Genetic diversity and population structure of *Terapon jarbua* (Forskål, 1775) (Teleostei, Terapontidae) in Malaysian waters

Shyama Sundari Devi Chanthran¹², Phaik-Eem Lim¹, Yuan Li³, Te-Yu Liao⁴, Sze-Wan Poong¹, Jianguo Du³⁵, Muhammad Ali Syed Hussein⁷, Ahemad Sade⁸, Richard Rumpet⁹, Kar-Hoe Loh¹

¹ Institute of Ocean and Earth Sciences, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur 50603, Malaysia ² Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur 50603, Malaysia ³ Third Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources, Xiamen 361005, China ⁴ Department of Oceanography, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung 80424, Taiwan ⁵ Fujian Provincial Station for Field Observation and Research of Island and Coastal Zone in Zhangzhou, Xiamen 361005, China ⁶ Fujian Provincial Key Laboratory of Marine Ecological Conservation and Restoration, Xiamen 361005, China ⁷ Endangered Marine Species Research Unit, Borneo Marine Research Institute, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu 88400, Sabah, Malaysia ⁸ Department of Fisheries Sabah, Kota Kinabalu 88624, Sabah, Malaysia ⁹ Fisheries Research Institute, Sarawak, Department of Fisheries Malaysia, Kuching 93744, Sarawak, Malaysia

Corresponding author: Kar-Hoe Loh (khloh@um.edu.my)

Abstract

A background study is important for the conservation and stock management of a species. *Terapon jarbua* is a coastal Indo-Pacific species, sourced for human consumption. This study examined 134 samples from the central west and east coasts of Peninsular (West) Malaysia and East Malaysia. A 1446-bp concatenated dataset of mtDNA COI and Cyt b sequences was used in this study and 83 haplotypes were identified, of which 79 are unique haplotypes and four are shared haplotypes. Populations of *T. jarbua* in Malaysia are genetically heterogeneous as shown by the high level of haplotype diversity ranging from 0.9167–0.9952, low nucleotide diversity ranging from 0.0288–0.3434, and high *F*ₜₛ values (within population genetic variation). Population genetic structuring is not distinct as shown by the shared haplotypes between geographic populations and mixtures of haplotypes from different populations within the same genetic cluster. The gene flow pat-