

Whale carcass found in Sai Kung waters

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (July 31) announced that the department and the Ocean Park Conservation Fund Hong Kong (OPCFHK) had arranged salvaging a whale carcass found in Port Shelter and commissioned the OPCFHK to perform a necropsy on the whale carcass with a view to finding out the species and the cause of death. The work concerned may take a few days. Necropsy results will shed light on whale behaviour and the specific cause of death which will be references for how the government should handle whales appearing in Hong Kong and formulate action plans in future.

Since a whale emerged in Sai Kung waters mid-July, the AFCD has partnered with the OPCFHK in closely monitoring the health condition of the whale. It has also patrolled the waters where the whale has appeared together with other departments. To avoid disturbing and scaring the whale, AFCD staff distributed leaflets at places including the Sai Kung Public Pier to urge members of the public not to go whale watching and abstain from water sports. Departments concerned sent out six patrol vessels over the past days to patrol large stretch of sea and gave advice to sight seeing vessels. Over the past few days, vessels, especially high speed ones, were urged to leave the waters where the whale had appeared. Whale watching and water sports in the concerned waters dropped sharply over the weekend.

The AFCD is saddened over the whale carcass found near Port Shelter. The OPCFHK will dissect the whale carcass for research. After dissection, the AFCD will make arrangements for the carcass including exploring the possibility of making it a specimen for scientific research and education purposes as appropriate.