

# Marketing Efficiency of Climbing Perch (*Anabas testudineus*) Cultured with Bioflock System

*by Ahmadi .*

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# Marketing Efficiency of Climbing Perch (*Anabas testudineus*) Cultured with Bioflock System

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## ABSTRACT

<sup>21</sup> The present study aimed to investigate the marketing channels, marketing margin and farmer's share of Climbing perch (*Anabas testudineus*) cultured with bioflock system. The fish were daily marketed in South and Central Kalimantan of Indonesia through <sup>2</sup> two marketing channels i.e. the first channel: fish farmers → wholesalers → retailers → end consumers; and the second channel: fish farmers → institutional market → end consumers. The fish prices at fish farmers, wholesalers and retailers were IDR 60,000, IDR 70,000 and IDR 77,667 per kg, respectively. In the first channel, the highest net profit was received by fish farmers (45%), followed by wholesalers (33%) and retailers (22%). While in the second channel, the restaurant earn profit (74%) almost 3 times higher than fish farmers (26%). The marketing margins of wholesaler, retailer and restaurant were 14%, 23% and 50%, respectively. The current marketing system was considered to be efficient (farmer's share = 77.25%). The fish farming and culinary could be a promising business opportunities due to high demand for this species.

**Keywords:** Bioflock system, Climbing perch, farmer's share, marketing channel, marketing margin

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago state and now the second largest global fish producer (Suadi and Kusano, 2019). The fishery sector contributes about 8% of national gross domestic product. More than 11 million people are working in this sector as fishermen (8.69%), fish farmers (35.06%), fish processors and fish marketers (55.84%), and salt farmers (0.41%) (Suraya and Sulisty, 2019). Fish consumption increases from 47.34 kg to 50.69 kg per capita per year. Nowadays, perception of

consumer preferences for consuming fish is highly appreciated (Esilaba *et al.*, 2017). Fish consumption preferences are affected by individuals' socio-economic characteristics (Can *et al.*, 2015). Consuming fish is very good for health as fish provides essential amino acid, calcium, phosphorus, iron, zinc, copper, vitamins (Rahman *et al.*, 2012; Tilami and Sampels, 2017). Fish arranges for 19.50% of protein and 2.27% of lipid (Ahmed *et al.*, 2012).

In South Kalimantan Province, Climbing perch (*Anabas testudineus*) is locally known as “*Papuyu*”, and favorably considered as one of commercially important freshwater fish species (Ahmadi, 2019). The fish are usually served as delicious food with high quality meat. The market demand for fish consumption continuously increase from time to time, meanwhile the market supply is still low in quantity. After all, freshwater fish marketing is a crucial moment to success for producers and traders to earn the profit since fish being a highly perishable commodity needs immediately processed or sold after harvest. It spoils soon after death due to microbial actions, which result in disagreeable taste, smell and texture thereby reducing consumer acceptability (Garrow and James, 1994). Meanwhile the fish price fluctuates much depend on the season, the quantity and quality of fish, the type and size of fish, freshness, supply and demand, market structure, market distance, and also long-short of marketing channels (Aswathy and Abdu Samad, 2013; Ali *et al.*, 2014; Begum *et al.*, 2014). Nowadays, business transaction can be done through fish market, retail market, fishing port or even via internet order.

Numerous studies have been well-documented to describe the overview of freshwater and marine fish marketing included marketing system (Husen, 2019),

marketing channels (Ali *et al.*, 2014; Rahman *et al.*, 2019), marketing management (Sathiadhas and Kanagam, 2000), market intermediaries and marketing margins (Hussain *et al.*, 2003), market integration (Omar *et al.*, 2014), typical transportation system used (Rokeya *et al.*, 1997), economic analysis of fresh fish marketing (Ali *et al.*, 2008), and marketing strategy (Ahmed and Hossain, 2012). All fish marketed here in the form of live fish, fresh fish, smoked and frozen fish sourced from capture fishery, aquaculture and fish processing. Basically the marketing system is the exchange activities associated with transferring property rights to commodities, physically purchasing and allocating resources, handling of products, disseminating information to participants and institutional arrangements for facilitating these activities (Hossain *et al.*, 2015). In the present study, we investigated the marketing channels for Climbing perch (*Anabas testudineus*) held from bioflock system-based fish farming down to the end consumers including farmer share and the profit gained at different levels of marketing, as well as provided specific suggestions for improving the marketing system in this area of study.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 1. Research Sites

The research activities were started from field survey to five fish farming sites in Banjarbaru and then moved into six local fish markets located in Banjarbaru, Binuang, Rantau, Barabai, Pelaihari of South Kalimantan Province, and also Kapuas of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia (Fig. 1). These locations are purposively selected to exemplify the business prospect, marketing channels and distribution of Climbing perch at different levels.

