



**Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of  
Fisheries *Refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand**

**REPORT**

**REPRODUCTIVE BIOLOGY OF THE PRIORITY SPECIES  
(GONAD MATURITY AND GSI)  
CORON, PALAWAN  
(APRIL – JUNE 2021)**

Prepared by  
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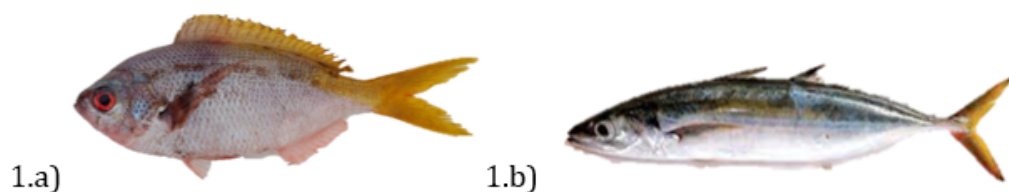
## I. Introduction

Fish reproductive biology is crucial for fishery management (Jakobsen et al., 2009), where managers rely on size at first maturity and the onset and duration of spawning season for managing fisheries (Dias Neto, 2010a). As part of the baseline data collection for the establishment of fisheries refugia in the 3 sites, the gonad maturity and GSI of the priority species were studied. After a series of consultation in Coron Site and in reference to the results of the Fisheries Landing Survey and the Ichthyoplankton Survey, the committee decided for the conservation of fusilier and scad refugia. Redbelly yellowtail fusilier and Amberstripe scad are among the commercially important fish commodities in Coron, Palawan.

## II. Materials and Methods

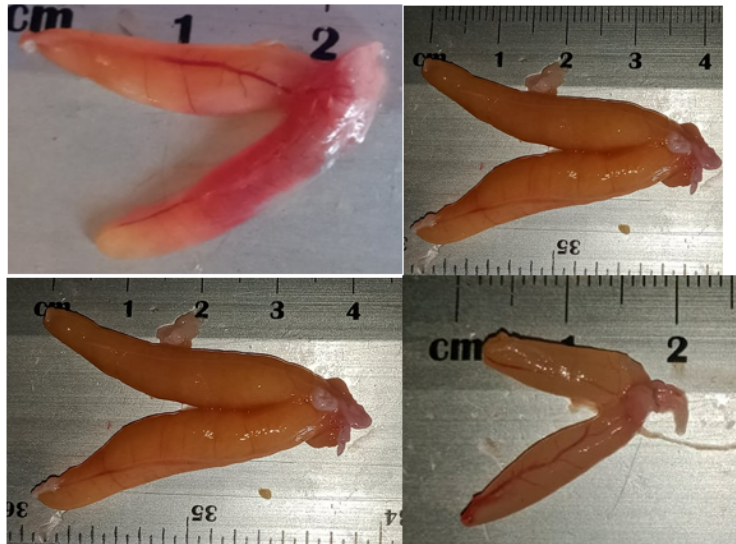
### Data Collection

The identified priority species selected for the proposed fisheries refugia site in Coron, Palawan were *Caesio cuning* (redbelly yellowtail fusilier) and *Decapterus muroadsi* (amberstripe scad) based on the series of consultations from the LGU and the fisherfolk. (Figure 1a-1b).

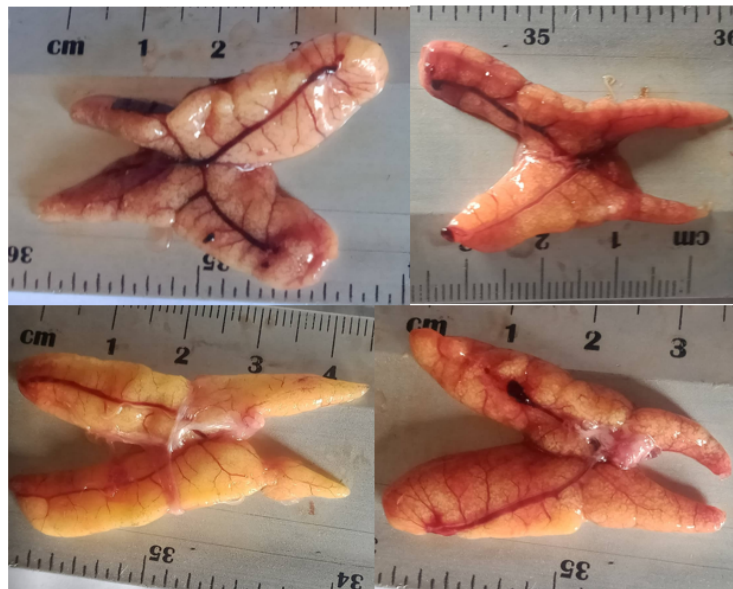


*Fig. 1. Fisheries Refugia - Priority Species*

Two technical enumerators were collecting the samples for reproductive biology. Ten samples for every species were randomly collected and purchased from the local markets of each site. The samples were dissected on-site daily from April 2021 to March 2022. Total lengths, weight and gonad samples were recorded for each sample. The sex of each fish sample were identified by visual examination (Figure 2a and 2b). The gonads were dissected and weighed by a digital weighing scale.



