

# Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources Bill gazetted today

The Government today (June 22) gazetted the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources Bill to provide for the application of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

The implementation of the Convention will enhance the conservation and rational utilisation of marine resources in the Southern Ocean. The Central People's Government, upon consultation with the HKSAR Government in accordance with the Basic Law, has agreed in principle to extend the application of the Convention to the HKSAR.

The Bill will provide for the legal basis for the HKSAR to fulfil the Convention's requirements. Upon the passage of the Bill, two regulations will be made to provide for the implementation of the Toothfish Catch Documentation Scheme to regulate the trading of toothfish in Hong Kong, as well as to conduct port inspection and control with a view to tightening up the monitoring of fishing vessels.

The Government consulted (the Fish Marketing Advisory Board) and other stakeholders including trading companies, importers, wholesalers, retailers, representatives of seafood trade and catering associations as well as environmental groups earlier this year. The parties consulted were supportive of the proposed implementation of the Convention in Hong Kong. In addition, the Legislative Council's Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene in general supported the proposal.

The Bill is scheduled for introduction into the Legislative Council on July 4.