

## Mainland fishermen convicted of operating illegally in Hong Kong waters jailed for four weeks

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (April 12) announced that two Mainland fishermen who engaged in illegal fishing in waters earlier on near Black Point, Tuen Mun, have been convicted and sentenced to four weeks' imprisonment.

The court heard that AFCD officers intercepted a Mainland fishing vessel at about noon on March 25 for investigation. The vessel was suspected to be carrying out illegal fishing in the above-mentioned waters. Some fishing gear (including winches and long cages) and catch were seized on board.

Charges were laid against the Mainland fishermen for violating the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) (the Ordinance). They pleaded guilty at Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today and were sentenced to four weeks' imprisonment with the fishing gear confiscated.

An AFCD spokesman noted that only a vessel registered under the Ordinance can be used for fishing in Hong Kong waters. Regardless of the type of fishing gear used, a non-local fishing vessel is not allowed to carry out fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. Any offender is liable on conviction to a maximum penalty of a \$100,000 fine and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government is committed to cracking down on illegal fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. The AFCD will continue to step up patrols and stringently enforce the law."