

Registration arrangement for ex-gratia allowance to fishermen affected by new fisheries management strategy in marine parks

In view of a commercial fishing ban imposed on four specified marine parks, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) announced today (June 11) that an ex-gratia payment will be granted to eligible fishermen affected by the commercial fishing ban. Registration for an ex-gratia allowance (EGA) will start on June 18.

A spokesman for the AFCD said that under the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks, commercial fishing by local fishing vessels registered under the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) should be allowed to continue in the Brothers Marine Park, Southwest Lantau Marine Park and new marine parks to be designated in the western waters through the marine park fishing permit system. To protect coral communities as well as to enhance the overall fisheries resources in Hong Kong, commercial fishing will be banned in four specified marine parks, namely Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP), Yan Chau Tong Marine Park (YCTMP) and Tung Ping Chau Marine Park (TPCMP) in the eastern waters and Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (SCLKCMP) in the western waters.

A transitional period of two years will be provided under the commercial fishing ban for the four specified marine parks for fishermen to adapt. The AFCD has no longer granted new fishing permits for HHWMP, YCTMP, TPCMP and SCLKCMP since April 1. Existing fishing permits will not be renewed with validity periods beyond the transitional period, i.e. by March 31, 2022. The above-mentioned commercial fishing ban is not applicable to fishing permits granted to local residents.

An Inter-departmental Working Group (IWG), co-ordinated by the AFCD and comprising representatives from the Marine Department and the Home Affairs Department, has been set up to handle all matters relating to processing of EGA applications from the affected fishermen permit holders.

Affected fishermen permit holders are invited to attend the EGA registration sessions from June 18 to July 31. An applicant must hold a fisherman fishing permit for the specified marine parks, and the fishing permit must remain valid on or after April 1, 2020.

For details of the EGA registration arrangement, please refer to the AFCD website at www.afcd.gov.hk/english/country/cou_vis/cou_vis_mar/cou_vis_mar_mpp/ega_registration.html. Affected fishermen permit holders will be notified on the assigned registration session individually by registered mail.

For enquiries, please call the IWG secretariat at 3468 3446 or 3468 3447 during office hours.