

Designation of Southwest Lantau Marine Park gazetted

The Government gazetted today (December 13) the designation of the Southwest Lantau Marine Park (SWLMP).

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said that the designation of the SWLMP would have a positive effect on the protection of the overall marine environment and marine mammals (e.g. Chinese white dolphins) in Hong Kong waters, and would increase the area of managed marine habitat which would be conducive to maintaining marine biodiversity and sustainability.

The draft map of the SWLMP was made available for public inspection for a period of 60 days from June 23, 2017, to August 21, 2017. The Country and Marine Parks Authority received two objections during the period. In accordance with section 12 of the Marine Parks Ordinance, an objection hearing was conducted on October 20, 2017. After careful deliberation of relevant submissions provided and views expressed at the hearing, the Country and Marine Parks Board rejected the two objections and considered that no amendment to the draft map was necessary.

The draft map was approved by the Chief Executive in Council on April 17, 2018. Copies of the approved map were deposited at the Land Registry, the headquarters of the AFCD and the headquarters of the Marine Department for public inspection. The deposit of the maps was notified in the Gazette on March 15, 2019.

The spokesman said, "Covering an area of about 650 hectares, the SWLMP is an important habitat for Chinese white dolphins. Activities in the waters concerned will be regulated by the Ordinance and the Marine Parks and Marine Reserves Regulation after the designation. It will be conducive to providing an improved habitat for marine life as well as conservation of Chinese white dolphins and marine biodiversity in the long run."

The Marine Parks (Designation) (Amendment) Order 2019 in respect of the designation of the SWLMP will be tabled at the Legislative Council on December 18, 2019, for negative vetting and come into effect on April 1, 2020.