

Mainland fishing vessel suspected of operating illegally in Hong Kong waters intercepted in joint operation (with photo)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (December 23) laid a charge against a Mainland fisherman on board a Mainland fishing vessel suspected of engaging in illegal fishing in Hong Kong waters north of Wong Mau Chau.

AFCD and the Marine Police officers mounted a joint anti-illegal fishing operation in the above-mentioned waters last night (December 22), a Mainland fishing vessel suspected to be carrying out illegal fishing by cage traps was intercepted for investigation at about 8.30pm. Some fishing gear was seized on board.

A charge was laid against the Mainland fisherman, who was suspected to have violated the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) (the Ordinance). The case will be mentioned at Fanling Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (December 24).

Only vessels 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 upon conviction is liable to a maximum penalty of a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for six months.

An AFCD spokesman said, "The Government is committed to cracking down on illegal fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. The AFCD will maintain close co-operation with relevant law enforcement departments and step up patrols and stringently enforce the law."

