

## **AFCD takes new measures to reduce nuisance and number of wild pigs**

In response to the increasing nuisance of wild pigs, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (November 12) announced that wild pigs in the urban area will be regularly captured for humane dispatch with a view to reducing their number and nuisance. The AFCD will also explore amending the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170) to expand the feeding ban area for wild animals in order to strengthen the curbing of intentional feeding activities.

An AFCD spokesman said that the Department launched the Capture and Contraception/Relocation Programme in late 2017 and adopted a multipronged approach to strengthen the management of wild pigs in 2019 to tackle the nuisance from different perspectives. However, wild pigs continue to gather and look for food in some urban locations which has caused a serious nuisance. Some wild pigs are even accustomed to wandering in busy urban areas or roads and thus bring potential danger to members of the public and road users. In recent years, the number of injury cases caused by wild pigs is on the rise. There were 36 injury cases caused by wild pigs over the past 10 years (November 2011 to October 2021), of which over 80 per cent (30 cases) occurred between 2018 and 2021. In the past 10 years, there was only one injury case per year on average for the first seven years, but 10 injury cases per year on average in the past three years.

On the premise of safeguarding public safety, the spokesman said that the AFCD will begin to capture wild pigs appearing in urban areas for humane dispatch today. Under the new strategy, the AFCD will conduct wild pig capture operations every month by using dart guns with anaesthetics to capture target wild pigs for humane dispatch. Priority will be given to sites with large numbers of wild pigs, and those with past injury cases or with wild pigs which may pose risks to members of the public.

As the wild pig nuisance is largely caused by intentional feeding activities, the AFCD is exploring amendments to the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170), including expanding the feeding ban area for wild animals and stepping up control of feeding activities to minimise the pull factor drawing wild pigs to urban areas. The AFCD will also strengthen publicity and public education to educate the public not to feed wild pigs.

The spokesman appeals to the public not to feed wild pigs under any circumstances. Wild pigs are not pets but are potentially dangerous large wild animals. Feeding activities will attract wild pigs to visit or even gather in urban areas. Not only do such activities pose dangers to the feeder but also bring threats to the safety of other citizens and cause a nuisance to their daily lives.