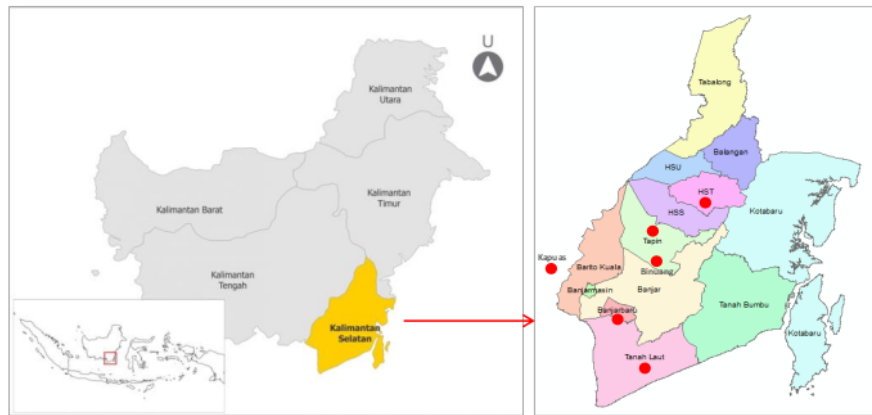


Fig. 1. The map showing the sampling areas for Climbing perch marketing

## 2. *Characteristic of Respondents*

A total of 22 respondents who directly involved in marketing channels were selected comprising 5 fish farmers, 2 fish collector traders and 15 retailers. The ages of respondents varied between 44-51 year olds with the duration of business ranged of 2-4 years. The wholesalers and retailers were determined by snowball sampling method. <sup>16</sup> Snowball sampling is a purposeful method of sampling in qualitative research (Naderifar *et al.*, 2017). The respondents were interviewed using the structured questionnaires. The deep interview was undertaken to get overview and reliable information on the existing fish distribution and marketing systems, marketing channels, and also constraints being faced.

## 3. <sup>3</sup> *Marketing Margin*

Marketing margin is the difference between the price at the fish farmer level and the price at the end consumer level. It can be simply expressed with this formula (Flowra *et al.*, 2012):

$$MM = Pr - Pf$$

where: MM is marketing margin (IDR), Pr is the price at the end consumer (IDR) and Pf is the price at fish farmer (IDR). It can also be calculated using the following formula (Rahman *et al.*, 2012):

$$\text{Marketing margin (\%)} = (\text{Selling price} - \text{Purchase price}) / \text{Selling price} \times 100$$

#### 4. Farmer's Share

The farmer's share is the ratio of price received by the fish farmer to the price paid by the end consumer. It can be calculated using the formula (Saravanapandeeswari and Vanitha, 2017):

$$Fs = Fp / Cp \times 100$$

where: Fs is farmer's share (%), Fp is farmer's price (IDR/kg), and Cp is consumer's price (IDR/kg). According to Kohls and Downey (1985), if the portion of the price received by fish farmer is greater than 50%, then the marketing system can be said to be efficient. The data were tabulated and analyzed using conventional statistical tools of MS Excel 2010, then presented in textual, charts and tabular forms.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There was about 60-240 kg of fish harvested by individual fish farmer during 8 months of cultured period (Table 1). The sizes of fish varied between 120 and 300 mm total length and between 35 and 125 g weight. The fish are typically being harvested and sold on the same day. When the fish price was set at IDR 60,000 per kg, the fish farmers received money about IDR 3,600,000 to 14,400,000. Of 720 kg of total fish, 672 kg (93.33%) was shared to the wholesalers and the rest 48 kg (6.67%) was given to the local restaurants. In the first channel, there were only two wholesalers, who collected the fish

directly from fish farmers to the number of 162-510 kg to be distributed to 15 retailers (6-8 kg per day or 42-56 kg per week per individual). With the <sup>30</sup> selling price of IDR 70,000 per kg, the wholesaler's revenue was ranged from IDR 11,340,000 to IDR 35,700,000. At retail prices of IDR 75,000-80,000 per kg, each individual retailer receives income ranging from IDR 450,000 to IDR 640,000 per day depends on the quantity of fish sold out to the end consumers. Among variable cost, pellet and fish seed were main purchase account to be borne by the fish farmers (30-41%). While for retailers and wholesalers, it counted for about 93-98% allocated for buying the fish.

