

Using the hydroacoustic and mini trawl data for estimating fish density in the eastern part of Banyuasin Coastal Waters, South Sumatra of Indonesia

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1 **Using the hydroacoustic and mini trawl data**
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24 **Abstract**

25

26 The hydroacoustic and mini trawl sampling was conducted to estimate a distribution
27 pattern of fish density in the eastern part of Banyuasin Coastal Waters, South Sumatra,
28 Indonesia. These surveys were carried out in September 2017 using a SIMRAD EK15
29 single-beam echo sounder with a 200 kHz operating frequency. Catch data obtained from
30 the mini bottom trawl were used to examine a dominant species for refining the TS value
31 concerning the fish density estimation along the hydroacoustic track. The ponyfishes
32 (*Eubleekeria jonesi*) from the Leiognathidae family were found at each station with the
33 highest relative abundance (50.98%). Hence this species was used to refine TS values for
34 estimating the acoustic volume density. These volume densities of 206 ESDU ranged from
35 0 to 9,048 fish/1000 m³, with an average of 930 fish/1000 m³. The results also described
36 a distribution pattern of fish densities hence this information could be valuable to the
37 fishery manager for improving sustainable management approaches.

38

39 **Keywords:** *Banyuasin coastal waters; distributions pattern; fish density; hydroacoustic*

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41

42 1. INTRODUCTION

43 The estimation of fish density using the traditional methods (traps and nets) requires
44 a great effort, financial resources, and time, therefore the recent hydroacoustic
45 development is an essential alternative to these traditional methods (Ehrenberg and
46 Steig 2003; Chen *et al.* 2009; Bezerra-Neto *et al.* 2013). When a substantial
47 hydroacoustic development was introduced in the 1970s, especially the echo-
48 integration technique (Bezerra-Neto *et al.* 2013), hydroacoustic methods and
49 technology are being increasingly and extensively applied as a tool to describe aquatic
50 ecosystems as well as estimating fish density, biomass, and abundance in both
51 freshwaters and marine system (Boswell *et al.* 2007; Rudstam *et al.* 2009; Trenkel
52 *et al.* 2011). Hydroacoustic is also used for estimating zooplankton (Greenlaw 1979;
53 Holliday *et al.* 1989; Martin *et al.* 1996; Miyashita and Aoki 1999; Holbrook *et al.*
54 2006; Kim *et al.* 2019) and identifying the bottom substrate type (Costa *et al.* 2013;
55 Fauziyah *et al.* 2018b, 2020a; Montereale-Gavazzi *et al.* 2018).

56 Besides being usable in the deep waters system, hydroacoustics also could be
57 used in shallow waters (waters depths < 5 m) and ultra-shallow waters (< 2 m) due
58 to the development advances of narrow acoustic beams (Boswell *et al.* 2007; Winfield
59 *et al.* 2007; Martignac *et al.* 2015). These methods potentially provide a cost-effective
60 assessment technique for obtaining estimates of pelagic fish abundance (Hassan *et al.*
61 1998).

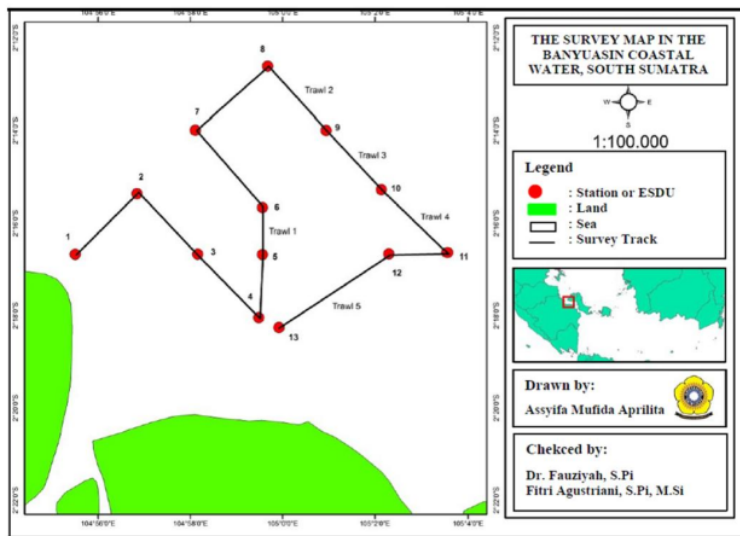
62 There is two output throughout the hydroacoustic data processing namely the
63 raw data of Volume backscattering strength (Sv) and Target strength (TS). The Sv
64 value is an acoustic energy integration scattered from discrete targets per unit volume
65 of water and it's often used for estimating fish biomass while the TS value is an
66 acoustic measurement of fish length where both fish biomass and density can be
67 estimated using Sv that scaled by TS (MacLennan *et al.* 2002; Boswell *et al.* 2007).

