

[AFCD laid charges against Mainland fishermen deckhands suspected of using snake cages for fishing and local coxswain \(with photo\)](#)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (July 17) laid charges against five Mainland fishermen deckhands suspected of engaging in fishing using snake cages (a type of cage trap banned in Hong Kong waters) on a local fishing vessel in waters off Shek Kwu Chau and a local coxswain onboard.

A joint operation was conducted by the AFCD together with the Hong Kong Police Force yesterday (July 16). A local fishing vessel was suspected of engaging in fishing using snake cages and was intercepted at around 5.30pm for investigation. Some fishing gear (including snake cages and winches) on board was seized by the AFCD.

After investigation, charges were laid against the six men who were suspected to have violated the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171). They will appear at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (July 18).

Only a vessel registered under the Ordinance can be used for fishing in Hong Kong waters and only the fishing methods listed on its Certificate of Local Fishing Vessel Registration can be employed for fishing by the vessel. The conditions of Certificate of Registration of Local Fishing Vessel regarding cage traps stipulate that any collapsible cage traps should not be connected in any way to another; or should not exceed five metres in any of its extended dimensions. Hence, fishing using snake cages is in breach of the registration conditions. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

The spokesman stressed, "The Government is committed to combatting illegal fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. The AFCD will continue to step up patrols and take stringent enforcement action."

