

Morphological and molecular studies of undescribed *Kappaphycus* species

Abstract

Morphological and molecular studies were carried on an undescribed species of *Kappaphycus* (AS 12) from Sabah, Malaysia. The species displays unique and different physical characters from *Kappaphycus alvarezii*, *K. striatus*, *K. malesianus* and *Eucheuma denticulatum* in terms of branching patterns, thalli texture and colors. The phylogenetic position of this plant was inferred by *cox2-3* spacer, intergenic transcribed spacer (ITS) region and RuBisCo spacer. Based on the results from this study, it is clear that the specimen AS 12 pointed to significant differences from *K. alvarezii*, *K. striatus*, *K. malesianus* and *E. denticulatum* as supported by both morphological and molecular analyses.