68 Banyuasin coastal waters had high potential and diversity of fish resources
69 (Fauziyah *et al.* 2018a, 2019a) but limited information available for their fish stock
70 status (Fauziyah *et al.* 2020b). Even though these waters have become the center of
71 fishing activities in South Sumatra Province. The fisheries management objective
72 could be reached optimally when fish density and distribution have been certainly
73 known as well as the management policy can encourage the sustainability of fish
74 resources in the future. Therefore, an acoustic survey for estimating fish density is
75 essentially useful for determining the fisheries management policy. This study aimed
76 to estimate the fish density distribution in the eastern part of Banyuasin Coastal
77 Waters. This information was needed for sustainable fisheries management.

78 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

79 2.1. Study area

80 Banyuasin Coastal Waters is the center of fishing activity in South Sumatra and this
81 water was strongly influenced by the inflow of the Musi River (Fauziyah *et al.* 2018a,
82 2019b; a). The acoustic survey with its acoustic tracking (Figure 1) was conducted
83 in September 2017 in the eastern part of Banyuasin Coastal Waters, South Sumatra
84 of Indonesia. These acoustic tracking for estimating the fish density were determined
85 by considering the water's contours and could represent all characteristics of the
86 study area.
87



88
89 FIGURE 1. Location and survey map in Banyuasin Coastal Waters, South Sumatra of
90 Indonesia.

91
92 **2.2. Hydroacoustic sampling**

93 The hydroacoustic sampling in Banyuasin Coastal Waters was held in September 2017
94 using a SIMRAD EK15 single-beam echo sounder with a 200 kHz operating frequency
95 and a boat operating speed of 5 knots. A mixed survey design (Fauziyah *et al.* 2020a)
96 with a total of 13 the Elementary Sampling Distance Unit (ESDU) was applied.
97 The transducer was mounted on the center-right side of the boat, positioned 1 m under
98 the water surface. Before using the Simrad EK15, it must be calibrated for maintaining
99 accuracy and verify the Simrad EK15 system can be fully operated.

100 The study area was surveyed for 3 days (20-22 September 2017). The recording
101 process of acoustic raw data was carried out continuously during the day except when
102 preparing to set the mini bottom trawl by spending 15 minutes at each station. The
103 total distance covered during the entire study was 44.603 km with the distance
104 covered between the station being 3.431 km.

105
106 **2.3. Trawl sampling**

107 For species identification traced by the acoustic system, a mini bottom trawl was
108 used. These trawl samplings were conducted simultaneously along the acoustic tracks
109 (Stenevik *et al.* 2015) but in this survey, the trawl sampling was conducted randomly
110 ranging from 5-6, 8-9, 9-10, 10-11, and 12-13 station. These trawl samples were
111 used for estimating the fish composition by species, weight, and length (Stenevik *et al.*
112 2015). The total length of the main species obtained from the trawl sampling was
113 used to refine the target strength (TS) measurements from the hydroacoustic survey
114 as well as to estimate the fish density (Mackinson *et al.* 2005; Doray *et al.* 2010).

115
116 **2.3. Data analysis**

117 Acoustic data were analyzed using Echoview 4.8 software and Microsoft Excel. Before
118 analysis, it's important to manually edit each echogram to confirm that only true fish
119 echoes were counted in the analysis. Furthermore, a sound returned from the seafloor
120 from echo integration was excluded using the Echoview bottom detection function.
121 Calculating the total amount of sound backscattered within an echogram used an echo

122 integration. These analyses provided the NASC (Nautical Area Scattering Coefficient)
 123 namely an average amount measure of sound reflected by fish per aerial square
 124 nautical mile. For calculating the fish density, scaling the NASC using the expected
 125 size of an acoustic fish was needed.

