



Management of Public Access to the Mai Po Nature Reserve/ the Hong Kong Wetland Park/ Walk-in Aviaries

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department



Over 100,000 migratory birds visit Hong Kong every year



Little Egret



Peregrine
Falcon



Grey
Heron

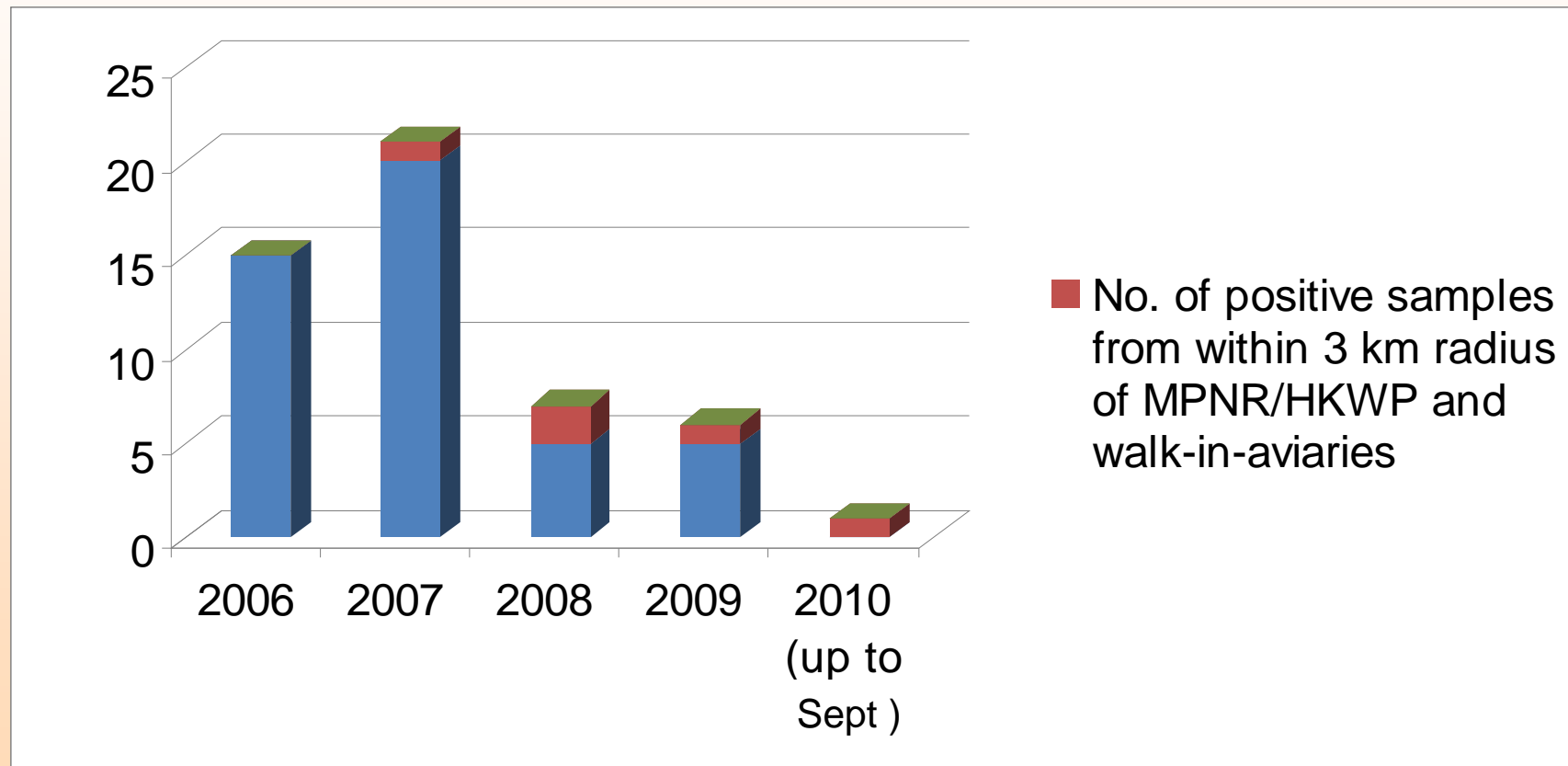


Chinese
Pond Heron

HPAI Surveillance and Monitoring by AFCD

- Since the end of 2002, the surveillance programme has been extended to cover wild birds, captive wild birds in recreational parks and pet birds in retail bird markets.
- Provide sick and dead wild bird collection service to the public since 2005.

