP) has decreased by 34 per cent since the pollutant was first monitored in 2015. Although the ozone level, which is influenced by regional photochemical smog, has increased by 32 per cent over the past 18 years, the trend has gradually stabilised in recent years.

The Cleaner Production Partnership Programme, which began in 2008, helps Hong Kong-owned factories in Hong Kong and Guangdong province adopt cleaner production technologies and practices to reduce air pollutant emissions, solid waste generation, effluent discharge and carbon dioxide emissions while saving energy and production costs. A new round was launched in May to encourage Hong Kong-owned factories to transform and upgrade traditional industries by adopting new and cleaner production technologies, dovetailing with the country's efforts in promoting high-quality development. As of end-2025, more than 4,300 projects had been approved under the programme.

Hong Kong and Shenzhen work together to protect the quality of adjoining waters. Cooperation in marine pollution prevention and control has been strengthened through establishing a mechanism to share data on marine and river water quality, discharge flow and effluent quality of sewage treatment plants, as well as evaluate land-based pollutants entering Deep Bay. Over the past two decades, the compliance rate with water quality objectives and long-term water quality of Deep Bay has shown significant improvement.

The water quality of Mirs Bay has achieved the Class I of the National Seawater Quality Standard and, in December, it was selected as a national 'Outstanding Example of Beautiful Bays', accentuating the government's efforts in marine ecological environment protection and representing a significant achievement in jointly building the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) into a first-class beautiful bay area.

To protect the water quality of the Pearl River Estuary, the Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel and Hong Kong-Shenzhen Task Force have respectively established alert systems and issued notifications in response to heavy rainfall, potential surges of marine refuse or other environmental incidents, enabling government departments to take action. As at end-2025, the alert system under the Hong Kong-Guangdong Marine Environmental Management Special Panel had been activated 65 times since its launch in 2017.

Physical Characteristics, Flora and Fauna

Topography, Geology and Landforms

Hong Kong's natural terrain is characterised by rugged uplands flanked by steep slopes. The highest point is Tai Mo Shan (957 metres above Principal Datum) in the central New Territories, and the lowest point (66 metres below Principal Datum) is in Lo Chau Mun (the Beaufort Channel) to the north of Po Toi Island. The mountains are predominantly formed of volcanic rocks, whereas the lower hills and low-lying areas are generally underlain by granite or sedimentary rocks. A layer of soft, weathered rock covers the bedrock in most places, slope debris mantles the natural hillsides, and alluvium fills many of the valleys. Offshore, the seabed is covered with marine mud, with sand sheets occurring near the coast and in channels.

Despite its small size, Hong Kong has a great variety of coastal landforms, including sea cliffs, sea caves, sea arches, geos, tombolos, wave-cut platforms, sea stacks, notches and blowholes.

Flora

Hong Kong, situated near the northern boundary of the distribution of tropical southeast Asian flora, has a rich flora with about 3,300 species of vascular plants, of which 2,100 are native to the city. The major types of vegetation cover comprise woodland, shrubland and grassland. Remnants of the original forest cover can still be found in steep ravines or nearby traditional villages in rural areas. They have survived as a result of their location in precipitous topography and the moist micro-climate, or because they are protected for cultural reasons.

The government continues its afforestation efforts, recognising that woodlands are important habitats for wildlife and protect water catchments from soil erosion.

Fauna

Terrestrial

The climate and physical environment provide habitats and support for fauna that includes over 580 species of birds, 55 species of terrestrial mammals, 25 species of amphibians, 91 species of reptiles, 203 species of freshwater fish, 245 species of butterflies and 135 species of dragonflies.

Some species, such as the Bogadek's burrowing lizard, have been recorded only in Hong Kong. The territory is also home to a number of globally threatened species, such as the big-headed turtle, yellow-breasted bunting, short-legged toad, Chinese pangolin and Chinese tiger dragonfly.

The Mai Po Inner Deep Bay forms one of the city's most important wildlife conservation sites. It is listed as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. About 1,500 hectares of inter-tidal mudflats, fish ponds, tidal shrimp ponds, marshes, reed beds and mangroves provide a rich habitat for migratory and water birds. Around 460 species of birds have been observed in this area. About 50 species are considered globally threatened or near threatened, including the black-faced spoonbill, Baer's pochard, Nordmann's greenshank and spoon-billed sandpiper. The AFCD implements a wetland conservation and management plan to conserve the ecological value of the area.

Traditional *fung shui* woods near old villages and temples and secondary forests provide important habitats for many woodland birds. Warblers, flycatchers, robins, thrushes, bulbuls and tits are among the birds that have been sighted.

Areas around the Kowloon reservoirs and the nearby forests are inhabited by monkeys descended from the rhesus and long-tailed macaques. Feeding them, and other wild animals, is prohibited to make them forage for themselves.

Other mammals that are common in the countryside include the red muntjac and East Asian porcupine, while the leopard cat, small-toothed ferret badger and small Indian civet are less commonly seen. Cave-dwelling bats such as the greater bent-winged bat and Chinese

horseshoe bat are found in caves and water tunnels, while the short-nosed fruit bat roosts under the Chinese fan palm. Sightings of rare species, such as the Eurasian otter and crab-eating mongoose, are reported occasionally.

The territory is home to 116 species of amphibians and reptiles, of which the Hong Kong cascade frog, Hong Kong newt, Romer's tree frog and Burmese python are protected under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance. Most of the 53 species of snakes are non-venomous, and reports of people being bitten by highly venomous snakes are rare. Among the five species of sea turtles recorded in Hong Kong waters, only the green turtle is known to be breeding locally.

Marine

Hong Kong's subtropical marine environment supports species found in both tropical and temperate climates. Situated on the eastern bank of the Pearl River Estuary, Hong Kong receives fresh water from the river, especially in its western waters. The waters on the eastern side, on the other hand, are little influenced by the Pearl River outflow and are predominantly oceanic in nature. This unique hydrography contributes to the high diversity of marine life.

Despite being close to the northern geographic limit for their growth, Hong Kong supports more than 80 species of hard corals. A variety of marine fish also breeds in local waters, with the red pargo typical in the eastern waters.

Two marine mammal species can be found throughout the year. The Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin, also known as the Chinese white dolphin, prefers an estuarine environment and inhabits the western waters, while the Indo-Pacific finless porpoise lives in the eastern and southern parts.

The Marine Parks programme protects sites of special ecological and conservation value. Other fisheries resources enhancement measures, such as deploying artificial reefs and conducting science-based restocking in suitable waters, restore and enhance fisheries resources, as well as biodiversity.

Conservation and Biodiversity

The Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, chairing the Country and Marine Parks Authority, oversees the conservation of terrestrial and marine ecological resources and the enforcement of legislation on nature conservation issues.

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, which covers Hong Kong, aims to conserve biodiversity, ensure the sustainable use of its components, and ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits deriving from the use of genetic resources.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, adopted under the convention, seeks to ensure the safe transfer, handling and use of genetically modified organisms that may affect biodiversity adversely. Hong Kong implements the protocol through the Genetically Modified Organisms (Control of Release) Ordinance.

Taking into account the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, endorsed at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the convention in 2022, the government promulgated the updated Hong Kong's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan in December 2025, setting out 10 overall targets expected to be met by 2035, as well as putting forth four strategic areas, 30 priority actions and 81 priority projects, with a view to enhancing the city's biodiversity conservation work, and contributing to the national and global efforts in achieving the latest biodiversity initiatives.

Protected Areas

The AFCD manages country parks, special areas including Hong Kong Wetland Park, marine parks, the marine reserve, Hong Kong Unesco Global Geopark and Long Valley Nature Park.