126 A maximum threshold value of -30 dB was used to detect the fish target with the
 127 highest echo, while the minimum value was determined based on the average TS
 128 value of the smallest total length of fish obtained from a dominant species in each
 129 sampling location. This TS value obtained was then reduced by 10 dB to suit the
 130 minimum threshold value (Parker-Stetter *et al.* 2009). Acoustic data processing used
 131 the integration upper threshold minus 1.0006453902 meters from the surface, due
 132 to the transducer mounted 1m under the surface and the presence of the nearfield
 133 transducer zone. The conventional equations that were commonly used for calculating
 134 the nearfield value were as follows (Foote 2014):

$$NF = \frac{D^2}{4\lambda} \text{ or } NF = \frac{a^2}{\lambda} \quad (1)$$

135 Where NF is the Near Field (m), λ is the wavelength (m), D is the transducer diameter
 136 (m), and a is the radius of the circular piston transducer.

137 The narrow beamwidth would have an acoustic dead zone (ADZ) value of 0.3 m
 138 (Parker-Stetter *et al.* 2009). Based on a simplistic approach (Ona and Mitson 1996),
 139 there was a "definite ADZ" that was defined as extending to a height of $c\tau/2$ above
 140 the seafloor, where c is the wave propagation speed in meters and τ is the transmitted
 141 pulse duration in seconds. Furthermore, the calculation of NASC, density per unit
 142 area (ρ_a), and density per unit volume (ρ_v) were expressed as follows (Foote 1987;
 143 MacLennan *et al.* 2002; Parker-Stetter *et al.* 2009; Fassler *et al.* 2013):

$$144 \quad NASC = 4\pi \cdot 1852^2 \cdot 10^{\frac{S_v}{10}} T \quad (2)$$

$$145 \quad \rho_a = \frac{NASC}{4\pi \sigma_{BS}} \quad (3)$$

$$146 \quad \rho_v = \frac{S_v}{\sigma_{BS}} \text{ or } \rho_v = \rho_a r \quad (4)$$

$$147 \quad TS = 20 \log L - 71.9 \text{ (for the clupeoid fish)} \quad (5)$$

$$148 \quad TS = 20 \log L - 66.2 \text{ (for the swimbladder fish)} \quad (6)$$

$$149 \quad \sigma_{BS} = 10^{\frac{TS}{10}} \quad (7)$$

150 Where ρ_a is the density per unit area, ρ_v is the density per unit volume, 4π is
 151 the steradians in a sphere-converting "backscattering" cross-section to "scattering"
 152 cross-section, 1852 is meters per nautical mile (m/nmi), S_v is the mean volume
 153 backscattering strength of the domain being integrated (dB re 1 m²m⁻³), T is the
 154 mean thickness of the domain being integrated (m), σ_{BS} is the backscattering cross-
 155 section value (m²), and r is the water's depth (m).

156

157 3. Results

158 3.1. Catch composition from the trawl sampling

159 The sampling using the bottom trawl in this study area obtained 13 species
 160 representing 11 families (Table 1). Leiognathidae family was distributed in all
 161 sampling stations (AF = 100%) with the highest relative abundance (RA = 57.62%).
 162 *Eubleekeria jonesi* and *Secutor incidiator* were two species from the Leiognathidae
 163 family that were found at each station. The species of *E. jonesi* had the highest
 164 relative abundance (50.98%) therefore this species could be specified as the
 165 dominant species used to refine TS values.

