

Estimating the economic value of coral reefs of Iran, egarding their recreational usage and using a contingent valuation method, case study:Kish Island, Persian Gulf

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Abstract

This research will discuss an assessment of the Economic value of Kish Island's coral reefs regarding their recreational usage, and estimate a visitor's willingness to pay (WTP) for recreational benefits obtained, based on contingent valuation (CV) and dichotomous choice (DC). For determination of visitor's willingness to pay semi-nonparametric distribution-free (SNPDF) model was employed. The visitors contain scuba diving and glass ship for visiting coral reefs. Results indicate that 73% of visitors in scuba diving and 52% of visitors in glass sheep are willing to pay for recreational values of Kish Island's coral reefs. The mean value for willingness to pay for the recreational annual value of the coral reefs is 45460 Rls/ha and 1684 Rls/ha per visit for scuba diving and glass sheep respectively. The total recreational annual value was estimated at 144,840 US\$/ha for the Kish Island. This provides enough justification for policy makers to maintain the quality of coral reefs habitat, and along with that to avoid the degradation of marine resources.

Keywords: *Kish Island's coral reefs, Recreational value, Contingent valuation, Willingness to pay, SNPDF model*