**Table 1.** The volume and value of fish production at different marketing levels

Marketing level	n	Share of production (kg)			Price (IDR/kg)	Revenue (IDR)	
		Quantity	Average	Total		Average	Total
Fish farmers	5	60-240	144	720 <sup>1)</sup>	60,000	8,640,000	43,200,000
Wholesalers	2	162-510	336	672	70,000	23,520,000	47,040,000
Retailers	15	42-56 <sup>2)</sup>	44.8	672	77,667	3,479,482	52,192,224

<sup>1)</sup> About 48 kg of total fish shared to the restaurant (second channel); <sup>2)</sup> Weekly quota (in kg/wk)

The market demand for Climbing perch fish consumption reaches 900 kg per day, which is almost entirely sourced from the wild and only 30% produced from fish farming. In line with population growth and economy improvement, it is predicted that market needs of Climbing perch to meet fish consumption of the community for next 5 years ranging from 1.5 to 2 tons per day. The bioflock technology in aquaculture system had been successfully applied for some commercial <sup>13</sup> fish and shrimp species such as Nile tilapia (Nahar *et al.*, 2015), African catfish (Ekasari *et al.*, 2016), <sup>17</sup> pink shrimp (Emerenciano *et al.*, 2013), the <sup>17</sup> pacific white shrimp (Da Silva *et al.*, 2013), Japanese tiger prawn (Zhao *et al.*, 2012), the green tiger shrimp (Megahed, 2010), Malaysian prawn (Perez-Fuentes <sup>31</sup> *et al.*, 2013), the giant tiger prawn (Anand *et al.*, 2014) and most

recently applied for Climbing perch cultured in the ponds and business has favorable prospect (**Izmaniar et al., 2018**).

### **1. Marketing Channels**

There were two marketing channels for bioflock system-based Climbing perch cultured (Fig. 2). The first channel, four of five <sup>18</sup> fish farmers sold out the fish to the wholesalers (80%), and then distributed to the 15 retailers and finally marketed to the end consumers. The second channel, one fish farmer sold out the fish through institutional market/the restaurant (20%) and then directly distributed to the end consumers. The basic reasons why most of fish farmers preferred to the first channel are as follows: (1) fish farmers do not need to bear the transportation costs and other risks; (2) there are still many farmers who depend on fish traders to market their fish production. The presence of fish traders also provides convenience for fish farmers during the process of harvesting, payment, transportation and distribution; (3) each fish farmer usually has own customer (fish trader) so that the sale transaction can work well; (4) fish traders also have the fixed customers (retailers) in some market areas so that the sales process can run quickly and timely. The retailers usually make the payment in cash; (5) there is a commitment and trust between fish farmers and fish traders, especially in terms of payments, which is usually done by fish traders after the fish have been sold out. <sup>9</sup> A partner's reputation in the market has a strong positive impact on the trust-building process (**Kwon and Suh, 2004**). Success in business is determinable how the key players build a good market communication to generate a sustainable business.



