October 2025
Communities in Sulawesi Establish Temporary Closure

Introduction

Octopus (*Octopus cyanea*) is categorised as a sedentary/domestic reef-associated biota that lives in 0–150 m depth. Male and female adults usually die shortly after spawning and brooding, respectively. The biological characteristics of this species could be a basis for designing appropriate fisheries management action. Specific management strategies are addressed by mainstreaming community-led actions to maintain octopus biomass in their fishing ground.

Octopus, with their fast-growing nature, is deemed responsive to community-led management responses such as temporary closure. Additionally, management action like temporary closure is a suitable approach for the local communities to learn about community-based fisheries management. Furthermore, by letting the octopus grow in size, fishers can gain more income/economic benefit with larger and higher quality octopus.

The temporary closure of the octopus fishery is initiated as management measures action by the communities in the targeted UoCs. There are three common main goals of temporary closure, the first one is to allow small-size octopus to reach maturity and optimal size to be caught. The second is to allow mature octopus the time to spawn and brood, thus recovering the octopus population in the closure area and fishing ground adjecent to it. The third one is to maintain the coral reef ecosystem, not only from octopus fishing activities but also from excessive and/or harmful fishing pressure.

Decisions for the temporary closures are designed and agreed upon by the communities based on the available octopus fisheries data through a series of fisheries meetings, colloquially known as Data Feedback Sessions (DFS). Community members, such as fisher households and community-level buyers, will decide on several actions to implement the temporary closures, i.e. timeline, closure period and location, closure preparation, also other related agreements. Communities also decide to recognise and formalise the temporary closure through village regulations and village head decree.

Updates on Temporary Closure in Sulawesi

From April to September 2025, 9 communities supported by 4 partners have implemented 6 temporary closures (Table 1). Average closure area implemented across UoCs is 90.48ha (±24.67) with average closure period duration 18.5 weeks (±1.83).

Table 1 Number of temporary closure by communities in Sulawesi from April to September 2025

Province	Regency	District	Management Unit	Community	Supporting Partner	Number of Temporary Closure
Sulawesi Tengah	Banggai	Luwuk Timur	Uwedikan	Uwedikan	JAPESDA	1
Sulawesi Tengah	Tojo Una-Una	Talatako	Kadoda	Kadoda	JAPESDA	1
Sulawesi Utara	Minahasa Utara	Likupang Barat	Bulutui	Bulutui	YAPEKA	1
Sulawesi Tenggara	Wakatobi	Kaledupa	Kadie La Olua	Sombano	FORKANI	1
Sulawesi Tenggara	Wakatobi	Kaledupa Selatan	Limbo Kiwolu	Darawa	FORKANI	1
Sulawesi Tenggara	Wakatobi	Wangi-Wangi Selatan	Kadie Kapota	Kapota, Kapota Utara, Kabita, Kabita Togo	KOMANANGI	1

Mean closure areas vary across communities with the communities in Kadie Kapota having the largest closure area of 185ha, whereas Bulutui has the smallest closure area with 22.9ha (Figure 1).

