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Study of Feeding Regime of Sea Cucumber *Stichopus herrmanni* Using Nutritional Indices on Coral Reefs of Southeast of the Qeshm Island, Persian Gulf

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the sea cucumber *Stichopus herrmanni* diet in coral reef located southeast of the Qeshm Island and other nutritional indices. Sampling was done seasonally (10-15 samples in each season) in southeast of Qeshm Island (area around 515000 m^2) and intestinal contents were examined as a standard method. In this study, Diatoms, blue green algae, Micro benthic animals (foraminifers, nematodes and gastropod) as main prey were detected in the intestinal contents in this species. During different seasons, changes observed in the index of fullness and vacuity index of intestine and RLG Index was over one. In general, it seems that the diet changes happening in this beast is affected by different stages of life including sexual maturation and spawning.

Keywords: *Sea cucumber, Feeding regime, Coral reefs, Stichopus herrmanni, Persian Gulf.*