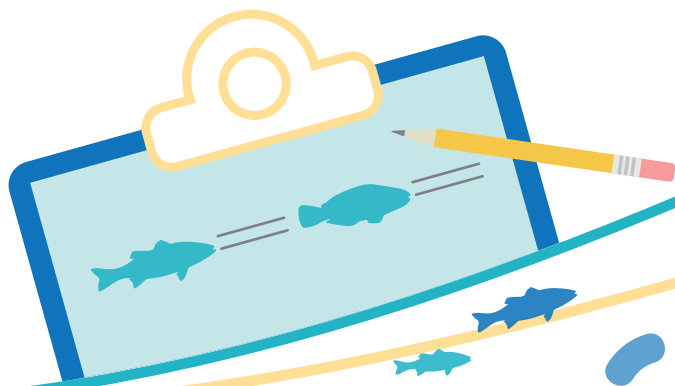




Marine Parks Featured Story

Fisheries Resources Surveys at Marine Parks and the Marine Reserve



The Importance of Fisheries Resources

Fisheries resources is one of the key components of the marine ecosystem, it is essential to a healthy marine ecosystem and is an important source of food to human. Information about the fisheries resources would help the planning and management of marine parks and marine reserve. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has commissioned a consultancy study to assess the fisheries resources in marine parks and the marine reserve using a variety of fishing methods.

Methodology

The quarterly survey in marine parks and the marine reserve used a number of fishing methods including gill netting, hand lining and long lining. Survey sites included Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park (HHWMP), Tung Ping Chau Marine Park (TPCMP), Yan Chau Tong Marine Park (YCTMP), Cape D'Aguilar Marine Reserve (CDMR) in the eastern waters, as well as the Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park (SCLKCMP) and the Brothers Marine Park (BMP) in the western waters. Reference Sites, which were located outside these marine parks and the marine reserve, were selected and surveyed for analysis purposes. Based on survey results, a number of biological parameters (including marine fauna species richness, composition, size, abundance and biomass) within and outside the marine parks and marine reserve were analysed.



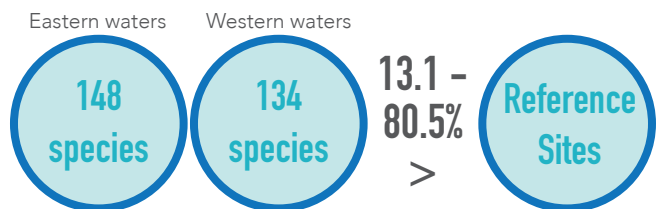
Key Findings

In general,



of **marine fauna** species were recorded within existing marine parks and the marine reserve as compared with the respective Reference Sites.

Totalling 148 and 134 species of marine fauna in eastern and western waters were recorded respectively. The number of species in marine parks in eastern waters was larger than the respective Reference Sites by 13.1 – 80.5%.



Threadfin bream

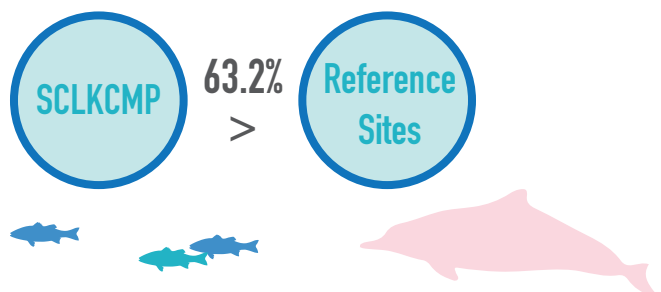
Seabream

Grouper



In the eastern waters, the biomass between **TPCMP and CDMR** and their respective Reference Sites were particularly prominent and was higher in the range of 42.9% - 48.7%. Commercial species of threadfin bream, seabream and grouper were higher in biomass within these two areas compared with the respective Reference Sites.

In the western waters, the biomass within SCLKCMP was 63.2% higher than its Reference Sites. The biomass and diversity of **prey fish species** to the Chinese white dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) were also higher within SCLKCMP than its Reference Sites.



Examples of the most abundant species

Several commercial species were found to be abundant in the surveyed marine parks and the marine reserve, examples include red pargo (*Pagrus major*), common rockfish (*Sebastiscus marmoratus*) and threadfin porgy (*Evynnis cardinalis*).

Prey species of the Chinese white dolphin, which were found to have higher biomass within SCLKCMP than the respective Reference Sites, include Belanger's croaker (*Johnius belangerii*), spotted catfish (*Arius thunbergi*), elongate ilisha (*Ilisha elongata*), etc.



Red pargo



Common rockfish



Threadfin porgy



Belanger's croaker



Spotted catfish



Elongate ilisha

Management of Marine Parks and Marine Reserve

At present, a total of six marine parks and one marine reserve have been designated in Hong Kong. Marine parks are created for the purpose of conservation, public education, scientific studies and recreation. Activities compatible with the objectives of marine parks are generally allowed. On the other hand, recreational activities are prohibited in marine reserve and the area is protected for conservation, education and scientific studies. To further enhance the overall marine resources in Hong Kong, under the new fisheries management strategy in marine parks, commercial fishing will be banned in HHWMP, TPCMP, YCTMP and SCLKCMP starting from 1 April 2022.



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