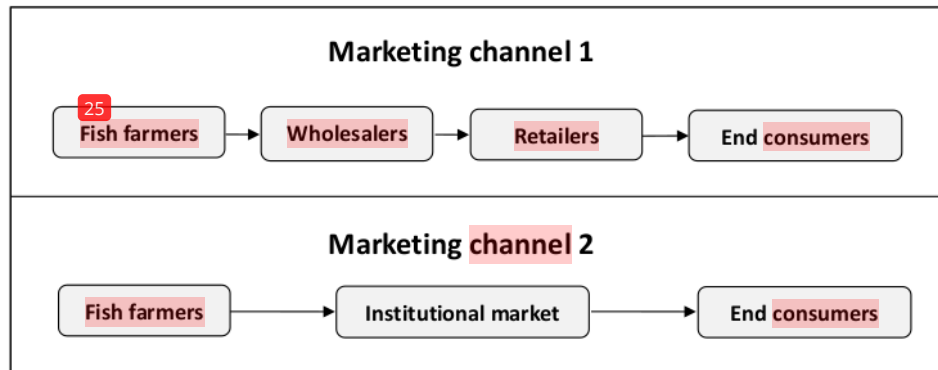


Fig. 2. Marketing channels of Climbing perch from fish farmers to end consumers

## 2. Marketing Margin

Marketing margin analysis was performed to see how big the role of market intermediaries as a link between fish farmers and final consumers in influencing the fish price. There was a variation in the fish prices at different marketing channels. The lowest fish price usually goes to the fish farmer level and then increasingly at the wholesalers or institutional market level and terminates in the retailer level leading to variation in the marketing margin (Table 2). It was estimated that the fish farmers received the net margin about 18% of the selling price for their fish production. According to **Huger and Hiremath (1984)**, the higher the value of marketing margin, the lower the efficiency of the marketing system. **Rabby et al. (2015)** assumed that the producers and intermediaries could be more benefited financially, if efficient marketing was arranged properly. In wholesale market, marketing intermediaries usually perform important role by providing financial assistance, inputs and other marketing facilities to the farmers since their motive is also profit oriented (**Keno, 1994**). Otherwise generally felt by the consumers is that they have to pay higher price due to the involvement of too many intermediaries in the marketing channels.

In the first channel, there was a difference in the price (IDR 17,666 per kg) between the price at fish farmers (IDR 60,000 per kg) and the average price at the end consumers (IDR 77,666 per kg). The percentages of marketing margin for the wholesalers to the fish farmers, the retailers to the fish farmers and the retailers to the wholesalers were 14.29%, 22.75% and 9.78% respectively. It was clearly pointed out that the wholesalers had margin (IDR 10,000 per kg) greater than retailers (IDR 7,666 per kg), this because: (1) they acted as the price maker in the marketing system since they have a good marketing intelligence; (2) they sold out the fish in large quantity in order to reduce the marketing cost; while (3) retailers sold out the fish in small quantity resulted in the marketing cost was relatively high. At the same time, the amount of marketing costs paid by the wholesalers (IDR 2,050 per kg) was lower than paid by retailers (IDR 2,456 per kg); this because they do not need to pay for stall rental cost, market retribution and other relevant services. In the first channel, the highest net profit was received by fish farmers (45%), followed by wholesalers (33%) and retailers (22%). While in the second channel, the restaurant earn profit (74%) almost 3 times higher than fish farmers (26%) corresponding to marketing cost spent. It was calculated that the marketing margin of restaurant to fish farmer was 50% (see Table 2). The profit received by the wholesalers (IDR 7,950 per kg) was comparatively higher than received by retailers (IDR 5,210 per kg). It means that the market intermediaries can be said to be efficient because they create the business much more profitable. Aktar <sup>23</sup> et al. (2013) reported that 80% of the fish retailers in Noakhali District of Bangladesh have improved their livelihood status through fish trading. Omar <sup>12</sup> et al. (2014) suggested that efficient marketing system should be developed by reducing marketing cost and increasing marketing services to make the business more profitable.

Moreover, the fish farmers should also follow standard scientific culture practices and regularly access information on the fish prices (**Kumar et al., 2010**).

**Table 2.** Market prices, marketing margin and farmer's share for Climbing perch at different levels of marketing channels

Marketing Level	Parameter Observed	Marketing Channel	
		1	2
<b>Fish farmers</b>			
	Production cost (IDR/kg)	49,225.52	49,225.52
	Selling price (IDR/kg)	60,000.00	60,000.00
	Marketing margin (IDR/kg)	10,774.48	10,774.48
	Marketing cost (IDR/kg)	-	-
	Profit (IDR/kg)	10,774.48	10,774.48
<b>Wholesalers</b>			
	Purchase price (IDR/kg)	60,000.00	
	Selling price (IDR/kg)	70,000.00	
	Marketing margin (IDR/kg)	10,000.00	
	Marketing cost (IDR/kg)	2,050.32	
	Profit (IDR/kg)	7,949.68	
	Margin of wholesaler to fish farmer (%)	14.29	
<b>Retailers</b>			
	Purchase price (IDR/kg)	70,000.00	
	Selling price (IDR/kg)	77,666.67	
	Marketing margin (IDR/kg)	7,666.67	
	Marketing cost (IDR/kg)	2,456.00	
	Profit (IDR/kg)	5,210.67	
	Margin of retailer to fish farmer (%)	22.75	
<b>Restaurant (Institutional market)</b>			
	Purchase price (IDR/kg)	-	60,000.00
	Selling price (IDR/kg)		120,000.00
	Marketing margin (IDR/kg)		60,000.00
	Marketing cost (IDR/kg)		29,000.00
	Profit (IDR/kg)		30,500.00
	Margin of restaurant to fish farmer (%)		50.00
<b>Consumers</b>			
	Purchase price (IDR/kg)	77,666.67	120,000.00
	Total margin (IDR/kg)	28,441.15	10,774.48
	Total marketing cost (IDR/kg)	4,506.32	29,000.00
	Total profit (IDR/kg)	23,934.82	41,274.48
	Farmer's share → efficient (Fs > 50%)	77.25	50.00

