

SEE welcomes national research team to exchange views on fisheries development in Hong Kong (with photos)

The Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Mr Tse Chin-wan, today (May 28) accompanied a research team led by the Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Mr Ma Youxiang and the Director-General of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of Guangdong Province, Mr Liu Zonghui, to visit the modern mariculture demonstration farm at Tung Lung Chau set up by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD). The research team gained a better understanding on the work of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in promoting modernised and sustainable mariculture and exchanged views on the development of marine fisheries in the two places.

Mr Tse said, "The HKSAR Government welcomes the nation's research team to visit the modern mariculture demonstration farm at Tung Lung Chau for exchange of views. The demonstration farm adopts deep sea cages with modernised and sustainable practices. It provides infrastructure for on-site training leading the upgrading and transformation of the local fisheries industry."

Mr Tse added, "Promoting the sustainable development of fisheries has now become the dominant trend and is consistent with the direction of the development of the nation. The Government will continue to promote and assist fishermen to switch to modernised and sustainable mariculture practices, enhance manpower training and conserve our ocean resources."

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The Government has been promoting the upgrading and transformation of fisheries operations, moving towards the modernisation and sustainable development of the fisheries industry. The Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB) and the AFCD are working hand in hand with the industry to formulate a blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries. The Government plans to roll out an array of measures covering finance, infrastructure, land and technical support to raise the quality and value of local produces, as well as the productivity of the industry.

To further promote the development of deep sea cage mariculture, the AFCD has designated new fish culture zones at four priority sites and will provide several deep sea cages equipped with modern mariculture equipment in phases for renting to fish farmers. Through the implementation of the measures, the Government expects the local mariculture production will increase by 100 per cent in five years.

Also joining the visit to the demonstration farm at Tung Lung Chau today were Hong Kong Deputy to the National People's Congress and Member of the Legislative Council, Mr Kenneth Fok, and representatives from the Hong Kong

Fishermen Consortium (HKFC). Witnessed by Mr Tse and Mr Ma, Mr Fok presented a cheque to the HKFC to support its HKSAR Mariculture Training Programmes for Young Talents. The EEB is pleased to know that the HKFC has been committed to promoting the upgrading and transformation of traditional fisheries to integrate into the overall development of the country. The training programmes provide scholarships for young people interested in joining sustainable fisheries, allowing them to apply for tuition fee or living subsidies to further their studies in the Ocean University of China or Guangdong Ocean University, etc. to become quality talents who meet national needs and contribute to aquaculture in Hong Kong.

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The Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Food), Miss Vivian Lau, and the Acting Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, Mr Mickey Lai, also attended the visit of the research team today.

