

Perception of Local Communities Towards the Conservation Terubok

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Received: Aug. 7, 2019 Accepted: Aug. 28, 2019 Online published: Sep. 10, 2019

doi:10.5296/jpag.v9i3.15232

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/jpag.v9i3.15232>

Abstract

Terubok is one of the famous, important commercially fish in Malaysia and has high economic value which only can be found in Sarawak rivers. However, this species has been threatened in the past 15 years due to heavy exploitation. Hence, this study was done to examine the perceptions of local in conserving and sustaining the terubok population. An attitudinal study is increasingly being adopted as tools for evaluating public understanding, acceptance and the impact of conservation interventions. This study examines the perception and views of local community towards the dynamic resources, government intervention, unique features and livelihood sustainability which acts as a basis on conserving terubok. The findings of these studies show that almost all of the respondents show a highly positive

attitude towards conserving terubok. Local community are really well aware with the importance of terubok. Hence, this study has proof that the local community has a positive attitude towards conserving terubok.

Keywords: descriptive analysis, natural resources, conservation

1. Introduction

The tropical shad of genus *Tenualosa* or locally known as Terubok fish are important estuarine fishes both commercially and culturally in many Asian countries including Malaysia. Worldwide, there are five types of genus *Tenualosa* that can be found which is *Tenualosa toli*, *Tenualosa macrura*, *Tenualosa illisha*, *Tenualosa revesii* and *Tenualosa thibaudaui* (Blaber, Milton, Pang, Wong, Boon, Nyigo & Lubim, 1996). However, only two species can be found in Malaysia which is *Tenualosa toli* and *Tenualosa Macrura*. *Tenualosa toli* can be found only in the estuaries and adjacent coastal of Sarawak which comprises the estuaries of Batang Sadong, Batang Lupar, Batang Saribas and Batang Lassa (Rajali, 1991; Philip, 2001; Blaber, Milton, Chenery & Fry, 2003) (Figure 1). However, nowadays, terubok fish are very limited and depleting in coastal waters of Sarawak. The population of terubok is being threatened because of the over-exploitation (Rahim, Tumiran, Yuzine & Husaini, 2014).



Figure 1. Maps of “Core *Terubok Sungai (tenualosa toli)* Area” in Sarawak

Source: Google Maps (2019)

Terubok is being exploited especially for its roe and meat which the spawning adult fish is targeted. The number of local terubok are still very limited and very difficult to obtain. Due to the high demand of terubok in Sarawak, many imported terubok that came from India and Myanmar entering the market. Terubok provides a good illustration of a public good for natural ecosystems that are currently under tremendous pressures. This study is mainly focusing on *tenualosa toli* or locally known as river terubok because nowadays terubok are