

Designation of North Lantau Marine Park gazetted

The Government gazetted today (June 14) the designation of the North Lantau Marine Park (NLMP).

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said, "The NLMP will be the eighth and largest marine park in Hong Kong, covering about 2 400 hectares (ha) of water. Designation of the NLMP will greatly increase Hong Kong's protected marine habitat from about 6 117 ha to about 8 517 ha. The designation of the NLMP is crucial for conservation of the Chinese White Dolphins (CWD) and the marine environment in North Lantau waters, and is one of the measures committed in the approved Environmental Impact Assessment Report of the Three-Runway System project of Hong Kong International Airport for mitigating the impact arising from the project on marine ecology."

The spokesman added, "The NLMP will provide critical linkages with the nearby Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (about 1 200 ha) and the Brothers Marine Park (about 970 ha) to form a matrix of connected marine protected areas totalling about 4 570 ha in North Lantau waters for better protection of the important habitats of the CWD. Furthermore, the NLMP will be contiguous with the Pearl River Estuary Chinese White Dolphin National Nature Reserve established in Guangdong Province, thereby linking the marine protected areas in Hong Kong and the Mainland, providing important connections among these core CWD habitats, and facilitating the movement of CWD between such habitats. The proposed NLMP also connects with the Hong Kong International Airport Approach Areas to form an interlinked water body and provide a synergistic effect for the conservation of marine ecology and fisheries resources."

The draft map of the NLMP was made available for public inspection for a period of 60 days from March 3 to May 1, 2023. The Country and Marine Parks Authority did not receive any objection during the period. The Chief Executive-in-Council approved the draft map in accordance with section 14(1)(a) of the Marine Parks Ordinance (Cap. 476) on September 5, 2023. Copies of the approved map signed by the Authority were deposited in the Land Registry, headquarters of the AFCD and headquarters of the Marine Department for public inspection in accordance with section 14(5) of the Ordinance. The deposit of the maps was notified in the Gazette by the AFCD on September 29, 2023.

The spokesman said that activities in the waters concerned will be regulated by the Ordinance and the Marine Parks and Marine Reserves Regulation (Cap. 476A) after the designation of the marine park. In the long run, it can provide a better habitat for marine life and, in particular, be conducive to protecting marine mammals and maintaining marine biodiversity.

The Marine Parks (Designation) (Amendment) Order 2024 will be tabled at

the Legislative Council on June 19, 2024, for negative vetting and coming into effect on November 1, 2024.