

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SWIMMING BLUE CRAB (*PORTUNUS PELAGICUS*) IN SIKAO DISTRICT, TRANG PROVINCE, THAILAND

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The data were obtained from 131 sample fishers who harvested swimming blue crab in Sikao Bay through interviewing with a prepared questionnaire.

The study found that the fishers had low education and fishing is their mainstay. They employed crab trap and trap gill net with outboard powered boat. The fishers realized that the swimming blue crab resource is depleted owing to overfishing. The total production is declining annually and size of landing crabs become smaller. The study also found that the small mesh size crab trap has a bigger catch than the crab gill net but the size of caught crabs is smaller. The fishers try to catch crab as much as possible due to its high price. However, most of the fishers have realized that the small mesh size crab trap will lead to the unsustainable crab fishery. The fisher's opinions on crab conservation and management focused on information acceptance and institutional arrangement. However, the fishers did not accept the ideas on catch limit and limit entry in a certain fishing ground.

The study also revealed that, for the sustainable of crab fishery in Sikao District, a fishers institution for swimming blue crab conservation and management should be established. In addition, information on the swimming blue crab resources recovering program and crab fishery development policy should be informed to the fishers. However, the crabs fishery development should keep the economic conditions of fishers in account.