

Red tides sighted

Four red tides have been sighted over the past week, an inter-departmental red tide working group reported today (January 22).

Staff of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department spotted the first red tide on January 18 at Deep Water Bay Beach, Hong Kong Island, and the second and third red tides on January 19 at South Bay Beach and Repulse Bay Beach respectively. The fourth red tide was spotted by staff of the Marine Department on January 20 in waters off Wan Poon Path, Junk Bay.

Apart from the red tide at South Bay Beach, which dissipated, the other three red tides still persist. No fish deaths associated with the four mentioned red tides have been reported as at today.

A spokesman for the working group said, "All four red tides were formed by *Phaeocystis globosa*, which is commonly found in Hong Kong waters. According to overseas literature, *Phaeocystis globosa* can produce foam that may cause harmful effects to fish."

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) urged mariculturists at the Lo Tik Wan, Sok Kwu Wan and Tung Lung Chau fish culture zones to monitor the situation closely and increase aeration where necessary.

Red tide is a natural phenomenon. The AFCD's proactive phytoplankton monitoring programme will continue to monitor red tide occurrences to minimise the impact on the mariculture industry and the public.