About 40 per cent of Hong Kong's land area is designated as country parks and special areas for conservation and recreation. There are 25 country parks and 22 special areas covering 44,842 hectares of scenic hills, woodlands, reservoirs, islands, indented coastlines, marshes and uplands. They are carefully protected and managed for nature conservation, education and scientific studies.

There are eight marine parks covering about 8,500 hectares of scenic coastal waters, seascapes and important biological habitats. The marine reserve is about 20 hectares, dedicated to conservation, education and scientific studies.

Besides designating protected areas, the government identifies and conserves sites of special scientific interest (SSSI), by exercising strict land use planning and development controls. Sixty-seven sites are listed on the SSSI Register.

Hong Kong Wetland Park

The 61-hectare Hong Kong Wetland Park stretches from the northern part of Tin Shui Wai to the southern tip of the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site. It is a special area designated under the Country Parks Ordinance. The park promotes wetland conservation, education and nature-based tourism, and gives visitors the opportunity to appreciate wetlands and local wildlife in an open and natural setting.

Hong Kong Unesco Global Geopark

The Hong Kong Unesco Global Geopark extends from Sai Kung to the northeastern New Territories. The spectacular hexagonal volcanic rock columns in the Sai Kung region are rarely found elsewhere in the world in terms of size and composition. The rock formation was selected as one of the first 100 International Union of Geological Sciences Geological Heritage Sites. There are also sedimentary rocks in the northeastern New Territories region that are 400 million years old and of great geological and educational interest.

Long Valley Nature Park

Located in North District, the 37-hectare Long Valley Nature Park is an ecological conservation facility integrating wetland conservation, farming operations and nature education in one place. Through implementing habitat management and eco-friendly farming practices, it

provides home for diverse wildlife. It offers guided tours and experiential activities to help visitors understand and appreciate the wetland ecosystem of Long Valley.

Countryside Conservation

The Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme provides funding to non-profit-making organisations for implementing conservation and revitalisation projects in countryside areas. Since its launch in 2019, the scheme has approved 57 projects with total funding of more than \$340 million.

To support eco-tourism, better serve visitors and help revitalise desolate villages, the Countryside Conservation Office published guides to guesthouse and food business licence applications in countryside areas in collaboration with relevant bureaus and departments. They set out a series of streamlined measures covering planning, land, and licensing matters. The office also hosted the Countryside Harvest Festival in January at Kuk Po in Sha Tau Kok.

Climate

Hong Kong has a subtropical climate. January and February are cloudier with cold spells, while March and April are milder and humid with fog. From May to August, it is hot and humid with occasional heavy rain and thunderstorms. Tropical cyclones usually occur between June and October, bringing high winds, heavy rain and sometimes storm surges. November and December are generally fine and dry with pleasantly cool weather, and may on occasion be relatively cold at night and in the early morning.

The Year's Weather

It was the sixth-warmest year in Hong Kong since records began in 1884, with an annual mean temperature of 24.3 degrees Celsius, 0.8 degrees above climatological normal. The mean temperature of 26.3 degrees for July to December was one of the warmest on record.

The total annual rainfall of 2,558.7mm was about 5 per cent above climatological normal. Rainfall was concentrated from July to September. The total rainfall in these three months contributed to more than 80 per cent of the annual rainfall. Five Black Rainstorm Warnings were issued by the observatory in the year, breaking the highest annual number on record.

In 2025, 14 tropical cyclones necessitated the issuance of Tropical Cyclone Warning Signals, the most issued in a year since 1946. The Hurricane Signal No 10 was issued twice, during the passages of Typhoon Wipha in July and Super Typhoon Ragasa in September, equalling the record set in 1964.

Climate Change

Carbon Neutrality

Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 sets out four major strategies and targets – net-zero electricity generation, energy saving and green buildings, green transport and waste reduction – to reduce carbon emissions by half before 2035 compared with the 2005 level, and to achieve carbon neutrality before 2050. The Office of Climate Change and Carbon Neutrality coordinates the implementation of decarbonisation strategies, while the Council for Carbon Neutrality and

Sustainable Development advises the government on decarbonisation strategies and promotes deep decarbonisation in different sectors of the community.

Meteorological and Geophysical Services

Weather Forecasting and Information Services

The Hong Kong Observatory provides weather forecasts, warnings and information through a variety of channels, including the media, social media, its website, mobile application MyObservatory, Dr Tin chatbot service and the Dial-a-Weather telephone service. It also produces regular weather television programmes and an educational series, *Cool Met Stuff*.

To provide essential observation data for monitoring different hazardous weather phenomena, the observatory further enhanced its radar and satellite imagery services with more frequent updates and new imagery.

To cope with more frequent extreme weather, the observatory, in 2025, started showing the maximum recorded rainfall over the previous hour for various districts on its website and MyObservatory to inform the public of districts affected by heavy rain. When there is a potential occurrence of a tornado or waterspout accompanying a thunderstorm, the observatory will include this information in its Thunderstorm Warning and issue a Special Weather Tips to alert the public to the potential dangers arising from hazardous weather.

MyObservatory was updated with a new lock-screen weather widget for iOS platform and a radar imagery widget to provide users with more convenient access to the latest weather information. Dr Tin was enhanced with features to help users find commonly used weather imagery, and to answer questions about lunar and solar eclipses, the dates of the 24 solar terms, and information about Gregorian-lunar calendar conversion. The Earth Weather webpage was also enhanced with more weather forecast models.

The observatory also offers professional advice to government departments and other sectors. For instance, it provides aviation weather services to the airport and the Hong Kong Flight Information Region; offers flight crew the latest inflight weather information through its mobile application MyFlightWx; and issues forecasts of wind, weather, waves and swells for the marine community and container terminals.

As the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre for nowcasting, the observatory launched an artificial intelligence (AI) nowcast based on satellite imagery in late December to enhance support for meteorological agencies in the region. In addition, as the Backup Centre of the Asian Aviation Meteorological Centre, the observatory takes over from the main centre in Beijing for one week every quarter to issue hazardous weather forecasts and warnings to aviation users in the Asian region.

Climate Services and Studies

The observatory provides government departments and those involved in disaster prevention and risk reduction with climatological information and predictions. It researches past trends and projections of temperature, rainfall, sea level and extreme weather in Hong Kong and

provides the latest climate change information and scientific input to support initiatives to combat climate change.

Radiation Monitoring and Assessment

The observatory monitors ambient radiation levels and measures the amount of radioactivity in environmental samples. Through collaboration with Chinese Mainland and international counterparts, it enhances its capabilities for monitoring and assessing radiological consequences in the unlikely event of a nuclear incident.

Geophysical Services

The observatory monitors earthquakes and tsunamis and, in 2025, recorded seven locally felt earth tremors. A network of earthquake intensity meters set up with the Guangdong Earthquake Agency also began a trial operation.

The Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Centre (Hong Kong), designated by the National Marine Environmental Forecasting Centre, conducted a scheduled activation for two weeks in December to provide tsunami advisory service to nine countries around the South China Sea.

Time Services

The observatory is Hong Kong's official timekeeper and maintains a standard accurate to within one-hundred-millionth of a second per day. It contributes to the determination of Coordinated Universal Time by the International Bureau of Weights and Measures. The observatory's internet time service recorded about 217 billion visits in 2025. The observatory signed its first cooperation agreement with the National Time Service Centre of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in September to enhance collaboration in time measurement, time-keeping and time services.

Cooperation with Other Meteorological Services

In 2025, observatory representatives attended the Extraordinary Session of the World Meteorological Congress, focusing on updating the Technical Regulations in connection with the United Nations' Early Warnings for All initiative.

During the year, the observatory signed a cooperation plan and a memorandum of understanding with the Shanghai Meteorological Service and the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology of the Government of Cambodia respectively, and signed a renewed memorandum of cooperation in aviation meteorological services with the Air Traffic Management Bureau of the Civil Aviation Administration of China to strengthen meteorological collaboration. The observatory and China Meteorological Administration jointly organised an international workshop for the first time under the Voluntary Cooperation Programme of the WMO in December, with the theme of AI application in weather forecasting. It also marked the second international training activity since the establishment of the Meteorological Training Centre for Belt and Road Countries in Hong Kong.