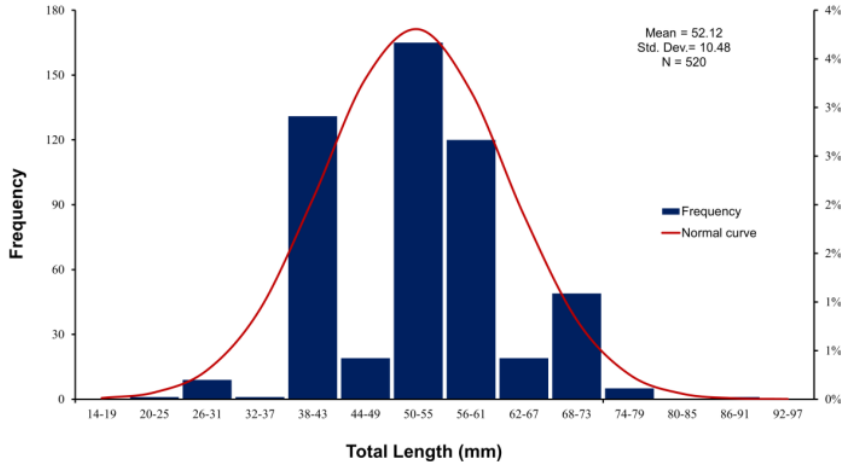
166 TABLE 1. Fish species composition, appearance frequency (AF), and relative abundance
 167 (RA) were obtained from the trawl survey in the eastern part of Banyuasin Coastal Waters.

Family	Species (Scientific name)	Stations										AF**	RA**	Environment*
		6		9		10		11		13				
		SA	n	SA	n	SA	n	SA	n	SA	n			
1. Clupeidae	1. <i>Dussumeiria elopsoides</i>					4				x	5	20 L	0.49 L	Pelagic-neritic
2. Cynoglossidae	2. <i>Symphurus microrhynchus</i>					x	8					20 L	0.78 L	Demersal
3. Engraulidae	3. <i>Stolephorus indicus</i>			x	28	x	30			x	4	60 M	6.05 H	Pelagic-neritic
4. Leiognathidae	4. <i>Eubleekeria jonesi</i>	x	112	x	100	x	102	x	100	x	108	100 H	50.98 H	Demersal
	5. <i>Secutor insidiator</i>	x	11	x	14	x	21	x	7	x	15	100 H	6.64 H	Demersal
5. Loliginidae	6. <i>Loligo chinensis</i>			x	28							20 L	2.73 L	Benthopelagic
6. Nemipteridae	7. <i>Nemipterus hexodon</i>			x	29	x	73	x	20	x	3	80 H	12.21 H	Demersal
7. Penaidae	8. <i>Parapenaeopsis sculptilis</i>	x	10	x	22			x	14			60 M	4.49 M	Benthic
	9. <i>Penaeus merguensis</i>					x	12	x	5			40 L	1.66 L	Benthic
8. Paralichthyidae	10. <i>Pseudorhombus elevates</i>					x	3					20 L	0.1 L	Demersal
9. Platycephalidae	11. <i>Platycephalus indicus</i>					x	3	x	6			40 L	0.88 L	Reef-associated
10. Portunidae	12. <i>Scylla olivacea</i>	x	29					x	10	x	12	60 M	4.98 M	Demersal
11. Sciaenidae	13. <i>Nibea soldado</i>	x	19			x	4	x	15	x	44	80 H	8.01 H	Demersal
	Number of Species	5	181	6	221	9	254	7	177	7	191			

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Notes: H: High; M: Moderate; L: Low SA: Species appearance n: number of species
 *) According to www.fishbase.org and www.sealifebase.org.
 **) The AF values were divided into 3 categories (Fauziyah et al. 2018a) namely low (AF ≤ 42.86), moderate (42.84 < AF < 7.42), and high (AF ≥ 71.42) whereas the RA values categories (Fauziyah et al. 2018a) were namely low (RA ≤ 2.845), moderate (2.845 < RA < 5.686) and high (RA ≥ 5.686).

The measurement results of 522 *E. jonesi* specimens showed that the total length (TL) ranged from 2-9 cm and most specimens (61%) were distributed in sizes 50-55 mm TL (Figure 2). The average TL and TS obtained from this dominant species were 52 mm and -57 dB respectively.



