

Regulation of use of snake cages for fishing implemented

To regulate the use of snake cages (a type of cage trap) for fishing, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (April 1) announced that implementation of the amendment of registration conditions for the Certificate of Registration of Local Fishing Vessel (registration certificate) regarding the part on cage traps has commenced, while the grace period for existing registration certificate holders with cage traps registered has ended.

An AFCD spokesman said, "In light of the concerns of the public and fishermen organisations on the impact of using snake cages for fishing on local fisheries resources, the AFCD decided earlier on to amend the registration conditions of the registration certificates relevant to cage traps in accordance with section 17 of the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171), with a view to regulating the use of snake cages for fishing in Hong Kong waters."

The part of the conditions of registration certificates relevant to cage traps is amended as follows: "Any collapsible cage traps should not be connected in any way to another; or should not exceed five metres in any of its extended dimensions."

The grace period for existing registration certificate holders with cage traps registered ended on March 31. The AFCD is issuing new registration certificates with the amended conditions to registration certificate holders with cage traps registered. The amended conditions will take effect on the date specified in the new registration certificate. The AFCD will take enforcement action against fishing using snake cages which is in breach of the registration conditions after they take effect. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

The grace period of individual registration certificate holders who have applied to the AFCD has been extended to December 31.

For enquiries, please contact the Fisheries Enforcement and Special Projects Division of the AFCD by telephone (2150 7109) or email (fish_lic_enf@afcd.gov.hk).