

## **EDITORIAL ON OCEAN MULTI-USE AT MAFIA ISLAND IN TANZANIA**

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### **EDITORIAL:**

Mafia Island is one of the Indian Ocean's most hidden gem found along the east coast of Tanzania. The idea of this article came up in relation to Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) project called MUSES (Multi-Use in European Seas). There are two synergies (active co-existence of uses) regarding aquaculture sector taking place in the Island i.e. Aquaculture and Environmental protection & Aquaculture and Tourism (Aquitourism). Mariculture activities came up in this Island due to promotion of alternative income generation activities to broaden income base and lessen involvement in unsustainable resource use activities.

Seaweed farming and Marine Protection co-exist in this Island. Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP) is the first and largest among the three multi-use Marine Park Areas (MPAs) in Tanzania with an area extending across some 882 km<sup>2</sup>. Sustainability measures are applied during marine activities in this MPA. Seaweed farming has proven to have very low negative environmental impact, while having open positive impact. There are around 134 species of marine algae within the waters of MIMP but only two commercial species of red seaweed *Eucheum* and *Kappaphycus* are farmed. Farming efforts began

in 1992 although it has been a supplier of dry wild red seaweed, *Eucheum*-type for carrageenan industry since 1950's. The activity is permitted in the general-use zone where for residents; local resident user certificate and others; MIMP permit is required; also in the specified-use zone where MIMP permit is required for all. Currently only residents from three villages (Chole, Jibondo and Juani) farm seaweed at MIMP using the shallow water off-bottom technology. Previously the activity seemed to be for women but nowadays even men are engaging themselves in seaweed farming.

Seaweed farming and Eco-tourism (Sea plant farm tours) also co-exist in this Island. The tourists visit aquaculture sites, learn about the aquaculture techniques and traditions and also experience the amazing life of seaweed farming women. The activity is called sea plant farm tours. Local products such as soaps, creams, gel, treatment scrubs, juices infused with seaweed ingredients such as Lang Lang are sold to visitors and across many East African Hotel establishments.

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