Public Education and Engagement

The observatory held open days in March, showcasing its application of the latest technology to provide various services, and enhancing public understanding and awareness of climate change and extreme weather.

The observatory promotes awareness of climate change and its impact through school talks, online quizzes, educational videos and publishing articles and the latest international research findings on its website. In 2025, the observatory participated in the Sustainable Development School Outreach Programme, organised by the Environment and Ecology Bureau, and Eco Expo Asia. The observatory also organised activities through the Science in the Public Service campaign, Community Weather Observing Scheme, Community Weather Information Network and Gamma-Go, which included scientific talks and guided tours of its facilities.

Energy

The government's energy policy is to provide a reliable supply of energy at reasonable prices and promote its economical and safe use, while minimising the environmental impact of its production and usage.

Electricity

The Hongkong Electric Company Limited (HK Electric) supplies electricity to Hong Kong Island and the neighbouring islands of Ap Lei Chau and Lamma. CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP Power) supplies Kowloon and the New Territories, including Lantau and several other outlying islands. The electricity supply to consumers is 50 hertz alternating current, while the voltage is 220 volts single-phase and 380 volts three-phase.

Both power companies are investor-owned and regulated by the Scheme of Control Agreements as agreed with the government. They are required to seek the government's approval for certain aspects of their development plans, including projected basic tariff levels. These agreements do not give the companies any exclusive rights or franchises to supply electricity, nor do they define supply areas for either company, nor exclude newcomers to the market. The companies receive a return on their average net fixed assets at the permitted rate of return specified in the agreements.

HK Electric has a total installed capacity of 3,082 megawatts at its Lamma Power Station. CLP Power receives its electricity supply from the Castle Peak Power Company Limited's power stations at Black Point (3,850MW), Castle Peak (3,058MW), Penny's Bay (300MW) and West New Territories Landfill (14MW).

Each company owns its respective transmission and distribution systems. The two transmission systems are connected by a cross-harbour link, which provides emergency backup and some sharing of generating capacity reserves. The link has an installed capacity of 720 megavoltamperes.

CLP Power's transmission system is also connected to the Guangdong electricity network. The company imports about 70 per cent of the power generated by the Daya Bay nuclear power station, which has two 1,026MW pressurised water reactors. In addition, it will import another 10 per cent of Daya Bay's electricity until 2028.

CLP Power has the right to use half of the 1,200MW capacity of the Guangzhou Pumped Storage Power Station phase 1 at Conghua. It stores off-peak electricity from Castle Peak Power's stations and the Daya Bay station in the Conghua plant, as well as generates hydroelectricity to meet Hong Kong's demand during peak periods.

Electricity generation is the largest contributor to carbon emissions in Hong Kong. Coal currently makes up about one-fifth of the fuel mix for electricity generation, down from about half in 2015. Under Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050, the government has pledged to cease using coal for daily electricity generation by 2035 and the target is to achieve net-zero electricity generation by 2050.

Other Fuels

Town gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) are the main types of fuel gas used for domestic, commercial and industrial purposes. Hong Kong has 2.3 million gas customers in the domestic, commercial and industrial sectors, and town gas and LPG respectively accounted for 88 and 12 per cent of the total fuel gas sold in these sectors in terms of heating values in 2025.

Town gas is manufactured at plants in Tai Po and Ma Tau Kok, which have daily throughput capacities of about 10 million and 2.6 million cubic metres respectively. It is channelled to customers via a pipe network of about 3,700km. LPG is imported mainly by sea and stored at five terminals in Tsing Yi, before being distributed to customers, including 70 auto-LPG filling stations.

CLP Power and HK Electric import natural gas from the Chinese Mainland through submarine pipelines to Black Point Power Station and Lamma Power Station respectively for power generation. To enhance the security of gas supply, the power companies jointly maintain an offshore liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal east of the Soko Islands. The terminal can receive, store and regasify LNG before it is piped to Black Point and Lamma power stations.

Natural gas is also sent to the Tai Po gas production plant, and onward from Tai Po to the Ma Tau Kok plant via underground pipelines, for the production of town gas.

Renewable Energy

As pledged in Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050, the government seeks to increase the share of zero-carbon energy in the electricity fuel mix to about 60 to 70 per cent before 2035 through local renewable energy projects and strengthening regional cooperation.

For the public sector, new government buildings are required to adopt renewable energy technologies.

To assess the feasibility of utilising solar energy at restored landfills, a medium-scale pilot solar photovoltaic system with an energy-generating capacity of 150kW at Jordan Valley Landfill was commissioned in 2023, while another pilot solar farm project with a capacity of 1MW at the South East New Territories Landfill in Tseung Kwan O was commissioned in December.

Alongside O • Park1 (Organic Resources Recovery Centre) – located in Siu Ho Wan, Lantau Island and operating since 2018 – O • Park2 in Sha Ling, North District commenced operation in 2024. Adopting biological treatment technology, O • Park1 and O • Park2 convert food waste into electricity and compost products and can respectively process about 200 tonnes and 300 tonnes of food waste per day. In addition to powering their own facilities, the parks can export up to 38 million kWh of surplus electricity to the grid every year, equivalent to the electricity consumption of about 8,000 households. The compost products can be used for agriculture and landscaping purposes.

T • Park (Sludge Treatment Facility) in Tuen Mun also generates electricity. The facility is expected to export up to 17.5 million kWh of surplus electricity to the grid every year upon reaching its designed capacity, which is equivalent to the electricity consumption of about 4,000 households.

Hong Kong's first waste-to-energy facility for treating municipal solid waste, I • Park1 (Integrated Waste Management Facilities Phase 1), commenced the first phase of its trial operation in December. It is currently capable of treating 1,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste daily, which will increase to 3,000 tonnes daily upon full operation. The heat recovered from the incineration process is used to generate electricity. Apart from supporting the facility's own operations, around 480 million kWh of surplus electricity can be exported to the power grid every year, equivalent to the electricity consumption of 100,000 households.

The government has also earmarked \$3 billion to install small-scale renewable energy systems on government premises since 2017-18, with about \$2.4 billion approved for more than 280 projects which can generate more than 27 million kWh of electricity per annum.

The Pilot Scheme on Building-Integrated Photovoltaics at the headquarters of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department commenced operation, supplying renewable energy to the building, in July. The department is collecting relevant operational data, with a view to exploring the feasibility of applying this technology to building facades across the city.

As for the private sector, the Feed-in Tariff scheme provides financial incentives for the installation of private renewable energy systems. Between 2018 and 2025, the two power companies approved about 28,400 applications. Systems already approved could generate about 466 million kWh of electricity each year.

Other measures to assist the development of renewable energy by the private sector include: facilitating the installation of solar energy generation systems in open car parks; relaxing the requirements for the installation of solar energy generation systems on the rooftops of New Territories Exempted Houses; establishing an appropriate non-combustibility requirement and standard for building-integrated photovoltaic systems; and providing exemption from the requirements to apply for business registration and pay profits tax in respect of participation in and the payments received under the Feed-in Tariff scheme.

Both power companies use renewable energy. CLP Power runs a 200kW renewable energy generation system of solar panels and wind turbines on Town Island in Sai Kung and a 14MW landfill gas power generation system at the West New Territories Landfill. HK Electric has

installed solar energy generation systems on the rooftops of its premises and substations and at Lamma Power Station with a total capacity of 2.5MW.

Energy Saving

Improving energy efficiency helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. End-users consumed 272,656 terajoules in 2023, with the commercial, transport, residential and industrial sectors taking up 45, 28, 23 and 4 per cent respectively.

