



## The Identification of Laor Worms (Polychaeta) in Marine Areas of Ambon Island, Mollucas Province, Indonesia Based on 16s rRNA Gene Sequence

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**Abstract :** The identification of Laor worms (Polychaeta) found in marine areas of Ambon Island has been done up till now based on phenotypic characters. The research goal is to find out the species of those worms and to determine their kinship relationship based on 16S rRNA gene sequences. The data were analyzed using sequencing scanner software (ABI) and multiple alignment was performed using *CLUSTAL W*, the phylogeny tree reconstruction based on nucleotide sequence was conducted using 5.03 MEGA program. The results of the research show that those Laor worm phenotype differs in body shape, color, and size. The results of the phylogenetic analysis based on the 16S rRNA gene sequences and the results of genetic distance and similarity analysis related show that the worm samples classified into 5 groups, namely group A (samples A2, A4, H1, H2, L3, and L4) identified as *Palola viridis*; group B (samples A5, L1, L2, L6, and L9) identified as *Eunice fucata*; group C (samples A7, H4, H5, L5, and L10) identified as *Eunice*; group D (sample A3) identified as *Lumbrineris magnidentata*; group E (samples H3, A1, A6, L7, and L8) identified as Nereidae. The value of NJ and ML bootstrap was 28-100% and 22-100% respectively. The genetic distance range between 0.03851 and 0.22936 with the highest and lowest similarity 96.14897% and 77.06362% respectively. The analysis results based on the 16S rRNA gene sequences of those worms were able to complement the identification phenotypically based on the number of antennas.

**Keywords:** Ambon Island; Laor Worm; Mollucas; Polychaeta; 16S rRNA gene.

### Introduction

Marine worms (Polychaeta) found in marine areas of Mollucas are commonly known as Laor worms. Laor worms are usually found in *swarming* state, in which they get together in a huge number on the surface of sea water for external mating once a year, either in March or in April. At the time of *swarming*, Laor worms are usually caught by local people as a rich protein food<sup>1</sup>.

Based on certain indication it was informed that during *swarming*, Laor worms appearing on the surface of sea water to perform external mating were not just one species<sup>2</sup>. Laor worms of Banda marine area in Mollucas have been identified as *Lysidice oele* (Eunicidae)<sup>3,4</sup>. Laor worms or Wawo worms, found in the Airlouw village, Ambon island marine areas, were identified as a mixture of 13 species of five (5) different families and mainly consist of *Palola viridis*<sup>5</sup>. The Laor worm caught in Lathualat village marine area of Ambon

Island has been identified Phenotypically as *Lysidice oele* whose body consisted of segments, had *chaeta*, and had three antennas on its head<sup>1</sup>.

The identification process of Laor worms conducted so far is based on phenotype or morphological character. Phenotype or morphological character used to identify the species is quite limited<sup>6</sup> because it is influenced not only by the genotype or genetic trait, but also by the environment<sup>7</sup>. The weakness of the phenotype marker is that it is time consuming, relatively expensive, and influenced by the environment. Besides, the diversity gained is quite limited and inconsistent<sup>8</sup>. Molecular identification is needed to obtain more accurate informations because the analysis is performed at the DNA level.

Two types of DNA often used as animal molecular markers are nuclear DNA (nDNA) and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA). Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) has been widely used as molecular markers in the phylogenetic studies of animals due to the simple structure of their genomes<sup>9</sup>. There are 13 proteins coding genes, 2 rRNA genes (12S and 16S) and 22 tRNA genes found in mitochondria<sup>10</sup>. Those protein coding genes found in mitochondria are 3 subunits of *cytochrome oxidase* genes (CO I-III), 7 subunits of NADH *dehydrogenase* genes (ND 1-6 and ND 4L), 2 subunits of ATPase genes (6 and 6L), as well as *cytochrome b* gene (Cyt b). The 16S rRNA gene is *anon-coding* area as well as the most conserved area of mitochondrial DNA which function to encode ribosomal RNA that plays a role in the translation process<sup>11,12</sup>.

In recent years there have been many efforts to identify Polychaeta using molecular data<sup>13</sup>. The genetic relationships and diversities of palola worms (*Palola*, Euniciidae) of tropical North Pacific and Caribbean have been analyzed using CO1 and 16S rRNA genes<sup>6</sup>. The phylogenetic position and genetic diversity of Neridae-Polychaeta have been analyzed based on molecular data of 16S rRNA sequences<sup>14</sup>. This study aims to determine the relationship of Laor worm (Polychaeta) based on the sequences of 16S rRNA genes and to determine the species of Laor worm (Polychaeta) in marine areas of several villages in Ambon Island based on 16S rRNA gene sequences.