*Fig. 2a. Gonads dissected from female C. cuning*



*Fig. 2b. Gonads dissected from female D. muroadsi*

#### Data Analyses

The mean Gonado-somatic Index (GSI) was used to determine the spawning season for each species (Figure 3).

$$\text{Gonado-somatic Index (GSI \%)} = \frac{\text{Weight of gonads (g)}}{\text{Weight of fish (g)}} \times 100$$

*Fig. 3. Formula for GSI*

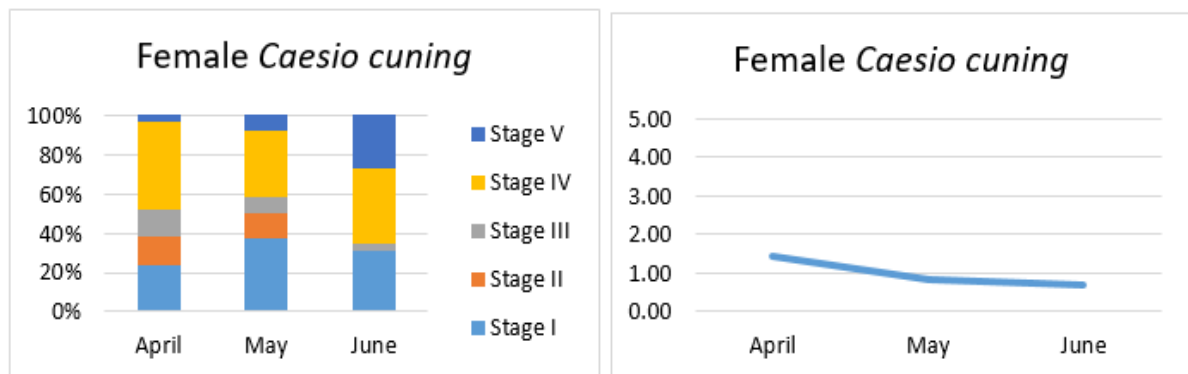
GSI was used to explore peaks of maturity in female gonads per month. After calculating the GSI, the gonads, both male and female, were staged visually. The gonads were identified in stages as: Undifferentiated: J (juvenile). Females: Stage 1

(virgin/immature), Stage 2-3 (mature resting) Stage 4(reproductively developed), Stage 5 (spawning). Males: Stage 1 (virgin), Stage 2 (mature resting), Stage 3 (reproductively developed/ripe), Stage 4 (spawning). The mean GSI values were plotted versus months to search for patterns of reproductive periodicity. The overall sex ratio of males to females was evaluated with  $\chi^2$  - test (Sokal and Rohlf, 1995).

### III. Results

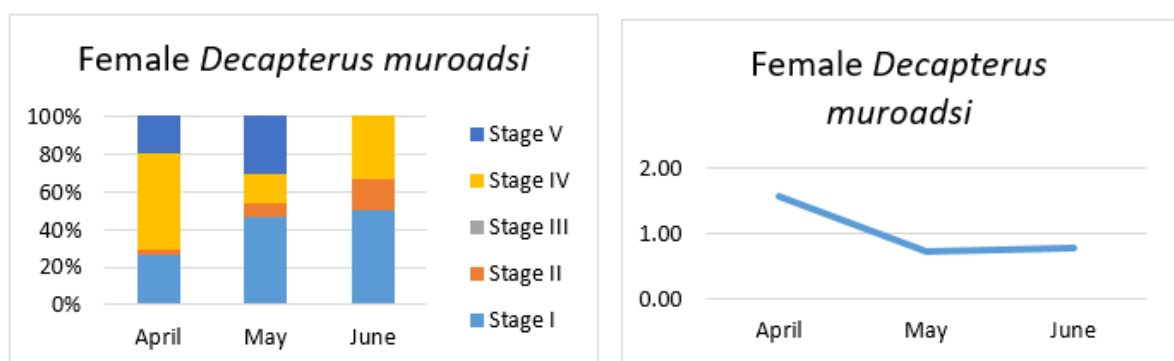
#### *Caesio cuning* (redbelly yellowtail fusilier)

*Caesio cuning* recorded a total of 122 females and 118 males in April to June 2021. All gonad maturity stages were documented, however majority of female gonads were at stage IV with 33-44%. The GSI value computed is ranging from 0.67 ( $\pm 0.11$ ) to 1.45 ( $\pm 0.25$ ).



#### *Decapterus muroadsi* (amberstripe scad)

For the first quarter of sampling (April to June) in Coron waters, *Decapterus muroadsi* recorded were 64 females and 56 males. The most gonad recorded were at Stages I and IV, consist of about 26-50% and 15-51%. No stages III samples were recorded for this quarter. The highest GSI value computed were ranging from 0.71 ( $\pm 0.17$ ) to 1.57 ( $\pm 0.15$ ).



IV. Documentation







## V. References

Dias Neto, J. (2010a). *Gestão do uso dos Recursos Pesqueiros Marinhos No Brasil*. Brasília: Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis.

Jakobsen, T., Fogarty, M. J., Megrey, B. A., and Moksness, E. (2009). *Fish Reproductive Biology: Implications for Assessment and Management*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Sokal, R.R. and F.J. Rohlf. 1995. *Biometry: the principles and practice of statistics in biological research*. 3rd edition. W. H. Freeman and Co. New York. 887 pp.