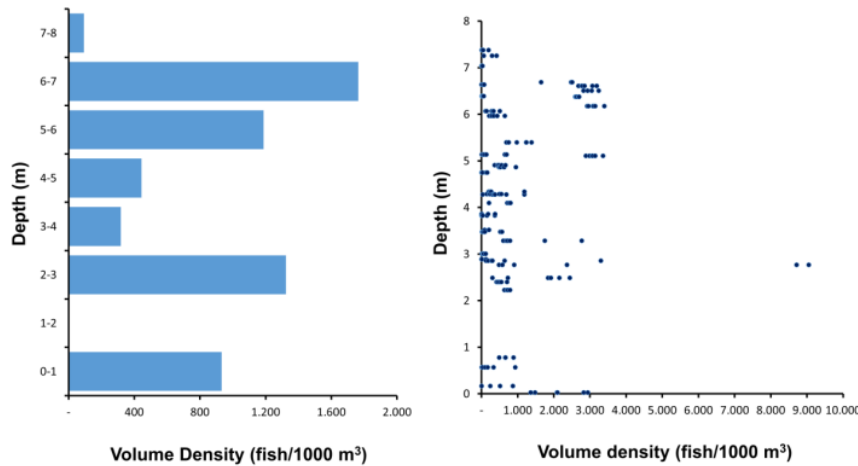
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FIGURE 2. The size distribution of *Eubleekeria jonesi* was obtained from the trawl sampling in the part of Banyuasin Coastal Waters, South Sumatra, Indonesia. These species were most abundant in the 50-55 mm total length.

3.1. Fish density and distribution patterns

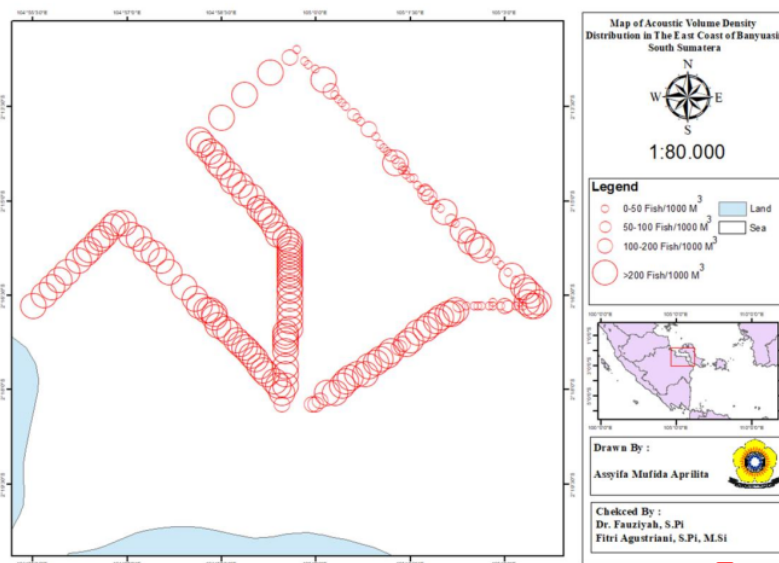
During the acoustic-trawl survey conducted in Banyuasin Coastal Waters, the vertical distribution of the acoustic volume densities is shown in Figure 3. The results

184 indicated that the volume densities of 206 ESDU ranged from 0 to 9,048 fish/1000
 185 m^3 , with an average of 930 fish/1000 m^3 . The highest volume densities were occurred
 186 in the 6-7 meters depth (1,763 fish/1000 m^3) and the next sequence was occurred
 187 between 2-3 meters in depth (1,324 fish/1000 m^3) as well as between 5-6 meters in
 188 depth (1,188 fish/1000 m^3). The lowest densities were occurred between 7 - 8 meters
 189 in depth (93 fish/1000 m^3). In this survey, there were no ESDUs between 1 - 2 meters
 190 in depth therefore these depth ranges did not have the volume density.



191

192 **FIGURE 3.** The vertical distribution of the acoustic volume density in the eastern part of
 193 **Banyuasin Coastal Waters**, South Sumatra, Indonesia; mean volume density by the depth
 194 class (left) and volume density at each ESDU by depth (right).



195

196 **FIGURE 4.** The horizontal distribution map of the acoustic volume density in the eastern
 197 **part of Banyuasin Coastal Waters**, South Sumatra, Indonesia.