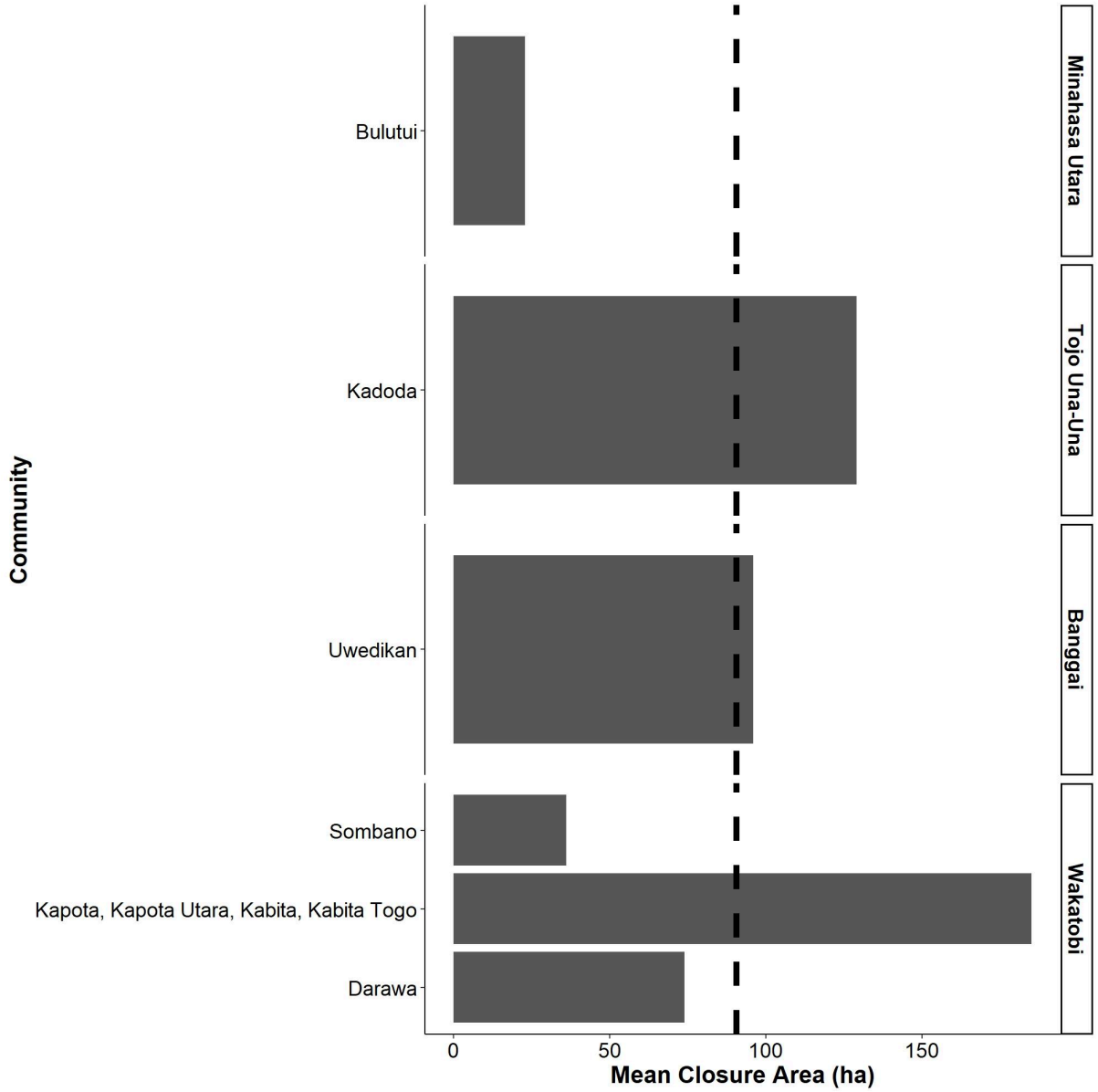

Figure 1 Closure area (ha) by community and regency in Sulawesi from April to September 2025. Dashed line is the average closure area across 9 communities.

Communities in Sulawesi generally have agreed on a similar closure duration that is close to the average duration of all 9 communities (Figure 2). Kadoda and Uwedikan have the shortest closure duration which is 13 weeks compared to other communities in the same period of April to September 2025. Communities in Kadie Kapota agreed on a longer closure duration compared to other communities, which is 23.25 weeks.

