

Fish restocking exercise held on National Fish Releasing Day 2025 (with photos)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), the Urban Planning and Natural Resources Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality, and the Ocean Development Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality today (June 6) jointly organised the National Fish Releasing Day 2025 fish restocking exercise concurrently with other exercises nationwide, with an aim to restore and enhance aquatic resources as well as to raise public awareness of the conservation of aquatic resources and the need to improve aquatic habitats.

Speaking at the launching ceremony, the Under Secretary for Environment and Ecology, Miss Diane Wong, said, "Today is the National Fish Releasing Day designated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. Hence, fish restocking exercises are launched nationwide concurrently to restore and enhance aquatic resources. We are actively responding to this initiative and are conducting restocking exercises jointly with the Urban Planning and Natural Resources Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality and the Ocean Development Bureau of Shenzhen Municipality for the first time."

Miss Wong added that the Blueprint for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Fisheries, released by the Government in collaboration with the agriculture and fisheries sectors in December 2023, proposed the implementation of restocking to restore and enhance fisheries resources, as well as to strengthen public education, arouse public awareness of the conservation of marine resources and environment, and enhance understanding of the significance of restocking.

After the launching ceremony, AFCD representatives and some guests proceeded to Tung Ping Chau Marine Park (TPCMP) and Hong Kong waters adjacent to Shenzhen in Mirs Bay, where they released some 23 500 juvenile fish of native species, including Hong Kong grouper (*Epinephelus akaara*), star snapper (*Lutjanus stellatus*), black seabream (*Acanthopagrus schlegelii*), and two newly added species this year, yellowfin seabream (*Acanthopagrus latus*) and red seabream (*Pagrus major*). The released juvenile fish are from reputable hatcheries and in good health, with their broodstock originating from Hong Kong or the nearby South China Sea. Restocking is a science-based approach of releasing appropriate species to their natural environment, allowing them to grow and reproduce. TPCMP, with its diverse habitats including artificial reefs, coral communities, natural rocky reefs and boulders, provides a favourable habitat for these juvenile fish. Commercial fishing has been banned in this marine park. The AFCD will conduct underwater surveys regularly to monitor the condition of the released fish and will continue to monitor the overall status of fishery resources in Hong Kong.

The fish restocking exercise, supported by the Hong Kong Buddhist Association, the Hong Kong Fishermen Consortium, Ocean Park Hong Kong and the

Ocean Park Conservation Foundation Hong Kong, brought together about 150 students, representatives from religious groups, fishermen's associations and green groups, etc. The AFCD will also arrange for the public and students to take part in other restocking exercises later this year, and strengthen collaboration with various groups to organise more educational activities for the public and schools, share information about restocking, as well as provide technical advice to groups interested in conducting restocking in local waters.

The AFCD reminds the public to think carefully before participating in animal release activities to avoid affecting the ecological environment or causing unnecessary suffering to animals. The public may consider participating in science-based restocking or other charitable activities as alternatives to animal releases.



