

Mangrove forest resources in Indonesia

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Abstract

Mangrove forests are widely distributed throughout the tropics where they grow abundantly along the coasts. The estimated total area of mangrove forests in Indonesia is 4.25 million ha, which represents about 20% of the world's mangroves. Of this, 2.94 million ha are stretched along the coastal line of Irian Java and are still relatively virgin and unexploited. The remaining 1.31 million ha are found in the more populated areas of Indonesia, such as Java, Sumatra, and Kalimantan where the mangrove forests have been heavily exploited for forest products, agricultural land use, human settlements, and aquaculture development.

The mangrove is a unique and complex ecosystem. This paper examines the human effects on the diverse utilization of this rich but fragile resource, summarizes the problems of managing the Indonesian mangrove forests, and discusses protection and management techniques.