

Red tide sighted

A red tide has been sighted, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (March 29).

Staff of the Environmental Protection Department spotted the red tide at Shing Mun River Channel near Banyan Bridge on March 27. The red tide still persists and no associated death of fish has been reported so far.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The red tide was formed by *Heterosigma akashiwo*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters. According to overseas studies, this species might be capable of producing toxins which are harmful to fish."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at Yim Tin Tsai, Yim Tin Tsai (East), Yung Shue Au and Lo Fu Wat fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue monitoring red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.