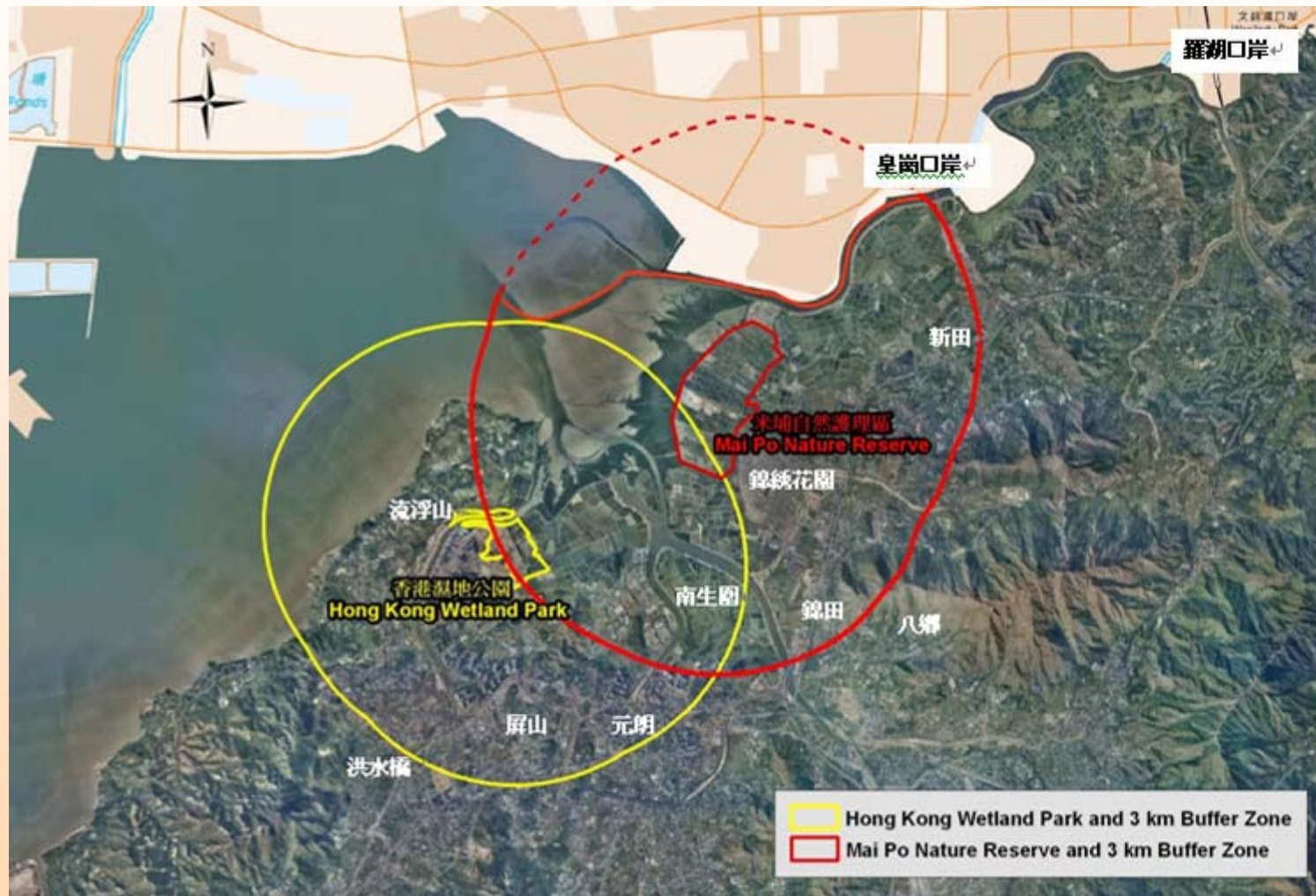
Number of H5N1-infected wild birds in Hong Kong



“3 km radius” rule is used by many European countries including U.K., France and Germany as the radius of a quarantine restricted zone and “21 days” is the OIE standard for H5 AI required surveillance period for H5 AI for live birds in a compartment/zone.