### 3. *Farmer's Share*

The selling price of fish at fish farmers was IDR 60,000 per kg, while the price at retailer level fall between IDR 75,000 to IDR 80,000 per kg or IDR 77,666 per kg in average. The price portion received by the fish farmers was ranged of 75-80% or about 77.25% of the price paid by the end consumers (Table 2), which was found to be higher than 50%, indicating that fish marketing system here was considered to be efficient (Kohls and Downey, 1985). Compared to other single-species from different geographical areas, the percentage of farmer's share obtained in the present study being equal to the trout marketing in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province of Iran (Shahi *et al.*, 2012), but it was higher than European anchovy (54%) or Atlantic horse mackerel (60%) traded in Trabzon province (Dağtekin, 2010).

The great portion of the price received by fish farmers was closely related to the marketing system itself that has been formed between them and wholesalers due to some reasons: (1). Fish farmers willing to get greater profits without any risks to be borne; (2) since fish farmers have a limited fish production, it was better to sell out the fish directly to the wholesalers rather than selling it the retail market; and (3) Fish farmers have also the bargaining power to determine a reasonable price based on the quality and size of fish because they also knew well about the market price of this species as important food fish. Such bargaining interaction was also shown by both the aquafarmer's association in Thambikottai village of Tiruvarur District and fishermen associations in Kombuthurai, Tamil Nadu of India (Kumar *et al.*, 2010). Market information is needed by the fish farmers as a part of market transparency and also reference for arranging a competitive pricing strategy. In this regard, there was a good lesson learned from Aquachoupals

model in Andhra Pradesh of India that provides access to prices on a daily basis, in which the farmers were able to take the critical decisions on when and where to sell their productions (Kumar *et al.*, 2010). A tangible deliverable was also demonstrated by Ghana's farmers who received significantly higher prices for their productions after using mobile phone-based Marketing Information Services (MIS) program and how information affects a farmer's decision to sell at the farmgate rather than at the market (Courtois and Subervie, 2014). In the present study, the retailers have more bargaining power when they sold out the fish to consumers than they purchased from wholesalers, because the bargaining power between retailers and wholesalers is almost equal, as well as the bargaining power between fish farmers and wholesalers. Dealing with the purchase ability of the party, most of wholesalers and retailers use their own capital to do business. It was similarly reported by Jamali *et al.* (2013) that about 70% retailers in Gopalpur Upazila of Tangail District used their own money for fish trading.

#### ***4. Constraint and Solution***

At the fish farmer level, some constraints being faced such as the availability of superior fish seeds, electrical supply and the limited capital for fish production are crucial to success. For the wholesalers, it takes time to collect the fish harvested since the fish farming sites are scattered. Moreover, asynchronous fish harvested by individual fish farmer resulted in high cost of fish marketing. While for the retailers, the quantity of fish which is shared by the wholesalers does not correspond with the retailer's demand, this because the supply of fish obtained from the fish farmers is still lacking. Occasionally if there is more demand of fish among the retailers, the wholesalers preferred to deliver the fish to a location that is closer from fish farming than far-off to reduce marketing costs.

Specific suggestions for improving the current marketing systems should incorporate: the certified fish hatchery to produce superior seeds, improvement of bioflock technology for small scale fish farming to increase fish production, <sup>24</sup> introduction of modern wholesaling and retailing facilities, the strengthening of institutional marketing, and promotion of mobile phone-based Marketing Information Services to find out the global and local market transparency. In the long term, it is necessary for interested parties to form the cooperative society with legal entity. The defined role of the cooperative society will support beneficially for fish marketing system as a whole (Rabby *et al.*, 2015).

## CONCLUSION

<sup>8</sup> It can be concluded that the fish marketing channel through market intermediaries was less efficient than through institutional market. The highest net profit per kg was received by the fish farmers followed by the wholesalers and retailers. The marketing margin of institutional market was 2-3 times higher than that of wholesalers and retailers. The current marketing system is considered to be efficient. It is a great challenge to increase fish production, and the prospect of culinary business is open. <sup>29</sup> To the best of our knowledge, the present study provides the first reference on the bioflock system-based fish marketing of Climbing perch in the investigated areas.

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