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JOHOR

Reeling in fishing offenders in coastal areas

Agencies monitoring Johor waters record 63 arrests in bid to ensure sustainability

TS MSY (NEWS) 28hb

Stories by MOHD FARHAAN SHAH
farhaan@thestar.com.my

Zahari: The Fisheries Department is tackling the use of trawlers that interfere with the activities of small-scale fishermen.

Fishermen must obey zoning rules, for example, those in Zone A are allowed to use only traditional equipment such as cast nets. – Filepic

JOHOR recorded 63 arrests of fisherman including 14 cases involving trawlers for breaching Zone A regulations in state waters.

State agriculture, agro-based industry and rural development committee chairman Datuk Zahari Sarip said there were five zones designated for fishing activities based on the Malaysian Fisheries Water Zoning System.

"They are Zone A (0-5 nautical miles), Zone B (5-12 nautical miles), Zone C (12-30 nautical miles), Zone C2 (30 nautical miles to the border of the open seas or exclusive economic zones) and Zone C3, which is the Indian Ocean.

"The permissible fishing gear for each zone has been designated.

"For example, fishermen in Zone A are only allowed to use traditional fishing equipment like cast nets and drift nets," he said during the state assembly sitting at Bangunan Sultan Ismail in Kota Iskandar.

He added that commercial fishing equipment such as trawl nets were not allowed in Zone A.

Zahari said this in his reply to Abdul Aziz Talib (PN-Maharani) who asked about action taken in response to complaints about trawlers in waters off Muar.

He said the Johor Fisheries Department was taking necessary measures to address problems concerning trawlers which interfere with small-scale fishermen's activities.

He said the zones helped ensure balanced socio-economic development in addition to guaranteeing the sustainability of resources for fishermen in Johor.

"Trawlers found in the coastal fishing zone have a negative impact on the coastal ecosystem.

"This includes changes to the seabed's topography due to dredging activities in shallow seas.

"This will result in destruction of natural habitats for marine life," he said.

Zahari added that the authorities held regular programmes to educate local fishermen on the demarcation of trawling areas and zone violations.

He added that enforcement was carried out regularly in accordance with the Fisheries Act 1985.

"The Act is relied on to avoid conflicts and disputes between coastal fishermen, who use traditional fishing equipment, and commercial fishermen using high-capacity fishing equipment."

Zahari said multiple enforcement agencies had increased their monitoring, control and surveillance programmes by 20% compared to the previous year.

"We are also collaborating with security agencies such as the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) and the police in carrying out enforcement activities, especially in information sharing.

"The Fisheries Department's enforcement capacity will be strengthened with additional patrol boats at the Batu Pahat Resource Protection Base.

"The assets are expected to be received at the end of 2024 or early 2025," he said.

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Kawal harga, beri subsidi makanan ikan

Oleh MOHAMAD SHOFI MAT ISA
shofi.isa@mediamulia.com.my

UM MS33

JERANTUT: Kerajaan diminta mengawal harga atau memberikan subsidi pada kadar RM20 satu beg makanan ikan yang disifatkan terlalu mahal daripada RM60 sebelum ini, naik kepada RM84 satu beg 20 kilogram ketika ini.

Bercakap kepada *Utusan Malaysia*, pengusaha dan peruncit ikan sangkar Kampung Jerantut Feri, Azman Zainuddin, 52, berkata, nasib pengusaha ikan sangkar di situ kini ibarat telur di hujung tanduk kerana tidak mampu lagi membeli makanan diperlukan membabitkan 100 beg satu sangkar.

Akibatnya Azman berkata, seramai 29 daripada 37 pengusaha ikan sangkar di kampung itu tidak lagi aktif dan sudah pun mengangkat sangkar mereka ke atas sekali gus hilang punca pendapatan.

Baru-baru ini, *Utusan Malaysia* melaporkan bekalan ikan patin sangkar berkurangan hampir 80 peratus dan berdepan krisis yang begitu kritikal ketika ini sehingga boleh menyebabkan harganya mahal sehingga mencecah RM30 sekilogram terutama pada bulan Ramadan ini.

AZMAN Zainuddin memberikan makanan kepada ikan sangkar yang diternak di Kampung Jerantut Feri di Jerantut, Pahang. - UTUSAN/HARIS FADILAH AHMAD

Ketika ini pun, harga patin sangkar sudah mencecah antara RM22 ke RM24 sekilogram berbanding RM18 ke RM20 sebelum ini.

Tiga faktor utama mempengaruhi kekurangan bekalan sumber protein tersebut iaitu harga makanan ikan mahal, kekurangan benih dan kadar kematian tinggi sehingga lebih 70 peratus setiap satu sangkar.

Sementara itu, penternak ikan patin, MZ Agriculture di Kampung Pangsenam di Temerloh dekat sini, Mohd. Zahran Ishak berkata, bekalan ikan patin sangkar di daerah itu terutama di kampung tersebut ketika ini boleh dikatakan sudah tiada.

"Bukan kurang, tapi sudah iada ikan patin. Banyak kedai-kedai sudah tutup perniagaan kerana tiada ikan. Bulan Ramadan ini memang tiada ikan patin sangkar di kampung ini.

"Isu utama sebab tiada benih yang sudah berlarutan lebih setahun. Buat tempahan 20,000 ekor, yang sampai hanya 2,000 ekor. Itu pun tidak semua yang hidup, hanya 10 peratus.

"Selain faktor benih, isu di daerah ini membabitkan kualiti air yang menyebabkan ikan banyak mati. Tidak tahu apa puncanya," katanya.