

Aunyarat Siammai 2009: Fishery Resource Value of Seagrass Bed Utilization by Community of Libong Island, Trang Province. Master of Science (Resource Management), Major Field: Resource Management, Interdisciplinary Graduate Program. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Somskaow Bejranonda, Ph.D. 193 pages.

The objectives of this research were to: 1) study seagrass bed utilization status of people in Libong Island, 2) evaluate the value of seagrass bed utilized in the fishery, and 3) study factors affecting the fishery resource value in seagrass bed at Libong Island. The 269 sample households in Libong Island, Trang Province were collected by survey from January to December, 2007. To evaluate the value of seagrass bed utilization, the market value approach was employed. Path analysis was used for examining factors affecting the utilization in the fishery sector.

The results showed that the majority of samples were aged between 25 to 34 years old, and had graduated in primary school. Horticulture was their main occupation and they owned average agricultural land of 6.97 rai per household. The average of family members was 4 persons and their average monthly income and expenditure were between 5,000 to 9,999 Baht. Most of them received seagrass information from television. It was also found that the Libong Island Fisherfolk Network Group had the largest membership among all environment organizations and all membership had been trained in coastal resources. The samples' main aim of seagrass bed utilization was for fishery and they entered the place on foot from the coast to seagrass bed less than four kilometers. Important economic aquatic animals were wing shells, seacucumbers, shrimps, fishes, crabs, and octopi. Most of them had a moderate level of knowledge about seagrass resources and a low level of participation for seagrass bed management. Fishery resource value of seagrass bed utilization by Libong Island community was 7,895,620 Baht in 2007. At the 0.10 significance level, factors affecting the value of fishery utilization were patterns of travel to seagrass bed, household expenditure, training participation in coastal resources and participation in seagrass bed management in Libong Island.

The suggestion is that the implications of research could be used as preliminary data for policymakers for seagrass bed management. Local government and NGOs should provide utilization choices for the community in order to use the seagrass bed in various functions besides the fishery purpose. Also, it is important to disseminate knowledge of functions and benefits of seagrass to local people and encourage participation for seagrass bed management. Therefore, all agencies including government organizations and private sectors should cooperate for unity of seagrass bed planning and management which affects the sustainability of seagrass bed utilization in the future.

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