## Materials and Methods

The samples of Laor worms had been collected from marine areas of Ambon island especially from marine areas of Latuhalat village Nusaniwe district of Ambon city, Allang Village Leihitu district of Central Maluku, Hutumuri village South Leitimur district of Ambon city. Those samples were collected on March 19, 2014. The samples were collected using traditional tools resembling a net (saser) to collect Laor worms from the sea water, rinsed with clean water and preserved in a 70% alcohol. Samples were then observed using an Olympus stereo microscope type SZX 9, described, and then the results of the observations were identified based on the book entitled *The polychaete Worms Definitions and Keys to the Orders, Families, and Genera*<sup>15</sup>.

DNA of Laor worms was isolated using the modified CTAB method<sup>16</sup> specified for Laor worms. The DNA samples of Laor worms especially the 16S rRNA gene were amplified in PCR using *Fast Kapa2G Ready mix* supported by forward primer 5'-CGCCTGTTTATCAAAAACAT-3' and reverse primer 5'-CTCCGGTTTGAAGTCAGATCA-3'<sup>17</sup>. The composition of PCR DNA amplification of Laor worms: Pre-denaturation process was carried out in 94 °C for 5 minutes, denaturation in 94 °C for 30 seconds, annealing in 45 °C for 30 seconds, extension in 72 °C for 30 seconds, and the final extension in 72 °C for 10 minutes. The results of PCR DNA amplification of Laor worms were then sent for sequencing in First BASE Laboratories Sdn. Bhd. Selangor, Malaysia, supported by ABI Prism 3730xl Genetic Analyzer.

Polychaeta sequences database is taken from GenBank (Table 1) to be aligned with Laor worm sequences obtained from marine areas of Ambon Island.

**Table 1. Database of Polychaeta and accession numbers retrieved from GenBank**

| Sample Name                        | Sample Name                           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Eunice_antarctica (GQ478137.1)     | Lumbrineris_magnidentata (DQ779621.1) |
| Eunice_cf_limosa (GQ478135.1)      | Palola_viridis (JN558570.1)           |
| Eunice_fucata (GQ478143.1)         | Palola_viridis (JN558575.1)           |
| Eunice_gracilicirrata (JX559748.1) | Perinereis_aibuhitensis (KF611806.1)  |
| Eunice_torquata (GQ478145.1)       | Perinereis_cultrifera (KC833495.1)    |
| Hediste_atoka (AB703092.1)         | Perinereis_nuntia (JX644015.1)        |
| Lumbrineris_inflata (AY838832.1)   |                                       |

The Results of Laor worm sequencing were analyzed by sequencing scanner software (ABI) and *multiple alignments* were performed using *Clustal W* supported by MEGA5:03 program. The reconstruction of the phylogeny tree based on the nucleotide sequences was carried out in *Neighbor Joining* (NJ) and *Maximum Likelihood* (ML) approaches using the MEGA 5.03 program Kimura 2-parameter model. Genetic distance and similarity calculation were conducted too using the MEGA 5.03 program Kimura 2-parameter model.

## Results and Discussion

### Phenotype of Laor Worms

Laor worms from were obtained from three villages namely Allang Village (A), Hutumuri Village (H), and Latahalat Village (L). The observation results of Laor worm phenotype are presented at Table 2.

**Table 2. Phenotype description of Laor worms**

| No. | Samples | Body shape/Body color/Body length (cm)  |
|-----|---------|---|
| 1.  | A1      | Round, flat, and fat body. Rubbery head and soft tail. 2 papilla sensors at the head. 2 antennae. 8 tentacular cirri. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. Translucent reddish brown stripes on the left and right sides of the body. ± 9 cm, 139 segments.                           |
| 2.  | A2      | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 3 antennae. Dark green body, translucent head and tail. ± 26 cm, 182 segments.   |
| 3.  | A3      | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 3 antennae. Orange body, translucent head and tail. ± 8 cm, 166 segments.  |
| 4.  | A4      | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 5 antennae. Brown body, translucent head and tail. ± 20 cm, 143 segments.  |
| 5.  | A5      | Long, flat, round, and fat body. Parapodia clearly visible. 5 antennae. Dark moss green body, translucent head and tail. ± 16 cm, 109 segments.   |
| 6.  | A6      | Round, flat, and fat body. Rubbery head and soft tail. two sensory papillae at the head. 2 antennae. 8 tentacular cirri. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. Translucent light green, striped brown on left and right sides of the body. ± 4 cm, 69 segments.                        |
| 7.  | A7      | Flat, round, and fat body. Parapodia clearly visible. 5 antennae. 5 eyes. Reddish orange body, translucent reddish head and tail. ± 9 cm, 114 segments.   |
| 8.  | H1      | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 3 antennae. Dark green body, translucent head and tail. ± 25 cm, 187 segments.   |
| 9.  | H2      | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 5 antennae. Brown body, translucent head and tail. ± 25 cm, 74 segments.   |
| 10. | H3      | Round, flat, and fat body. Rubbery head and soft tail. Two clamps at the head. Two sensory papilla at the head. 2 antennae. 8 tentacular cirri. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. Translucent reddish brown stripes on the left and right sides of the body. ± 5 cm, 166 segments. |