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department promotes the efficient use of energy through public education. The Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme requires prescribed products to bear energy labels informing consumers of the products' energy efficiency performance. The scheme, now in its fourth phase, regulates 11 types of household electrical and gas appliances covering about 80 per cent of energy consumption in the residential sector.

The department's E&M InnoPortal promotes energy-related innovation and technology. It lists the service needs of government departments, public organisations and trades, and universities and start-ups can propose solutions to meet those needs. At end-2025, the portal had collected more than 570 service needs and over 1,750 suggested solutions. More than 260 field trials have started, including over 50 items related to energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Enhancing Buildings Energy-efficiency

As buildings account for about 90 per cent of the electricity consumed, the efficient use of energy is essential for reducing carbon emissions.

The Buildings Energy Efficiency Ordinance was amended in June to expand the scope of regulation to more types of buildings, shorten the energy audit intervals, and mandate the disclosure of information in energy audit reports. These amendments will take full effect in September 2026, and will save an additional 500 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually in 2035, equivalent to the annual consumption of about 150,000 three-person households.

The Building Energy Code stipulates the minimum energy efficiency standards for four major types of building services installations, namely air conditioning, electrical installations, lifts and escalators, and lighting installations. Commercial buildings must also conduct energy audits at least once every 10 years in accordance with the Energy Audit Code. The codes are reviewed every three years and the latest editions were gazetted at end-2024, improving the energy efficiency standards by more than 20 per cent compared with 2015.

In the 2022 Policy Address, the government set the target to improve the overall energy performance in government buildings and infrastructure by more than 6 per cent by 2024-25. In 2023-24, the overall energy performance of government buildings and facilities had improved by 6.4 per cent compared with the baseline year of 2018-19, thereby meeting the target a year ahead of schedule.

For private buildings, the capital cost of buying renewable-energy installations and building energy-efficient installations is eligible for accelerated tax deduction under the Hong Kong Energy Efficiency Registration Scheme for Buildings.

Pollution Prevention

Air Pollution

The government has been implementing measures to reduce air pollutant emissions from local electricity generation, vehicles and vessels. Between 2004 and 2024, emissions of SO₂, nitrogen oxides, RSP, FSP, carbon monoxide and volatile organic compounds dropped by between 36 and 97 per cent.

The government reviewed the air quality objectives (AQOs) again in late 2023 and introduced an amendment bill in 2024 to tighten the five existing AQOs and set three new parameters introduced in the Global Air Quality Guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO). Most of the major air pollutants complied with the WHO guidelines and the new AQOs were implemented on 11 April.

From 2004 to 2025, ambient concentrations of RSP, FSP, NO₂ and SO₂ dropped by 58, 67, 45 and 88 per cent respectively, while roadside concentrations of the same pollutants fell 60, 63, 37 and 83 per cent respectively. With this continuous improvement in air quality, the health risks posed by air pollution have been markedly reduced and the long-term risks have decreased to levels equivalent to those between the WHO guidelines' interim target 2 and interim target 3. This gives Hong Kong a similar air quality to many major European cities and ranks it among the top in the GBA and major cities in the country.

Land Transport

With a public transport-oriented policy that prioritises railway systems, the government provides the public with convenient, environmentally friendly and efficient mass transport services. The Hong Kong Roadmap on Popularisation of Electric Vehicles sets out long-term policy objectives and plans for the use of electric vehicles (EVs) and their associated supporting facilities, with the goal of achieving zero vehicular emissions and facilitating the attainment of carbon neutrality before 2050. The key measures include ceasing new registration of fuel-propelled and hybrid private cars in 2035 or earlier, promoting trials for electric public transport and commercial vehicles, as well as expanding the EV charging network. The government also announced the Green Transformation Roadmap of Public Buses and Taxis in 2024 to promote the electrification of public transport.

By end-2025, the number of EVs, including government and special-purpose vehicles, was more than 140,000 – about a 35 per cent increase on 2024 – while about 16,440 public chargers were available, including approximately 2,650 quick/fast chargers and 10,670 medium chargers.

To support the wider use of EVs, the EV-charging at Home Subsidy Scheme promotes the installation of charging infrastructure in car parks of existing private residential buildings, covering some 140,000 parking spaces. The government also encourages the installation of such infrastructure in parking spaces of newly built private buildings through the provision of gross floor area concessions. The \$300 million Fast Charger Incentive Scheme was launched in July to encourage the private sector to install 3,000 fast chargers by the end of 2028 to support 160,000 additional EVs. As of end-2025, 426 fast chargers have been granted approval-in-principle, of which 19 are in operation.

The trial and application of green commercial transport technologies is subsidised under the New Energy Transport Fund. Around 300 trials have been approved since the fund's inception, with subsidies totalling about \$234 million. Following the announcement of the Green Transformation Roadmap of Public Buses and Taxis in 2024, the government has earmarked about \$135 million and \$470 million in the fund for providing financial support to the taxi trade to purchase 3,000 electric taxis and franchised bus operators to purchase about 600 electric buses respectively. A funding scheme to trial hydrogen fuel cell heavy vehicles was also launched in 2024.

The government implements vehicle emission control measures. Nearly all taxis and about 80 per cent of public light buses run on LPG. Further to the phasing out of about 80,000 pre-Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles, an incentive-and-regulatory programme has been implemented to phase out some 40,000 Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles by 2027. About 32,000 Euro IV diesel commercial vehicles had been retired under the programme as at end-2025, accounting for about 80 per cent of the target.

Controls are in place to curb excessive smoke from diesel vehicles and excessive emissions from petrol and LPG vehicles due to poor maintenance. During the year, 425 diesel vehicles with excessive smoke were reported and 2,375 petrol and LPG vehicles with excessive emissions were identified by roadside remote sensors. Such vehicles must pass a chassis dynamometer emission test within 12 days to prove the problem has been rectified.

Marine Transport

Marine vessels are a major air pollutant emission source. The government caps the sulphur content in locally supplied marine light diesel at 0.05 per cent. All vessels in Hong Kong waters are required to use compliant fuel, such as fuel with sulphur content not exceeding 0.5 per cent and LNG.

In addition, the government launched a pilot scheme to trial electric ferries operating routes across Victoria Harbour. The first two electric ferries have commenced the 24-month trial since December 2024 and May 2025 respectively.

Power Generation

The government tightens statutory emission caps on the power sector progressively through the issuance of technical memorandums and encourages the power companies to further develop and utilise more zero-carbon energy to reduce emissions of air pollutants. The latest set of memorandums was gazetted in May to set out emission caps for power plants for 2030 and beyond. Compared with those set in 2010, the allowances for SO₂, NO_x and RSP under the most recent memorandums have been reduced by about 91, 80 and 75 per cent respectively.

Ozone Layer Protection

Hong Kong implements the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer, prohibiting the manufacture of these substances and their import for local consumption by means of Ozone Layer Protection Ordinance. Importing hydrochlorofluorocarbons for local consumption is banned, with only a small amount permitted to service refrigeration and

air-conditioning equipment. Legislative amendments to control the import and export of hydrofluorocarbons came into effect on 1 December and will implement the requirements of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, which aims to further phase down the use of hydrofluorocarbons.

Noise Pollution

Construction Noise

The EPD controls noise from general construction works between 7pm and 7am and at all times on public holidays through construction noise permits that restrict the use of equipment and the conduct of noisy manual activities in built-up areas. Percussive piling is prohibited at night and on public holidays, and requires a permit during the day on non-public holidays. Noisy diesel, steam and pneumatic piling hammers are generally banned, while hand-held percussive breakers and air compressors must meet noise standards. In recent years, newly developed populated built-up areas were included as designated areas, and the noise emission standards for air compressors and hand-held percussive breakers were tightened by 2 to 3 decibels.

