

R27m Hong Kong bound Abalone shipment returned to SA

R27 million worth of abalone has been returned to Cape Town after it was seized from a ship that docked in Hong Kong, Independent Online reports.

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries spokesman said it was the first time a consignment had been returned to SA after having docked elsewhere. Spokesman Lionel Adendorf said that the 2627k consignment was illegally harvested and processed in Cape Town before being exported to Hong Kong. The Hong Kong authorities assessed the shipment when it docked in Hong Kong on March 10, 2011, and valued it at R27m.

This is "the first consignment to return to South Africa after it had docked," Adendorf said, adding that a man who has been arrested in Hong Kong for his involvement was fined \$45 000 (R341 720). Since 2007 the department had managed to have three other consignments stopped while en route to the East and return to South Africa. This was done with the help of the police, as well as Sars. "This brings the number of abalone, destined for the East, that were seized and confiscated since 2007 to more than 500 000 units," Adendorf said. This latest success follows an operation that ended in gunfire in Cape Town's Hout Bay last week.

Last week the Cape Argus reported that violence erupted in Hangberg, Hout Bay during a joint raid by police, a technical response team and Marine Coastal Management officials looking for an abalone syndicate. The team has been told that five boats and approximately 50 men were illegally diving for abalone near Robbe Island. As team members started searching homes, the area quickly became the scene of a violent riot. Cars were pelted with rocks and roads were barricaded as residents retaliated against the police. Shots were heard. One police officer was taken to hospital and several others received minor injuries.

Read [Abalone worth R27m returned to Cape](http://www.iol.co.za) on www.iol.co.za.

Read [Hangberg goes to war over abalone raid](http://www.iol.co.za) on www.iol.co.za.