

ORGANIZATION AND CONFLICT IN THE EXPANSION OF THE FISHING GROUND FOR RUMPON FISHING BY SINJAI PEOPLE

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In fishing, a rumpon is a structure used as a fish-aggregating device (FAD) that originated in the Mandar district in Western Sulawesi province and spread widely across eastern Indonesia. In Sinjai prefecture, southern Sulawesi, it is said that rumpon was introduced over five decades ago, and the structures are used by skipjack fishermen at Bone Bay. However, because of the decline in fishery resources in inner Bone Bay and increases in export-oriented fisheries, skipjack fishermen in Sinjai have recently expanded the rumpon fishing ground to the south. In about 1985, the rumpon fishing ground was moved from the waters of Kabaena Island to those of Bonerate Island; in about 1992, rumpon fishing was further expanded to the Flores Sea (from south Flores Island to Sumba Island). At the same time, the demersal fish resources such as serranid in Bone Bay decreased to such an extreme that the fishery was no longer viable, and many of these fishermen joined the rumpon fishing group in Sinjai. Rumpon fishing in the Flores Sea, operated by fishermen from Sinjai, is aimed at only diadromous pelagic fish that meet the required size for export, and principally involves handline fishing. Local fishermen have the right to use the rumpon in the fishing ground, but must fish using handlines. This expansion of the fishing ground toward the south has its roots in the presence of scattered Buginese colonies and ready-made FADs constructed by Filipino fishermen, of which over 300 were once deployed in the Flores Sea. Skipjack fishermen in Sinjai began to set rumpon in this area in 2001, and currently use approximately 30 FADs. Currently, fishermen from the Philippines, Sinjai, and Lombok set FADs to fish for skipjack tuna in this area. The relations among groups sharing the fishing ground are not favorable; in particular, fishermen from Lombok and Sinjai continually fight over territory by damaging the FADs of the other group. Accordingly, Sinjai fishermen must maintain constant surveillance on the ocean using 2-week rotations of fleets of several boats. This has been a factor in increasing the size of these fishery groups.

Keywords: Fish aggregating device (FAD), Flores sea, Philippines fishery, Rumpon, Sinjai, Skipjack fishing