

## [AFCD releases fish fingerlings in northeast waters of Hong Kong to enhance local fisheries resources \(with photos\)](#)

To facilitate the restoration of native fisheries species of high commercial value and enhancement of local fisheries resources in the long run, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) released fish fingerlings in the northeast waters of Hong Kong yesterday (June 5) and today (June 6). The programme is also to tie in with National Fish Release Day and World Oceans Day this month for promoting public awareness of marine conservation and sustainability of fisheries resources. Similar releases will also be conducted later this year.

A spokesperson of the AFCD said, "The Government is highly concerned about the conservation of marine resources and the sustainable development of Hong Kong fisheries. Following the implementation of the ban on trawling in Hong Kong waters and a series of other complementary fisheries management measures to control fishing efforts in Hong Kong since 2012, it is a suitable time to take a further step in restoring the marine fisheries resources by a carefully planned restocking. The information obtained in this programme will be very useful for our planning of future resources enhancement measures.

"We have just released some 6 000 Hong Kong grouper (*Epinephelus akaara*) and 2 000 star snapper (*Lutjanus stellatus*) fingerlings in the northeast waters of Hong Kong. They are both native species of high commercial value with populations that have declined in the past decades. There are natural rocky reefs, boulders and artificial reefs previously deployed by the AFCD in the northeast waters of Hong Kong, which are suitable for Hong Kong groupers and star snappers to inhabit, and can provide suitable habitats, protection and sufficient food for the fingerlings released. We have previously found Hong Kong groupers and star snappers in these waters as well, indicating the release sites are natural habitats of these species."

The spokesperson added that the fingerlings for the restocking came from reputable hatcheries. They have undergone quarantine procedures for common fish diseases to ensure good health condition, and have been acclimatised in local waters before release.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the restocking, the AFCD will conduct underwater visual surveys regularly to record the condition of the released fingerlings. In addition, the AFCD has implanted small external plastic tags under the dorsal fins of a proportion of fingerlings for individual tracking and monitoring. Each tag is printed with a four-digit code, the short form of the AFCD in both Chinese and English, and the government hotline 1823. If members of the public have incidentally captured

or observed any tagged fingerlings of Hong Kong groupers and star snappers, please record the relevant information and report it to the AFCD through 1823.

For details, please visit [www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/fish\\_cap/fish\\_cap\\_con/restocking/restocking.html](http://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/fish_cap/fish_cap_con/restocking/restocking.html).

