

Study on octopus pot fishing around Klong-yai coastal, Trat province.

Saruttaya Jaroongpongswat¹, Nammon Sukhumalchan¹, Gowit Janejaem¹, Thunyakarn Sirishang¹, Wuthipong Lertchaipat¹ and Anukorn Boutson¹

¹Department of Marine science, Faculty of Fisheries, Kasetsart University, Bangkok

Abstract

In Thailand, octopus pot operations targeting *Amphioctopus aegina* were reported firstly in Trat province in 2004, conducted by Vietnamese fishers. Now, it is a popular fishing gear and widely used by Trat fishers since easy to operate, good catch amount and high value of the octopus for exporting to oversea markets. This study carried out around Klong-yai coastal, Trat province. The relative papers were reviewed and onboard survey with the fishers was conducted on 28 Oct 2017. The data revealed that the pot has been widely operated in Thai waters. The pot made by Noble volute shell (*Cymbiola nobilis*). In the study site, each pot was connected by polypropylene rope (7 m pot interval), set at the bottom (mud-sand), set parallel to the coastal, fishing depth of 10-15 m. The sock time was 1-2 days. During retrieving process, pots were hauled onboard and arranged in the buckets. The main caught octopuses were released from the pots by themselves. If the octopus still remained inside, the fresh water was used by dropping to the pot to release the octopus. Only *A. aegina* species was found in the pot and only 1 individual octopus was caught in a pot. The capture statistics in 2010–2013 showed that the octopus catch tend to increase both the catch amount and value, with the amount of 10,200 tons and the value of 651.1 million baht in 2013. Regarding Trat fishers opinions, the octopus catch have been decreasing because of the intensive fishing particularly from the commercial boats those increased the pot numbers/boat (maximum can reach 20,000 pots/boat). Even though octopus pot is a very species selectivity gear but it was reported that associated to decreasing of the octopus numbers. Beside the pot fishing also impacted to the amount decreasing of noble volute shell. The underwater observations in the real fishing ground and the position of the octopus setting at the sea bottom that relate to the catch efficiency will be discussed.