Quiet Renovation

The EPD has been promoting the concept of quiet renovation to property management companies with a view to helping them formulate quiet renovation house rules. As of end-2025, more than 5,000 trade practitioners had participated in seminars and site demonstrations on quiet renovation.

Road Traffic Noise

To mitigate the impact of traffic noise on residents, proponents of development projects are required to assess traffic noise impact when planning new roads and residential developments, and provide direct mitigation measures such as noise barriers, low-noise road surfacing for new roads and innovative noise mitigation designs such as acoustic balconies and windows.

To promote the use of new energy vehicles, all newly registered new energy vehicles (including battery EVs and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, which do not have internal combustion engines or exhaust emission systems) are exempt from noise emission requirements. All other newly registered vehicles must comply with internationally recognised noise standards.

As regards existing roads, the government installs noise barriers and lays low-noise road surfacing materials, with 151 road sections enhanced through these efforts as at end-2025. About 220 new residential development projects, involving about 70,000 units, had adopted innovative noise mitigation designs by the end of the year.

Noise from Industrial or Commercial Activities

The EPD serves noise abatement notices requiring the owners or occupants of premises causing excessive noise from industrial or commercial activities to tone down within a given period. The EPD has also continued to review and enhance measures to more effectively tackle noise arising from street cries.

Railway Noise

In planning new railway projects, MTR Corporation Limited must comply with a statutory environmental impact assessment. The EPD will request the company to make improvements if noise emitted from existing railways exceeds the relevant standards.

Aircraft Noise

The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines restricts new residential developments from being built in areas with aircraft noise levels exceeding the planning standard. The impact of aircraft noise on residents in the vicinity of flight paths at the airport should also be within the planning standards.

Waste Management

Waste Statistics

In 2025, the amount of municipal solid waste disposal dropped to 3.77 million tonnes from 3.85 million tonnes in 2024, and the daily per capita disposal rate also dropped to 1.38 kilograms from 1.4kg in 2024. About 60 per cent of the municipal solid waste disposed was domestic waste, and the remainder was commercial and industrial waste.

Waste Reduction

The Waste Blueprint for Hong Kong 2035 outlines the strategies, goals and measures for waste management up to 2035, so as to move away from the reliance on landfills for direct waste disposal by reducing the per capita disposal rate, raising the recovery rate, and developing adequate waste-to-energy facilities. The government has promoted six major areas of action: waste reduction, waste separation, resources circulation, industry support, innovation and cooperation, and education and publicity.

Various producer responsibility schemes have been introduced to reduce waste at source and facilitate the development of a circular economy. Existing schemes include the Plastic Shopping Bag Charging Scheme, as well as schemes for waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), and glass beverage containers. In 2025, more than 23,000 tonnes of regulated WEEE and more than 24,000 tonnes of waste glass containers were collected and treated. The government has established a common legislative framework for producer responsibility schemes with a view to progressively extending them to cover more products. The EPD is consulting the relevant trades before finalising the implementation details.

Legislation for the regulation of disposable plastic tableware and other plastic products came into effect in 2024 and both the public and businesses have adapted to the change. The number of takeaway customers who do not require disposable tableware has increased significantly, with some chain restaurants reporting that more than 80 per cent of their customers no longer require disposable cutlery. It is estimated that the regulation could reduce, on average, the amount of disposable tableware ending up in landfills by more than 60 million sets every year.

To further encourage catering businesses to expand the use of non-plastic containers, the EPD launched the Non-plastic Container Trial Programme in August, which invited local catering

businesses to trial various types of non-plastic containers and provide feedback on product performance. As of end-2025, nearly 100 catering brands (covering more than 1,300 outlets) and nearly 30 tableware suppliers had participated.

Waste Recycling

The government supports the recycling industry and educates the public to reduce and separate waste at source, so as to improve the quality of the recyclables collected and streamline the treatment process.

The Programme on Source Separation of Waste covers about 2,800 housing estates and buildings and 1,400 commercial buildings, enabling the public to deposit paper, plastic and metal in recycling bins close to their homes and workplaces.

The Green@Community recycling network collects nine common types of recyclables and provides over 800 public collection points. It comprises 12 recycling stations, 82 recycling stores, around 600 regular recycling spots and about 150 smart recycling bins. Green Outreach, under the EPD, promotes waste reduction and recycling through community outreach and providing support at a district level. Programmes such as the We-recycle@School and Green Outreach Volunteer Programme encourage waste separation at source and clean recycling.

A pilot scheme for waste plastic collection and recycling was implemented in nine districts, covering about half of the population with a total recycling quantity exceeding 8,800 tonnes in 2024. Upon the conclusion of the pilot scheme in January, the related services have been taken over by the Green@Community recycling network.

Food waste collection services cover the whole territory, mainly providing point-to-point collection services for public and private premises with larger quantities of food waste. There are currently about 1,500 food waste collection points, covering food processing factories, wet markets, cooked food centres, hospitals, government facilities, tertiary institutions, hotels, shopping malls, restaurants and residential estates.

Food waste smart recycling bins have been installed in all public rental housing estates, with subsidies available for eligible private residential buildings. As at end-2025, there were more than 1,650 such bins or food waste collection facilities across the city. The government aims to place one bin per block in all public rental housing estates by the end of 2026.

The EPD has set up about 250 public food waste recycling points at public refuse collection points, public markets, recycling stations under Green@Community, outlying islands transfer facilities and food waste recycling spots (in the form of kerbside booths with fixed hours and locations) to facilitate public and restaurant participation in food waste recycling. With the introduction of various food waste recycling measures, the overall amount of food waste collected has been increasing, reaching an average of about 350 tonnes per day in 2025.

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Charter encourages property management companies, owners' corporations and residents' organisations of private residential premises to pledge to set up waste separation and recycling facilities accessible to residents and arrange reliable recyclers to handle the recyclables properly, thereby cultivating good recycling habits and

increasing the recovery rate. As at end-2025, about 950 private residential premises had joined the charter, covering about 820,000 households.

Between 2020 and 2024, an average of 32 per cent of municipal solid waste was recovered each year, amounting to an annual average of 1.9 million tonnes. Among the municipal solid waste, the annual average recovery rates of paper, metal and plastics were 40, 92 and 12 per cent respectively.

EcoPark

Over the past five years, an annual average of about 80 per cent of recyclable municipal solid waste has been exported overseas for recycling, with plastics, paper and metals contributing about 90 per cent of the recovered waste. The 20-hectare EcoPark in Tuen Mun promotes development of the recycling industry by providing long-term land at affordable rents to encourage the trade to invest in advanced technologies and value-added processes. Private recyclers in EcoPark recycle waste including cooking oil, metals, wood, WEEE, plastics, construction materials, glass, rubber tyres, lead-acid batteries, EV batteries and paper.

Recycling Fund

The \$2 billion Recycling Fund supports the recycling industry to enhance operational capabilities and efficiency, and the application of technology. As of end-2025, about \$890 million of funding had been approved.

Waste Treatment and Disposal

Refuse Transfer Stations

Municipal solid waste is mainly collected by refuse collection vehicles and delivered to refuse transfer stations for compression, then packed into specially designed containers and taken to strategic landfills or waste-to-energy facilities by sea or land. In 2025, the network handled 3.12 million tonnes of such waste, accounting for 83 per cent of the city's total municipal solid waste.

Landfills

There are three strategic landfills, which serve as the final disposal sites for most of the city's solid waste. The design and operation of these landfills adopt different measures to reduce the impact on the environment. With the South East New Territories Landfill Extension accepting only construction waste, all municipal solid waste is disposed of at the North East New Territories Landfill and West New Territories Landfill, both of which need to be extended to ensure an uninterrupted disposal service. Site formation and construction work is under way at the extensions of both landfills.

