

Factors responsible to subtropical seagrass distribution, depth and siltation.

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Tropical and subtropical seagrass bed in Indo-West Pacific Ocean is characterized by its high species richness and their mixed structure. In Ishigaki Island, southwestern Japan, we observed the nine species. For the species distribution, several factors were considered. However, few researches have focused to plural factors at once. Our objective was to evaluate the contribution of two major factors for seagrass distribution: depth and siltation. Cluster analysis categorized 26 stations into four groups, based on species richness and LAI (leaf area index; the ratio of total leaf area to bottom area). The result of the cluster analysis makes it clear that depth is more responsible to seagrass composition than silt ratio in the sediment.