

Marine Resources at Kuala Lawas and Its Utilization

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Abstract

Kuala Lawas has a unique and special marine ecosystem. It has mangrove forests, sea grass beds, coral reefs, estuarine, sandy beaches, mud flat and also continental slope. During the marine life survey in September 2004, seven species of sea grasses from two families were recorded along the 25-30 km long beaches stretching from Sungai Bangkulit, on the Sarawak/Sabah border to Sungai Kabab Putus; a total of sixty species belonging to thirty five families of marine fishes were recorded; two species of turtles were sighted; and eight irrawaddy dolphins were spotted. Although no dugong was sighted during this survey, very obvious dugong feeding trails/tracks could be seen at sea grass beds during low tide. This area also provides significant contributions to Sarawak's fisheries industries. Although numbers of fishermen are relatively small and only depend on traditional fishing methods such as drift nets, fishing stakes, bag nets, barrier nets, hook and lines, and fish traps, Lawas district provides 4.70% of total annually marine fish landings in Sarawak in 2004. Limbang and Lawas are the major brackish water cage cultures in Sarawak with production around 1.38 metric tones and production value around RM1.6 million which is 60% of the total annual water cage culture productions in the state.