

Overview of Mariculture in Hong Kong

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Marine fish culture in Hong Kong involves the culture of fish in cages suspended from rafts in the sea. It is regulated by the Marine Finfish Culture Ordinance Cap. 353. All marine fish culture operations require to be licensed and conducted in designated areas. Grouper is the major group of species being cultured in Hong Kong (over 50%). Other significant species include snappers, sea breams and pompano. Cultured marine finfish production in 2005 was 1500 tons, valued at US\$9.7 million.

Fish disease has been a difficult problem encountered by fish farmers. Under the Fish Health Inspection Programme, fish farms are visited regularly to facilitate early detection of disease outbreaks and to advise fish farmers on good husbandry techniques and disease prevention measures.

After the 1998 red tide episode, a comprehensive red tide management programme was implemented. It comprises of an interdepartmental red tide reporting network, a phytoplankton monitoring programme, a geographic information system (GIS), and various contingency plans to address different issues including mariculture, food safety and human health.

To investigate the possibility of reducing the impact of self-pollution from fish farming activities, a trial study on the efficiency of artificial reefs (AR) as biofilter in fish culture zone was conducted. The study aimed at quantifying the efficiency of AR to remove nutrients from fish farms, and to evaluate the changes in environmental and biological conditions after deployment of AR. According to our field study and modelling, by employing 16 pieces of 3m X 3m X 4m specially designed AR, the total removal of carbon, nitrogen and phosphate were estimated at 2,352 Kg, 624 Kg and 103 Kg per year respectively.
