

Red tides sighted

Four red tides have been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (May 24).

Three of the red tides were spotted by staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department on May 21 at Approach Beach, Lido Beach and Casam Beach, and Ting Kau Beach in Tsuen Wan. These three red tides have dissipated.

The fourth red tide was spotted by staff of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) on May 21 in the western waters of Hong Kong (including Ma Wan Fish Culture Zone). This red tide still persists.

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

A spokesman for the working group said, "All four red tides were formed by *Phaeocystis globosa*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters. According to overseas studies, *Phaeocystis globosa* can produce foam that may cause harmful effects to fish."

The AFCD urged mariculturists at the Ma 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.