Hong Kong has 13 restored landfills and the government promotes their development into recreational or nature conservation facilities.

Planned Infrastructure

To reduce reliance on landfills for municipal solid waste disposal by around 2035, the government is developing a network of advanced modern waste-to-energy facilities. Located on an artificial island off Shek Kwu Chau, the first waste-to-energy facility for treating municipal

solid waste, I • Park1 commenced the first phase of trial operation in December. The government is planning the construction of a second facility, I • Park2, in Tsang Tsui, Tuen Mun, to expand waste-to-energy capacity. The two facilities combined can treat 9,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste per day.

The Food Waste/Sewage Sludge Anaerobic Co-digestion trial schemes at Tai Po and Sha Tin sewage treatment works can treat up to 100 tonnes of food waste per day.

Another recycling centre, Y • Park in Tuen Mun, can turn suitable yard waste into products such as wood chips and wooden boards. A pilot biochar production plant in EcoPark began trialling its production stage in 2024 to explore the technical feasibility of yard waste recycling by converting woody waste into biochar.

Chemical, Clinical and Special Waste

All chemical and clinical waste producers are required to pack, label and store their waste properly before disposal at licensed treatment facilities. The existing trip ticket system tracks the waste movement from its origin to the final disposal point. The Chemical Waste Treatment Centre in Tsing Yi collected a daily average of 20.3 tonnes of chemical waste and 8.3 tonnes of clinical waste for treatment in 2025. Waste producers using its services pay part of the treatment cost.

The government's policy is to return radioactive waste to its original suppliers as much as possible, hence only some low-level radioactive waste needs to be transferred to a dedicated facility for long-term storage. The facility, situated on an uninhabited island of Siu A Chau in the southwest of Lantau Island, is purpose-built to meet stringent international standards for the safe storage of low-level radioactive waste.

T • Park, the sludge treatment facility in Tuen Mun, adopts an advanced incineration technology to treat up to 2,000 tonnes of sludge per day. Incineration heat is converted to electricity sufficient to power the entire facility and export the surplus to the power grid. The facility treated about 396,600 tonnes of sludge and exported 14.1 million kWh of electricity in 2025. Its environmental education centre has had more than 420,000 visitors since its opening in 2016.

Construction Waste

The Construction Waste Disposal Charging Scheme provides economic incentives to reduce construction waste, recover and reuse inert materials, and reduce their disposal at landfills. An annual average of 18 million tonnes of overall construction waste was generated from 2021 to 2025 and the average reuse rate was 91 per cent, having remained above 90 per cent in recent years. In 2025, the amount of construction waste disposed of at landfills was 1.77 million tonnes.

Marine and Shoreline Refuse

Marine refuse in Hong Kong waters is cleared by the Marine Department, which deploys about 42 vessels to remove floating refuse and collect domestic refuse from vessels in anchorages and typhoon shelters. In 2025, the department collected about 2,340 tonnes of such refuse.

Shoreline refuse is cleared by the AFCD, FEHD, Leisure and Cultural Services Department and other government bodies. The Inter-departmental Working Group on Marine Environmental

Management coordinates the efforts of different departments in handling marine refuse and marine environmental incidents.

The government unites community efforts to protect the marine environment through the Clean Shorelines Liaison Platform which disseminates information on coastal clean-up activities via social media and a dedicated website. Since 2015, environmental and volunteer groups have organised more than 4,700 coastal clean-up events through the platform.

Livestock Waste

The Waste Disposal Ordinance bans the keeping of livestock in new towns and environmentally sensitive areas. Where they are allowed, livestock farms must have proper waste treatment systems. A free livestock waste collection service collected about 21,700 tonnes of waste in 2025.

Sewage Treatment and Disposal

The public sewerage system covers the entire urban area and serves over 94 per cent of the population. It collects about 2.86 million cubic metres of sewage daily, with more than 99 per cent receiving chemical or more advanced treatment before discharge.

Harbour Area Treatment Scheme and Improving Near-shore Environment of Victoria Harbour

The government has implemented the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme by constructing deep tunnels to collect and convey sewage generated from both sides of Victoria Harbour to the Stonecutters Island Sewage Treatment Works for centralised treatment and disinfection before discharge into the sea.

The government has also taken several steps to improve the near-shore environment of Victoria Harbour. These include investigating and rectifying major pollution sources in the stormwater drainage system, intercepting pollutants, rehabilitating sewers and dredging drainage culverts and outfalls to address sediment build-up and odour problems. To ameliorate near-shore water and odour problems, the EPD identifies and rectifies sewer misconnections and monitors water quality, with the monitored areas extended to Central, Tsim Sha Tsui, Hung Hom and Kwun Tong.

Sewage Disposal in Rural Areas

As at end-2025, more than 18,300 village houses had been connected to public sewers. Eligible households may apply for loans and grants to connect their village house to public sewers.

Sewage Charges

All water users who discharge sewage into a communal drain or sewer pay a charge of \$2.92 per cubic metre of water supplied, with each domestic account exempt from paying for the first 12 cubic metres per four-month consumption period. There are 27 trades whose effluent strength is higher than that of domestic sewage and they pay a surcharge. These charges are used to recover the operating and maintenance costs of sewage collection, treatment and disposal facilities.

Water Quality

The water quality of Victoria Harbour has improved considerably following the implementation of the Harbour Area Treatment Scheme. In 2021-2025, the harbour's five-year average overall compliance rate with the water quality objectives (WQOs) was 91 per cent. A slight decline in the average compliance rate was mainly attributed to exceptional weather conditions in 2025, which saw an unusually hot summer and a record number of tropical cyclones and rainstorms.

By controlling pollution at source, river water quality has also remained good. During the year, 81 per cent of the river monitoring stations were rated as 'good' or 'excellent', while only 5 per cent were classified as 'bad' or 'very bad'.

Bathing Beaches

Beach water quality is assessed under an established system which rates beaches according to the level of *Escherichia coli* in the sea water. In 2025, all 42 gazetted beaches complied with the bacteriological WQO for bathing waters, marking the 16th consecutive year of compliance. Of these, 29 beaches were rated 'good' and the remaining 13 were 'fair'.

Licensing of Food Premises and Other Trades

The FEHD issues licences for food businesses and permits for the sale of restricted foods. It also issues permits for karaoke establishments in licensed restaurants and licences for places of public entertainment, private swimming pools, commercial bathhouses, funeral parlours, undertakers of burials and offensive trades.

Hawking is regulated and, as at end-2025, there were 4,714 licensed fixed-pitch hawkers and 218 licensed itinerant hawkers. The department also provides executive and secretarial support to the Liquor Licensing Board, an independent statutory body that issues liquor licences, including those for clubs.

During 2025, the department issued 8,409 full, provisional and temporary food business licences; 1,530 permits for the sale of restricted foods, including 98 online restricted food permits; 3,429 licences for places of public entertainment; 40 licences for other trades; and five permits for karaoke establishments in licensed restaurants. The Liquor Licensing Board issued 789 liquor and club liquor licences.

In January, the FEHD introduced the Composite Restricted Foods Permit to cover the sale of various types of restricted food on the same premises or online platform, so that the applicant no longer needs to make individual applications for each restricted food item.

Food Safety and Facilitation of Food Trade

The Centre for Food Safety ensures that food sold in Hong Kong is safe and fit for consumption. It tested about 69,600 samples of food at the import, wholesale and retail levels for chemical and microbiological examination in 2025. The overall satisfaction rate of these tests was 99.9 per cent.

During the year, the Man Kam To Animal Inspection Station inspected 29,511 vehicles carrying live food animals including pigs, cattle and goats, and examined 1,121,642 live food animals.

