

**COMPARATIVE GROWTH AND SURVIVAL OF HATCHERY PRODUCED
CRASSOSTREA BELCHERJ SEEDS AT A MARINE AND AN ESTUARINE SITE
IN MALAYSIA**

By Shau-Hwai Tan¹ and Tat-Meng Wong²

1. Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Minden, Penang, Malaysia
2. Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong, 9-13/F, Trade Department Tower, 700 Nathan Road Kowloon, Hong Kong

ABSTRACT

Hatchery produced seeds of the tropical oyster *Crassostrea belcheri* which were either set on marble chips (spats) or free (cultchless) were grown using suspended tray culture for 18 months at Muka Head, Penang (salinity 28.0 ppt) and at Batu Lintang, Kedah (salinity: 15-25 ppt). During the first 12 months growth of cultchless seeds and spats was significantly higher ($p > 0.05$) at Muka Head, with mean shell height reaching 6 cm compared to 3.5 cm at Batu Lintang. However, differences in shell height narrowed during subsequent months. By the 18th month the mean shell height of spats and cultchless seeds at both sites had all reached between 7.30-7.63 cm. Overall, *Crassostrea belcheri* survived better at Batu Lintang (13.4%) compared to Muka Head (2.0%). The implications of these results on site selection for mass culture are discussed.