

PROTECTION OF TOP SHELL (*TROCHUS NILOTICUS*) AT BANDA AND LEASE ISLANDS

By Sigit A. P. Dwiono¹, Edward Danakusumah², Sam Wouthuyzen¹ & Ngurah N. Wiadnyana¹

1. Division for Marine Resources, R & D Center for Oceanology - LIPI, Guru-guru, Poka, Ambon 97223, Indonesia
2. Balit Perikanan Budidaya Pantai, Badan Litbang Pertanian, Departmen Pertanian, Jl. Makmur Dg. Sitakka, Maros 90511, Indonesia

Top shell (*Trochus niloticus*) represents a dependable source of income for the eastern Indonesian fishermen. But, a high price of shells has caused a drastic decrease of the broodstock due to increasing fishing intensity. The threat to natural stocks of topshells occur all over the Indonesia, especially in regions close to the trade centers. This tendency has led the authorities to issue a ministerial decree no. 12/KPTS-11/1997 which prohibits fishing activity and declare the top shell a threatened species.

The R & D Division for Marine Resources has initiated research on *T. niloticus* with a view to conserve this important fishery resource.