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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i14/7363>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i14/7363

Received: 12 April 2020, **Revised:** 16 May 2020, **Accepted:** 23 June 2020

Published Online: 27 June 2020

In-Text Citation: (Bakeri et al., 2020)

To Cite this Article: Bakeri, N. A., Affizzah, A. M. D., Abdullah, A. M., & Ashraf-Roszopor, R. (2020). Willingness to Pay to Conserve *Tenuالosa toli* (Terubok). *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(14), 61–69.

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Special Issue: WSTI2018 - Issues and Trends on Education, Science and Technology, 2020, Pg. 61 - 69

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Willingness to Pay to Conserve *Tenualosa toli* (Terubok)

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Abstract

Over the year, the population of local terubok (*Tenualosa toli*) is being threatened due to over-exploitation. Terubok is one of the famous and important commercially fish in Malaysia which only found in Sarawak rivers. Nowadays, the landing of local terubok are very limited and difficult to obtain since 1980s. Environmental goods like terubok has a value to society, however, it is difficult to obtain and express these economic values in monetary terms. One of the methods that commonly used to evaluate non-market valuation which is Contingent valuation method (CVM) was used in this study to estimate the willingness-to-pay (WTP) of local communities to conserve terubok. A dichotomous choice contingent valuation method (DC-CVM) in single bound formulation was employed in this study. The general objective of this study is to examine the monetary value that local people are willing to pay to conserve terubok in Sarawak. The result shows that WTP of Yes decreases as the price of the offer increases. Result indicates that respondents are willing to pay at an average of RM31 per annum for sustainability of Terubok.

Keywords: Contingent Valuation, Environmental Goods, Economic Value, Willingness to Pay.

Introduction

The world's ecosystems provide a huge variety of useful services that enhance human welfare (Pagiola, Bishop & Von Ritter, 2004). Natural ecosystem provides valuable commodities such as animals, edible plants, medicinal products, construction materials and also clothing. Aesthetic or cultural benefits provided by natural ecosystems, including scenic views and recreation opportunity offers many benefits that can be classify as a public good where everyone can used it freely without any barrier. However, the existence of public goods creates a problem resulting negative externalities affecting all user such as destruction of environmental resources. Public goods problem often closely related to the "free-rider" and over-usage problems in which people are not paying for the good and continue to access it, resulting ecosystem nowadays in under tremendous pressures where most of the forest ecosystems have been converted to other uses, wetlands are being drained and coral reef are destroyed.