

Attention to:

To whom it may concern,

The Hong Kong 'Seagods' dragon boating team strongly supports the ban of trawling in Hong Kong Waters. As a group of people who are passionate and spend a lot of time in the ocean, we are concerned about the current state of our ecosystems, habitat and animals in the waters where we paddle.

Many have compared ocean trawling to deforestation. The damage caused by dragging weighted nets along the sea bed is just as destructive as tearing down rainforests, the difference being that what happens in the ocean is not always seen by the public eye.

An unimaginable amount of damage is done not only physically to the seabed and corals, but to the entire surrounding ecosystem. Hong Kong is home to the very unique species of Pink Dolphins, and even they are suffering as a result of this outdated practice and the dumping culture. Habitats that have been cleared can take up to 10 years to fully recover.

The daily average catch of just 5kg from these trawlers would scarcely cover the costs of the diesel needed to take them out to sea. Most fishermen are barely earning a living due to fish stocks being exhausted, and as a result more than 50% of the fishing communities are willing to move away from the fishing industry if given the opportunity.

Research has shown that in areas protected from trawlers and over-fishing (marine parks), the living habitat has thrived with corals, soft sponges, fish and invertebrates.

Hong Kong is a fantastic destination for eco-tourists, spending millions per year on recreational marine activities. In continuing to allow destruction to our waters and its ecosystems would be detrimental to our economy. Being one of the most developed territories in Asia, Hong Kong needs to set the standard in terms of environmental and animal welfare policies, leading by example so other nations in Asia and across the world can follow.

Healthy oceans are required for a healthy planet. Being such dynamic systems of life, the ocean will most certainly recover, if we only give it the chance.

Yours faithfully,

Members of Seagods

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