198 The ESDU in this study mostly (66%) have volume densities higher than 200
 199 fish/1000 m^3 and the horizontal distribution of these densities is shown in Figure 4.

200 The values of acoustic volume densities were shown through bubble scatter, where
201 the larger size indicated the higher fish density. The results indicated that the volume
202 densities near the coastal zone were higher than near the offshore.
203

204 **4. Discussion**

205 This study implemented the hydroacoustic method which was validated with trawling
206 survey data for a spatial distribution assessment of fish densities in Banyuasin Coastal
207 Waters (shallow waters). Both hydroacoustic and trawl surveys were conducted
208 simultaneously and were intended to validate hydroacoustic surveys. Bez *et al.*
209 (2011) stated that using these two surveys can improve the accuracy and precision
210 of the fish abundance estimates. Both data were highly consistent, and the presence
211 of the trawl behind the vessel was around a few hundred meters thus no systematic
212 perturbation for recording the acoustic data (Bez *et al.* 2011). In contrast opinion
213 (Mitson and Knudsen 2003), the noise effects from the fishing vessel on fish and their
214 hydroacoustic detection were a low-frequency noise generated by fishing vessel
215 significantly causing a fish avoidance behavior from the vessel which can bias the
216 results of hydroacoustics and trawls surveys. In deepwater conditions with a single-
217 fish target, the levels of ambient noise in the sea will not have a significant effect on
218 the results of acoustic and trawl surveys (Reynisson 1996).

219 The results were capable to detect a distribution pattern in volume densities,
220 where higher densities occurred near the coastal zone. These coastal near the
221 mangrove area that useful for nursery ground, feeding ground, and spawning ground
222 (Walters *et al.* 2008; Eddy *et al.* 2016), consequently these waters favored the fish
223 occurrence as well as had high abundance and densities. This distribution pattern was
224 in line with the hydroacoustic survey at a Brazilian Lake - Lagoa Santa, Minas Gerais
225 (Bezerra-Neto *et al.* 2013).

226 The results of the trawl sampling indicated that ponyfishes (*E. jonesi*) were the
227 dominant species then used to refine TS values for estimating the acoustic volume
228 density. These species were commonly distributed in estuarine and inshore waters of
229 subtropical and tropical regions (Bianchi 1985; Harini *et al.* 2018). Additionally, the
230 ponyfishes were captured ranged in size 2-9 cm TL. These size ranges were
231 appropriate for the hydroacoustic method application that can detect a small fish at
232 sizes more than 1 cm TL (Arce *et al.* 2011). Overall, their horizontal distribution
233 pattern of acoustic volume density showed a fluctuations pattern and was in line with
234 the hydroacoustic survey in Sikka Regency Waters (Pujiyati *et al.* 2016).
235

236 Generally, the difference in horizontal distribution of fish density was influenced
237 by a predation risk at the smallest scales, but at larger scales in consequence of
238 habitat selection, the spatial distribution of predators and competitors as well as
239 environmental forcing (Bacheler *et al.* 2016). A density maximum was commonly
240 found during the early afternoon but the highest density was generally recorded
241 during the early morning, evening, and night (Fabi and Sala 2002). The diel
242 variability of fish might be related to both the fish horizontal distribution and fish
243 acoustic response that be expressed by the variability of TS. Due to the hydroacoustic
244 measurement result of TS being unpredictable, in the present study, this TS value
245 was determined based on the species composition (dominant species) and the
246 individual size obtained from the trawl sampling.

247 Estimating fish density and its distribution pattern obtained from a hydroacoustic
248 survey could be valuable to the fishery manager and these estimates are also useful
249 to examine the stocking program effectiveness, forage fish, and predators. The
250 hydroacoustic survey is an essential method to estimate the fish density, however,
251 many precautions before and after conducting this research needed to be considered
252 for minimizing an error. Finally, the hydroacoustic survey is useful for implementing
253 advanced approaches to sustainable fisheries management.
254

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261 **S**

262 **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

263

264 The authors declare no conflict of interest.

265

266 **DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT**

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268 The data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article [and/or] its
269 supplementary materials.

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