

# Search for injured porpoise ongoing

More than 80 aquatic animal rescuers are now involved in the search for an injured finless porpoise in the country's largest freshwater lake.

In addition, more than 2,000 fishermen have also been mobilized on Poyang Lake to report traces of the finless porpoise – an endangered mammal considered rarer than China's giant panda – which is known to have life-threatening injuries.

"There are less than 1,000 finless porpoises in China, and the number is declining by 13.7 percent each year," said Hao Yujiang, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Science's Institute of Hydrobiology, who led a team of six from his institute to join the rescue mission on Monday.

Volunteers first saw the mammal, which is similar to a dolphin in appearance, on Feb 5 in Yugan county, Jiangxi province. Photos showed a large fishhook in the back of the porpoise. Rescuers said they saw the porpoise several times, but that it disappeared before they could help.

"The photos showed signs of infection in the wound, meaning rescuing the porpoise is a matter of urgency," Hao said.

The team is prepared to provide medical treatment, and the porpoise might have to be sent to Wuhan, capital of Hubei province, where the institute is headquartered, for further treatment, he added.

Another three local rescue teams as well as two from Hubei province also joined the rescue efforts, bringing the total number of rescuers in the six teams to more than 80.

The local fisheries bureau has distributed notices asking more than 2,000 fisherman to help track down the porpoise, Zhang Jinyang of Yugan county's fisheries bureau told Changjiang Daily, which is headquartered in Wuhan.

Human activities have put the existence of the finless porpoise at great risk, Hao said. "Shipping, fishing, construction and sand excavation in the Yangtze River are all to be blamed for the mammal being endangered."

Zhu Jiang, head of the World Wildlife Foundation's Yangtze River biodiversity conservation project, said, "in previous years, there was a lack of recognition of the finless porpoise's situation in China and government resources to support the mammal's protection were far from enough."

The situation has improved to some extent in recent years, with the Ministry of Agriculture classifying the mammal as a first-class national protected species in 2014, and a plan for its protection being drafted late last year, Zhu said.

However, many issues, such as overfishing and sand excavation, still hinder the mammal's protection, he added.

The finless porpoise's habitat may be further worsened as the Jiangxi government plans to build a series of sluice gates in areas that link Poyang Lake to the Yangtze River to keep water in the lake during winter months, as the lake has been suffering from worsening drought over the past decade.

The mammal's habitat is mainly located in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River, and about 450 of them live in Poyang Lake.

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## [Official pledges safe development of nuclear energy](#)

A Chinese atomic energy official said the country will fine tune its nuclear energy safety standards, develop its emergency response system and improve the management of spent fuel.

Wang Yiren, vice head of the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence, told Xinhua that during the 13th Five Year period (2016-2020), China will undertake a number of nuclear-related projects.

Research into the processing of spent fuel will be conducted, according to Wang, who is also deputy head of China Atomic Energy Authority.

In response to concerns over the safety of inland nuclear power projects, Wang said such worries are understandable, but assured that the projects would be secure.

As energy demands in inland regions have increased, the need for inland nuclear power projects has increased, he said.

Wang said the authorities have also organized expert discussions on the construction of nuclear power stations at sea, to support offshore oil and gas exploitation and the country's islands.

The official also pledged efforts to ensure the supply of uranium resources and nuclear fuel for nuclear energy development.

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## [Nominations for Hong Kong chief](#)

## [executive election open](#)

The nomination period for Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR)'s fifth term chief executive election started on Tuesday and will run until March 1.

"A nomination form must be subscribed by no less than 150 members of the Election Committee and each member can nominate only one candidate," a Registration and Electoral Office (REO) spokesman said.

A candidate must submit the completed nomination form in person during the nomination period, the spokesman added.

Woo Kwok-hing, Ip Lau Suk-ye, Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor and Tsang Chun-wah have announced their candidacy.

According to Hong Kong Basic Law, a Chinese citizen of no less than 40 years of age who is a permanent resident of Hong Kong SAR with no right of abode in any foreign country and has ordinarily resided in Hong Kong for a continuous period of no less than 20 years, is eligible to be nominated as a candidate.

The chief executive election will be held on March 26, when the Election Committee composed of nearly 1,200 members elects the fifth term chief executive to be appointed by the central government of China, by secret ballot.

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## [25 arrested for dumping garbage into Yangtze River](#)

Twenty five people have been arrested in two separate instances of fly-tipping, in which more than 100,000 tonnes of garbage was carelessly dumped last year, the People's Procuratorate of Zhejiang Province in east China said Tuesday.

The 25 suspects have been implicated in two cases that occurred between May and December last year.

In one case, over 90,000 tonnes of household trash from Haiyan County, Zhejiang, was either dumped at sites across the provinces of Zhejiang and Anhui, or thrown into the Nantong section of the Yangtze River in east China's Jiangsu Province.

In the other case, more than 10,990 tonnes of trash from Haining City, Zhejiang, was collected and 9,747 tonnes of it was dumped into the Yangtze

River between November and December, causing serious water pollution and economic losses of over 300,000 yuan (about 43,725 U.S. dollars).

The investigation continues.

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## **[News story: Petunia Seaways and Peggotty report published](#)**

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Collision between ro-ro freight ferry Petunia Seaways and historic motor launch Peggotty on the River Humber.

MAIB's report on the investigation of the collision between the ro-ro freight ferry Petunia Seaways and the historic motor launch Peggotty on the River Humber, UK on 19 May 2016 is now published.

The report contains details of what happened and the subsequent actions taken.