

## **PROVISIONAL LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Establishment of a Vessel Prohibition Zone in Tung Ping Chau Marine Park**

#### **Purpose**

To seek members' comments on the proposal to establish a Vessel Prohibition Zone (VPZ) in Tung Ping Chau Marine Park (TPCMP).

#### **Background**

- Mooring of cargo boats in shallow waters of TPCMP was noticed with increasing trend since January 2005;
- These vessels were staying motionless most of the time but would suddenly moved out of the TPCMP followed by rapid transfer of consignments onto sampans that sailed to the mainland at high speed; and
- These vessels found inside the TPCMP did not lit up any navigational lights when staying motionless or moving.

#### **Impact onto the TPCMP**

##### *Coral*

- A number of grounding cases of these vessels inside the TPCMP were recorded since January 2005;
- The most severe case took place on 26 December 2004 when a cargo vessel grounded inside Core Area A causing damages to about 138 square meters of corals involving colonies of 10 species.

- Another cargo vessel was sunken in June 2005 near Cham Keng Chau and the latest grounding happened on 16 February 2006 near Core Area B of TPCMP.

#### *Oil spillage*

- Discharge of ballast water from vessel passing near TPCMP or sometimes oil spillage due to grounding cases would threaten the marine lives in TPCMP.
- The most recent oil spill was found in association with the grounding case on 16 February 2006.

#### *Dumping of consignment*

- Scuba survey in the TPCMP found remains of broken monitors, computer cables, and frozen food items indicating that the activities of the cargo boats might cause other pollution problems to the environment.

### **The Proposal**

- Since these vessels were found in the TPCMP mainly in nighttime after between sunset and sunrise, the Country and Marine Parks Authority proposed to declare the TPCMP under section 16(1) of the Marine Parks and Marine Reserves Regulation a VPZ from 18:30 hours to 0630 hours everyday.
- This will enable the Authority to exercise effectively control of vessels mooring in the TPCMP during night time and to minimize any possible environmental impact on the TPCMP
- To avoid unnecessary inconvenience caused to the vessels that need to enter the TPCMP during night time, the following classes of vessels are proposed to be exempted from the prohibition:

- i Fishing vessels with valid marine park fishing permits;
- ii Kaito or public ferries serving Tung Ping Chau;
- iii Pleasure vessels;
- iv Work boats or barges associated with approved works; and
- v Barges delivering fuel to serve the radar station on Tung Ping Chau  
and
- vi Government vessels

**Advice sought**

- Members are requested to note comment on the proposal.

*Country and Marine Parks Authority  
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department*

*February 2006*