The FEHD oversees the hygiene standards of licensed slaughterhouses in Sheung Shui and Tsuen Wan. Meat supplied by the slaughterhouses has to pass inspection before delivery to markets. During the year, a total of 1,172,312 pigs, 8,779 head of cattle and 698 goats were slaughtered in the two slaughterhouses; 28,932 samples were taken from food animals to test for veterinary drug residues.

The bureau and Centre for Food Safety, referring to the food safety standards of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and other economies, and taking into account local dietary practices and risk assessment results, review and update Hong Kong's food safety standards and regulatory arrangements. During the year, the Food Adulteration (Metallic Contamination) (Amendment) Regulation 2025 came into effect while the Food and Drugs (Composition and Labelling) (Amendment) Regulation 2025 was passed by the Legislative Council and will take effect on 1 April 2026.

The bureau and the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China signed two cooperation agreements in May, which allow the export of meat and dairy products manufactured in Hong Kong to the Chinese Mainland.

Public Markets and Cooked Food Markets

The FEHD operates 95 public markets, with some 13,100 stalls, mainly selling fresh provisions, cooked food, light refreshments and household items. As at end-2025, the overall occupancy rate at these markets was 82.2 per cent.

A number of new public market projects, including those in Tin Shui Wai, Tseung Kwan O, and Kwu Tung North New Development Area, are under construction.

The FEHD continues to implement the Market Modernisation Programme to renovate existing markets. Stall enhancement works in Ap Lei Chau Market Cooked Food Centre and Luen Wo Hui Market Cooked Food Centre commenced in August, with the two projects expected to be completed by April and July 2026 respectively. As of end-2025, minor refurbishment or improvement works had also been completed in 15 markets.

Environmental Hygiene

To maintain a clean and hygienic living environment for the public, the FEHD provides a range of services, including public cleansing services; pest control; enforcement on shopfront extension; and abatement of sanitary nuisances.

Public Cleansing Services

Enforcement action is taken against littering, spitting and other unhygienic practices in public places. In 2025, some 37,000 fixed penalty notices were issued. To support enforcement against fly-tippers, internet protocol cameras have been installed at 540 illegal refuse dumping black spots.

All streets are swept daily and washed regularly. Mechanical sweepers are deployed to sweep flyovers and highways.

In 2025, about 5,550 tonnes of household waste were collected daily by the FEHD. Other than managing public refuse collection points, the department has been enhancing the refuse collection facilities in rural areas. By end-2025, 431 fully enclosed refuse collection facilities with new designs, such as solar-powered/foot-pedal type aluminium refuse collection points, solar-powered refuse compacting bins and mobile refuse compactors, had been installed in 410 locations.

The FEHD manages over 810 public toilets with thorough cleansing at least twice a day. Toilet attendant services are also provided at the heavily used ones. The department is implementing the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme. In 2025, 41 public toilets were refurbished or given a facelift.

Pest Control

To help prevent vector-borne diseases, the FEHD's anti-mosquito teams conducted 746,506 inspections of potential mosquito breeding spots and eliminated 80,312 breeding places during the year. Further prevention and control measures, aiming to address chikungunya fever, were also implemented. The department uses advanced technologies, including new mosquito trapping devices, robot dogs, large-scale ultra-low volume foggers and small aircraft.

Targeted measures have also been implemented to tackle rodent infestation, including deploying overnight rodent control teams, applying new anti-rodent tools and strategies, and extending a scheme that allows food businesses to use large bins to store refuse temporarily in rear lanes. Thermal imaging cameras with AI technology conduct the Rodent Activity Survey, which monitors rodent infestation in each district. The FEHD caught 129,083 live rodents in 2025, about 44 per cent more than in 2024.

Shopfront Extension

The FEHD takes enforcement action against the illegal extension of business by shops into the street and accords priority to cases causing obstruction to scavenging operations or cases relating to illegal hawking or the unauthorised extension of a food business.

The Public Health and Municipal Services (Amendment) Ordinance 2025 came into effect on 17 August, empowering the FEHD to conduct enforcement operations against shopfront extensions independently. In 2025, 641 prosecutions and 1,355 fixed penalty notices respectively were instituted against shopfront extensions.

Abatement of Sanitary Nuisances

The FEHD issues nuisance notices requiring those responsible to stop sanitary nuisances arising from refuse accumulation, dripping air conditioners and water seepage on private premises. In 2025, the department issued 13,295 such notices and secured 165 convictions against those who failed to comply. The FEHD has adopted a new and targeted approach to combat

dripping air conditioners and in 2025, handled 8,628 dripping air conditioners, marking an increase of 30 per cent on 2024.

The FEHD and Department of Justice jointly launched the Pilot Scheme on Community Mediation in July, which offers mediation skills training to property management personnel, enabling them to resolve water seepage disputes.

Cemeteries, Crematoria and Columbaria

The FEHD manages six government crematoria, 10 public cemeteries, 13 public columbaria, 15 gardens of remembrance, three facilities for keeping abortuses and one abortus cremation facility, and monitors the management of 27 private cemeteries. It promotes green burial and seeks to provide a steady supply of public niches, allocating about 19,000 in 2025.

Private columbaria are regulated by the Private Columbaria Ordinance. The Private Columbaria (Amendment) Ordinance 2025 came into effect on 30 May, enhancing the regulatory regime for private columbaria. By end-2025, the Private Columbaria Licensing Board had approved 14 licence and eight exemption applications; given approvals in principle to applications from 73 private columbaria; and refused applications from 33 private columbaria. During the year, the FEHD carried out about 510 inspections of private columbaria and investigated 26 cases of suspected contravention of the ordinance.

Guarding against African Swine Fever

In 2025, African swine fever virus was detected in pig samples from four licensed local pig farms resulting in the culling of the pigs. Biosecurity was enhanced at pig farms, boundary checkpoints and slaughterhouses.

The AFCD collects samples from captured wild pigs for testing under the surveillance programme for African swine fever. The virus was not detected in the year.

Measures against Avian Influenza

Government measures to keep avian influenza at bay include stringent monitoring of the poultry supply chain from farm to retail levels, compulsory vaccination of chickens against the H5 and H7 avian influenza viruses and the close surveillance of imported and local birds.

Other preventive measures include checking avian influenza control measures at live poultry retail outlets and cleaning public places where wild birds gather. Stringent enforcement action is also taken against the feeding of wild birds in public places.

The measures are effective in preventing human infection of avian influenza, as evidenced by the total absence of locally infected human cases of the H5 or H7 viruses since the first avian influenza outbreak in Hong Kong in 1997.

Antimicrobial Resistance

The government implements the Hong Kong Strategy and Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance through the joint efforts of different government agencies and non-governmental organisations, to alleviate the development of antimicrobial resistance and safeguard animal and public health.

As part of the plan, the AFCD inspects food animal farms to collect data and samples to evaluate antimicrobial usage, as well as biological samples for bacterial culture and antimicrobial sensitivity testing on a regular basis. The Centre for Food Safety conducts regular antimicrobial resistance surveillance on raw meat and ready-to-eat foods and educates the public and trade about the additional risks associated with consuming raw or undercooked ingredients in ready-to-eat foods. The centre also promotes the Five Keys to Food Safety to address the issue of foodborne antimicrobial resistance.

Control of Animal Diseases

The AFCD regulates cross-border animal movements to prevent animal diseases from entering Hong Kong and formulates quarantine measures to control the import of animals and animal products.

In 2025, about 5,500 lot-based permits were issued for animal imports, which included dogs, cats, horses, birds, zoo animals and live food animals such as pigs and cattle. At land boundary control points, Hong Kong International Airport and the airport's Air Mail Centre, trained dogs are deployed to detect live animals and animal products hidden in luggage. In 2025, more than 147,500 travellers, 500 vehicles and 21,600 parcels and pieces of luggage were screened.

