

Red tide sighted

A red tide has been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (May 15).

The red tide was spotted by staff of the Environmental Protection Department on May 12 at Silver Mine Bay Beach, Lantau Island. The red tide has dissipated and no associated fish deaths have 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 literature, *Heterosigma akashiwo* might produce neurotoxins and kill fish by damaging their gills."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at the Ma Wan, Cheung Sha Wan, Lo Tik Wan and Sok Kwu Wan 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 to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.