A map showing appropriately the areas included in the “3km radius” of Mai Po Nature Reserve and the Wetland Park



The important considering factor for managing public access to the Mai Po Nature Reserve, the Hong Kong Wetland Park and other walk-in aviaries is whether there is any live or dead bird samples tested positive for HPAI.



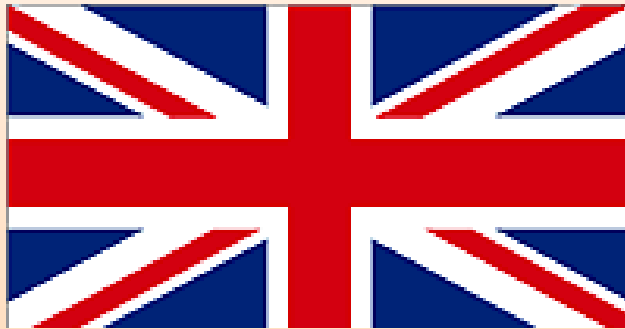
Latest Scientific Development

- Results from the Hong Kong wild bird surveillance show that out of over 57 000 dead birds collected in the territory in the past five years, only 50 were tested HPAI positive. Of which, only five HPAI positive birds were found in the vicinity of MPNR/HKWP or walk-in aviaries.
- From 2007-2009, only 205 cases of human infection by AI have been reported worldwide and of the human cases, 2 cases reported in Azerbaijan are known to be associated with contact with wild birds.



Latest Scientific Development

- Risk assessment by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in UK in 2006 revealed that there was no increase in AI risk to members of the public and park wardens from the presence of wild birds in public parks/parkland and open waters in England.



The Review

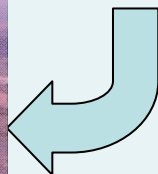
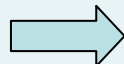
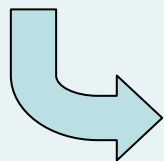
- Based on the surveillance results and latest scientific development, it was considered that the existing restriction (introduced in 2006) on public access to the MPNR/HKWP and other walk-in aviaries can be slightly relaxed without compromising the policy objective of protecting public health by safeguarding the public from the risk of AI infection.



Comparison between Restrictions introduced in 2006 and New Recommendation

2006

Closure of the MPNR/HKWP and walk-in aviaries for a period of 21 days when a dead bird collected within a 3km in radius of the MPNR/HKWP and walk-in aviaries has been tested positive for HPAI virus.



New Recommendation

The MPNR/HKWP and the walk-in-aviaries will be allowed to remain open to the public if one or more live or dead bird(s) infected with HPAI virus is/are found within the 3km radius of these areas provided that there is no evidence of widespread infection i.e. if there are less than three live or dead birds confirmed with HPAI virus infection within a period of 10 days in the same area.

If there is evidence of spread i.e. three or more confirmed cases of confirmed HPAI infection within a period of 10 days in the same area, then the premises will be closed for 21 days from the day of collection of the last positive sample.

If there is indication that HPAI virus has spread amongst the wild bird population within 3 km radius, MPNR/HKWP and walk-in aviaries will be closed to public access for a period of 21 days.



However, the indoor section of the Wetland Park will remain open to the public as threat of carrying contaminated materials into such areas is negligible.



The suggested criteria will also apply to the closure and re-opening of the walk-in aviaries managed by the LCSD and Ocean Park as the droppings of wild birds outside the aviaries may still be able to contaminate the aviaries and the public inside the aviaries may have very close contact with birds and their droppings.



If all HPAI tests are negative during the “21 days”, the Mai Po Nature Reserve, outdoor section of the Wetland Park and other walk-in aviaries will then be re-opened.



Thank You