

SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS IN RESOURCE USE BY THE FISHING COMMUNITIES IN AND AROUND KOMODO NATIONAL PARK, A MARINE PROTECTED AREA IN CENTRAL INDONESIA.

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Komodo National Park (1,800 km²) is situated in Central Indonesia, between Flores to the East and Sumbawa to the West. The Park was established in 1980 to protect the Komodo dragon *Varanus komodoensis*, but it also encompasses 1,200 km² of highly diverse marine habitats. The fishing communities in and around the Park, numbering ca. 20,000 people, use a variety of fishing methods to exploit pelagic resources such as squid, small clupeids, and demersal resources such as lobster, groupers (*Plectropomus* spp. and *Epinephelus* spp.), sea cucumber and abalone. Especially if destructive fishing methods are used, the exploitation of demersal resources threatens the marine biodiversity of the Park. During 1997, 1998 and 1999, creel surveys were conducted in the Park to study resource use by the fishing communities to support the management of the Park. The creel surveys revealed distinct spatial patterns in resource use, which vary between fishing communities and between years. Based on resource use patterns, and on the spatial distribution of marine habitats in the Park, a zoning plan was proposed and endorsed by the Indonesian Park authorities.