Animal Welfare and Management

The government's approach towards animal welfare and management includes strengthening public education, controlling animal trading, working with animal welfare organisations, managing stray animals, handling and preventing acts of animal cruelty and promoting responsible pet ownership.

The AFCD partners with 17 animal welfare organisations to rehome dogs, cats, rabbits, birds and reptiles. It provides free desexing for the rehomed animals, and subsidises these organisations in carrying out animal welfare and management projects. There is also an established cooperation mechanism for the police to invite officers from the AFCD and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to provide professional advice and assistance at the scene of an animal cruelty case.

Dog breeders and sellers are regulated under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) (Trading and Breeding) Regulations. Pet shops may only obtain animals, such as dogs, cats and birds, for sale from approved sources.

Sustainable Development of Agricultural and Fisheries Industries

Hong Kong's agricultural and fisheries industries are relatively small in scale. They employed 17,679 people directly and produced \$3.257 billion of output during the year. Live poultry accounted for 100 per cent of local consumption; cut flowers, 40 per cent; seafood, 19 per cent; live pigs, 6.5 per cent; freshwater fish, 4 per cent; and vegetables, 1.7 per cent.

The Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries sets out measures to raise the quantity, quality and value of local produce. They include developing deep sea mariculture at the Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay new fish culture zones; conducting preparatory work for the Agricultural Park Phase 2 development; implementing an urban farming strategy in new development areas; facilitating the livestock sector to construct modernised and environmentally friendly multi-storey livestock farms; and promoting leisure farming and fisheries.

Agricultural Industry

The agricultural industry focuses mainly on producing quality fresh food crops through intensive land use. Most farming is in the New Territories and is for growing crops, comprising mainly vegetables and cut flowers, with a combined output in 2025 valued at about \$354 million. The principal food animals reared are pigs and poultry, which respectively yielded earnings of about \$198 million and about \$309 million, inclusive of eggs.

The AFCD encourages crop farmers to tap niche markets and sharpen their competitiveness by cultivating quality and special vegetable varieties. The department provides organic farming support to 124 certified organic farms occupying 72 hectares of land and also promotes sustainable and advanced production technologies, including smart greenhouses equipped with real-time remote monitoring, solar-powered automated irrigation systems and modernised agricultural machinery for intensive high-value crop production.

The Controlled Environment Hydroponic Research and Development Centre studies the application of state-of-the-art hydroponic cultivation techniques, including automated and smart cultivation and monitoring systems, to enhance the output of local vegetable production and increase product variety, while the voluntary Accredited Farm Scheme ensures a stable supply of quality vegetables. A total of 300 farms in Hong Kong, Guangdong province and Ningxia autonomous region, occupying 2,437 hectares of land, are accredited under the scheme.

Following the launch of phase 1 of the Agricultural Park in Kwu Tung South in 2022, the AFCD is conducting preparatory work for Agricultural Park Phase 2 First Stage development, and continues to take forward the Modernised Techno-Agricultural Park project through a public-private partnership model.

The government provides financial support to the industry through the \$1 billion Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund. It can help local farmers adopt advanced technology and intensify production, and seize the opportunities arising from the GBA development.

To promote leisure farming, the government launched the 'Agri EnJoy' Scheme in 2024, which 108 farms engaged in commercial crop production had joined by the end of 2025.

In October, the first modernised urban farm was commissioned as a pilot project in Ma On Shan Sai Sha Road Garden, to facilitate the integration of commercial farming into urban development.

Fisheries Industry

Fresh fish is one of Hong Kong's most important primary products. In 2025, the amount of fish caught and fish reared in ponds and floating cages at sea totalled about 92,770 tonnes, with a value of \$2.4 billion.

As at the year end, some 6,060 vessels were licensed as fishing vessels under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation. These included larger vessels operating mainly in the South China Sea and smaller vessels in local waters. There were about 10,120 local fishermen in the industry, with a quota of 3,852 Chinese Mainland deckhands. The total catch weighed about 90,460 tonnes, with an estimated wholesale value of \$2.27 billion, and provided some 33,440 tonnes of fish for local consumption.

At end-2025, 28 designated fish culture zones were in operation, which supplied consumers with some 680 tonnes of live marine fish valued at \$70.8 million during the year. They included the newly designated zones at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi and Mirs Bay, which began operation in 2023. Two other zones, Outer Tap Mun and Po Toi (Southeast), have also been designated.

Freshwater and brackish water fish are reared in fish ponds located mainly in the northwestern New Territories. In 2025, pond fish culture yielded some 1,520 tonnes of fish, valued at \$41 million.

The government provides credit facilities to fishermen, owners of fish-collecting vessels and fish farmers for sustainable development and general productive purposes, and offers training courses to fishermen. The \$1 billion Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund helps fishermen adopt sustainable and high value-added methods of operation, and subsidises programmes and research to enhance the industry's competitiveness.

A total of 177 farms participated in the voluntary Accredited Fish Farm Scheme, with their fish being tagged for easy recognition. More than 47,000kg of accredited fish were sold under the scheme in 2025.

To help the industry learn modern and sustainable aquaculture techniques, the AFCD has established a modern mariculture demonstration farm as a training centre at the Tung Lung Chau fish culture zone. Deep-sea cages, equipped with modernised mariculture facilities, will be provided to fishermen organisations/associations via licence agreement to practice deep sea mariculture at the new fish culture zones so as to reduce their start-up costs.

To further promote the development of leisure fisheries, the AFCD launched the 'Fish EnJoy' Scheme in September, allowing mariculture rafts/inland fish farms mainly engaged in aquaculture to offer visitors ancillary leisure activities in addition to recreational fishing. As of December, a total of 20 fish farms participated in the scheme.

The AFCD monitors red tides and issues red tide alerts through support groups at the fish culture zones and via its website, press releases and text messages. Fourteen red tides were recorded in Hong Kong waters in 2025.

Wholesale Markets

Fresh food produce is sold in wholesale markets managed by the AFCD, Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO), Fish Marketing Organization (FMO) and private sector. In 2025, the government's four wholesale markets altogether handled 195,799 tonnes of vegetables, 64,866 tonnes of fruits, 50,683 tonnes of eggs, 28,417 tonnes of freshwater fish and fishery products and 8,565 tonnes of poultry, with a total value of \$5.57 billion.

The VMO provides farmers and traders with wholesale marketing services, including trading facilities, accounting and transport services. In 2025, 37,209 tonnes of vegetables valued at \$291 million were sold through the VMO.

The FMO provides wholesale marketing services at its seven wholesale markets. In 2025, some 36,426 tonnes of marine fish valued at \$3 billion were sold through the FMO. The organisation also develops fishery products at its processing centre to enhance the quality of local products. The Local Fresh app and website enable customers to buy local agricultural and fishery products online.

Websites

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department: www.afcd.gov.hk

Hong Kong Biodiversity Information Hub: www.bih.gov.hk

Carbon Neutrality and Sustainable Development: www.cnsd.gov.hk

Centre for Food Safety: www.cfs.gov.hk

Electrical and Mechanical Services Department: www.emsd.gov.hk

Environment and Ecology Bureau: www.eeb.gov.hk

Environmental Protection Department: www.epd.gov.hk

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department: www.fehd.gov.hk

Government Laboratory: www.govtlab.gov.hk

Hong Kong Environmental Database: hkcd.epd.gov.hk

Hong Kong Observatory: www.hko.gov.hk

Hong Kong Observatory Cool Met Stuff channel: url.hko.hk/cms

Internet Memorial Service: www.memorial.gov.hk

Low Carbon Living Calculator: www.carboncalculator.gov.hk

MyObservatory mobile application: www.hko.gov.hk/en/myobservatory.htm

Meteorological Training Centre for Belt and Road Countries: www.beltandroadmet.training

Science in the Public Service campaign: www.science.gov.hk