

Red tides sighted

Six red tides have been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (February 8).

One of the red tides was spotted by staff of the Environmental Protection Department on February 1 at Yim Tin Tsai Fish Culture Zone and Plover Cove including Yim Tin Tsai (East) Fish Culture Zone. The red tide has dissipated.

Two of the red tides were spotted by a mariculturist today at Port Shelter including Ma Nam Wat Fish Culture Zone and Silverstrand including Silverstrand Beach, Sai Kung. These two red tides still persist.

The other three red tides were spotted by staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department today at Eastern waters of Lantau Island including Silver Mine Bay Beach and Nim Shue Wan, Pui O Beach and Tong Fuk Beach, Lantau Island. These three red tides still persist.

No associated death of fish has been reported so far in all six red tides.

A spokesman for the working group said, "The two red tides spotted at Port Shelter and Tong Fuk Beach were formed by *Akashiwo sanguinea* whereas the other four red tides were formed by *Noctiluca scintillans*. Both species are non-toxic and commonly found in Hong Kong waters."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at Yim Tin Tsai, Yim Tin Tsai (East), Yung Shue Au, Lo Fu Wat, Ma Nam Wat, Kau Sai, Kai Lung Wan, Tai Tau Chau, Leung Shuen Wan and Cheung Sha 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.