

'Coast chiefs' to fight pollution, illegal fishing

A coastal Chinese province is to appoint coast chiefs to fight pollution and illegal fishing.

Zhejiang provincial government said Tuesday that the arrangement will take effect on August 7 and by the end of this year all coasts in Zhejiang should have their chiefs.

Coast chiefs will be responsible for supervising waste discharged into the sea, illegal fishing gear, unlicensed fishing boats, illegal use of coasts, illegal ship building, repairing and recycling, the government said in a circular.

Zhejiang has a coastline of more than 6,600 kilometers, the longest of any Chinese province.

The coast chief practice is regarded as an extension of river chiefs, which are being rolled out across the country after a successful trial in Jiangsu Province.

The responsibilities of river chiefs include water resource protection, pollution prevention and control, and ecological restoration. Their performance is assessed and they will be held accountable for environmental damage in the bodies of water they oversee.

Zhejiang tested the practice in 2008 and expanded it across the whole province in 2013 and there are now 61,000 river chiefs there.