

Sujana Thongkhammut 2006: Interaction Effects of Salinity, Alkalinity, Hardness and Temperature on Growth of *Gracilaria fisheri* (Xia et Abbott) Abbott, Zhang et Xia. Master of Science (Fisheries Science), Major Field: Fisheries Science, Department of Fishery Biology. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Anong Chirapart, Ph.D. 113 pages. ISBN 974-16-1638-4

Interaction effects of salinity, alkalinity, hardness and temperature on growth of *Gracilaria fisheri* were determined. Two set of experiments were conducted under laboratory conditions. In Experiment I, algal samples were grown under 4 ranges of alkalinities: 71-90, 111-130, 151-170 and 191-210 mg CaCO_3/l at different salinities of 15, 25, 35, 45 ‰ and temperatures of 25, 34, and 38 °C. In Experiment II, algal samples were grown under 4 ranges of hardness: 3001-4000, 5001-6000, 7001-8000 and 9001-10000 mg CaCO_3/l at different salinities of 15, 25, 35, 45 ‰ and at temperatures of 25, 34, and 38 °C. Fresh algal materials were soaked in 10 ppm of PES media for 2 hrs prior to culture experiments. Forty milligrams of initial fresh weight of each algal sample were grown in sterilized seawater in 300 ml glass bottle under controlled light intensity of $100 \mu \text{E m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$. Algal growth was determined every 7-10 days interval as percentage of fresh weight per day. Each experiment was conducted for 8 weeks. In this study, *G. fisheri* could grow at alkalinity range from 71-210 mg CaCO_3/l and hardness of 3001-10000 mg CaCO_3/l at salinity of 15-45 ‰ and temperature of 25-34 °C. However, optimum range of alkalinity and hardness for growth of *G. fisheri* was from 71-130 mg CaCO_3/l and 4001-8000 mg CaCO_3/l , respectively when salinity ranged from 25-35 ‰ at temperature of 25 °C. Under these culture conditions, thalli were healthy, succulent and had much long branching. Algal growth was gradually decreased when grown at alkalinity of 151 mg CaCO_3/l in all salinities and temperatures when there appeared white crystal of limestone precipitated on thalli surface. Thalli were rigid, brittle and easily broken. Increasing effects of alkalinity on *Gracilaria* growth were observed when salinity and temperature reached 45 ‰ and 34 °C, respectively. Thalli were markedly declined in all experiments when temperature exceeded 38 °C.

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