

Mainland fisherman suspected of operating illegally in Hong Kong waters charged (with photo)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (February 23) laid a charge against a Mainland fisherman suspected of engaging in illegal fishing in Hong Kong waters near Shek Ngau Chau.

AFCD officers intercepted a Mainland fishing vessel suspected to be carrying out illegal fishing by gill net in the above-mentioned waters at about 5pm yesterday (February 22) for investigation. Some fishing gear and catch were seized on board.

The charge was laid against the Mainland fisherman found on board the vessel today. He was suspected to have violated the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171) (the Ordinance). He will appear at Fanling Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (February 24).

Only a vessel registered under the Ordinance can be used for fishing in Hong Kong waters. Regardless of the type of fishing gear used, a non-local fishing vessel is not allowed to carry out fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. Any offender on conviction is liable to a maximum penalty of a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for six months.

An AFCD spokesman said, "The Government is committed to cracking down on illegal fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. The AFCD will continue to step up patrols and stringently enforce the law."