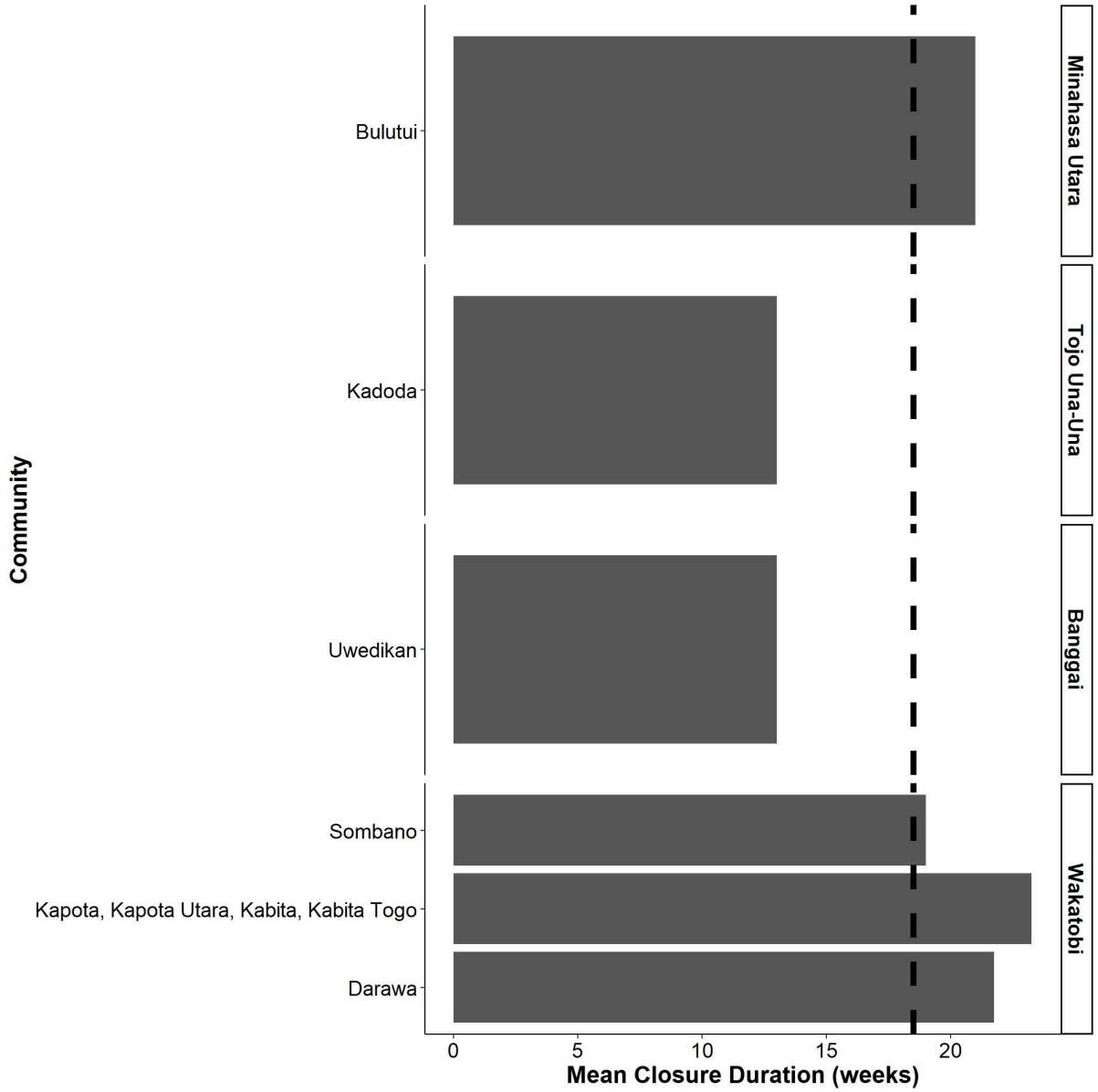

Figure 2 Closure duration (weeks) by community and regency in Sulawesi from April to September 2025. Dashed line is the average closure duration across 9 communities.

After the agreement to establish temporary closure, fishers and communities that attend the meeting socialise the decision to other community members and fishers. The communities also communicate the decision to neighbouring villages and fishers regarding the regulation, especially on closure location and duration.

To measure the effectiveness of temporary closure, fisheries data is constantly being collected, especially before and after closure period. The results of the temporary closure implementation are used to evaluate management responses with the communities and other related stakeholders. This is part of the regular data feedback session and is considered important by the community because fisheries management groups want to understand the effectiveness of temporary closure. Based on the

analysis, the community can improve and make adaptive management decisions regarding their octopus fisheries management.

Appendix

Appendix 1 Community member in Uwedikan, Banggai is removing the closure signage during the opening event

Appendix 2 Community leader is praying during the octopus closure ceremony in Kadie Kapota, Wakatobi

Appendix 3 Community members of Darawa, Wakatobi is preparing offerings for the octopus closure ceremony