

Fish Mortality from Anoxia and Sulphide Pollution

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ABSTRACT The estuaries (*kayals*) of Kerala are of late, becoming increasingly polluted due to persistent retting of coconut husk for the manufacture of coir. The estuaries of Kerala are extensively utilized for the processing of coconut husk in this traditional method and the shores of these estuaries are famous as important coir fiber production centre in the world. Depletion in dissolved oxygen and production of large amounts of hydrogen sulphide and ammonia were observed in the retting zones and that had a detrimental effect on the fish and shell fauna of the Kadinamkulam kayal. As a result, mass mortality of fishes occurred in the retting zones of the Kadinamkulam estuary during the pre-monsoon period. A large number of fishes of different varieties, of which majority were euryhaline, were seen floating and also strewn all along the sides of the estuary and adjacent areas. The effect of anoxia and sulphide pollution on the ecosystem is discussed.