|     |     |  |
|-----|-----|--|
| 11. | H4  | Flat, round, and fat body. Parapodia clearly visible. 5 antennas. 2 eyes. Greenish orange body,translucent head andtail . ± 7 cm,97 segments.  |
| 12. | H5  | Flat, round, and fat body. Parapodia clearly visible. 5 antennas2 eyes. Bright green moss body, translucent headand tail . ± 11 cm,99 segments.  |
| 13. | L1  | Flat, round, chubby and a little longbody. Parapodia clearly visible.Roundish head, 2 eyes embedded in the head and rather stand out.Bright red meat. ± 28 cm,102 segments.  |
| 14. | L2  | Flat, round, chubby and little long body. Parapodia clearly visible.Roundish head, 2 eyes embedded in the head and rather stand out. Burgundy. ± 20 cm,118 segments.   |
| 15. | L3  | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 5 antennas. Brown body,translucent head andtail. ± 9 cm,163 segments.   |
| 16. | L4  | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 3 antennas. Dark green body,translucent head andtail. ± 28 cm,347 segments.   |
| 17. | L5  | Long, smooth, and round body. Parapodia clearly visible. 2 eyes. 5 antennas. Orange body,translucent head andtail. ± 11 cm,126 segments.   |
| 18. | L6  | Flat, round, and fat body. Parapodia clearly visible.5 antennas. 2 eyes.Moss bright greenbody, translucent reddishhead and tail. ± 11 cm,111 segments.   |
| 19. | L7  | Round, flat, and fat body. Rubbery body. Two sensory papillae at the head. 2 antennas. 8 tentacular cirri. Parapodia clearly visible.2 eyes.Bright red meat.± 12 cm,143 segments.  |
| 20. | L8  | Round, flat, and fat body. Rubberyhead, soft tail. Two sensory papillae at the head. 2 antennas. 8 tentacular cirri. Parapodia clearly visible.4 eyes. Translucent reddishbrown stripes on theleft and right sides ofthe body.± 9 cm,113 segments. |
| 21. | L9  | Flat, round, and fat body. Parapodia clearly visible. Roundish head, 2 eyes embedded in the head and rather stand out. 3 antennas.Dark moss greenbody, translucenthead and tail. ± 8 cm,121 segments.  |
| 22. | L10 | Flat, round, and fat body. Parapodia clearly visible.2 eyes. 5 antennas.Orange body, headand tail somewhattranslucent and orange. ± 21 cm,118 segments.  |

Based on the descriptions explained at Table 2, it can be concluded that phenotype of those Laor worms varies in relation to the shape, color, and size of the body. One of the most important parts of Polychaeta used for identification is the head<sup>18</sup>. The Polychaeta body consisting of presegmental, segmental, and postsegmental parts, with the presegmental parts having the palp, antenna, and prostomium<sup>15</sup>. In this connection, the head of the Laor worm can be used to identify Laor worms phenotypically because it has a number of antennas. Based on the of antenna number, the Laor worms can be classified as those having 2 antennas found in the sample A1, A6, H3, L7 and L8, those having 3 antennas found in sample A2, A3, H1, L4 and L9, those having 5 antennas found in sample A4, A5, A7, H2, H4, H5, L3, L5, L6, and L10, and those having no antenna found in sample L1 and L2. Polychaeta have been identified based on the number of antennas, namely Nereidae having 2 antennas, whereas Eunicidae having 3 antennas or 5 antennas<sup>15</sup>. At the head of the Laor worm (*Lysidice Oele*) there were 3 antennas and having no tiny spines while at the head of Palolo worms (*Eunice viridis*) there were 5 antennas having tiny spines on the antennas<sup>1</sup>. *Lysidice Oele* (*Lysidice* genus) and *Palola viridis* (*Palola* genus) or *Eunice viridis* (*Eunice* genus) were classified into Eunicidae family<sup>15</sup>.

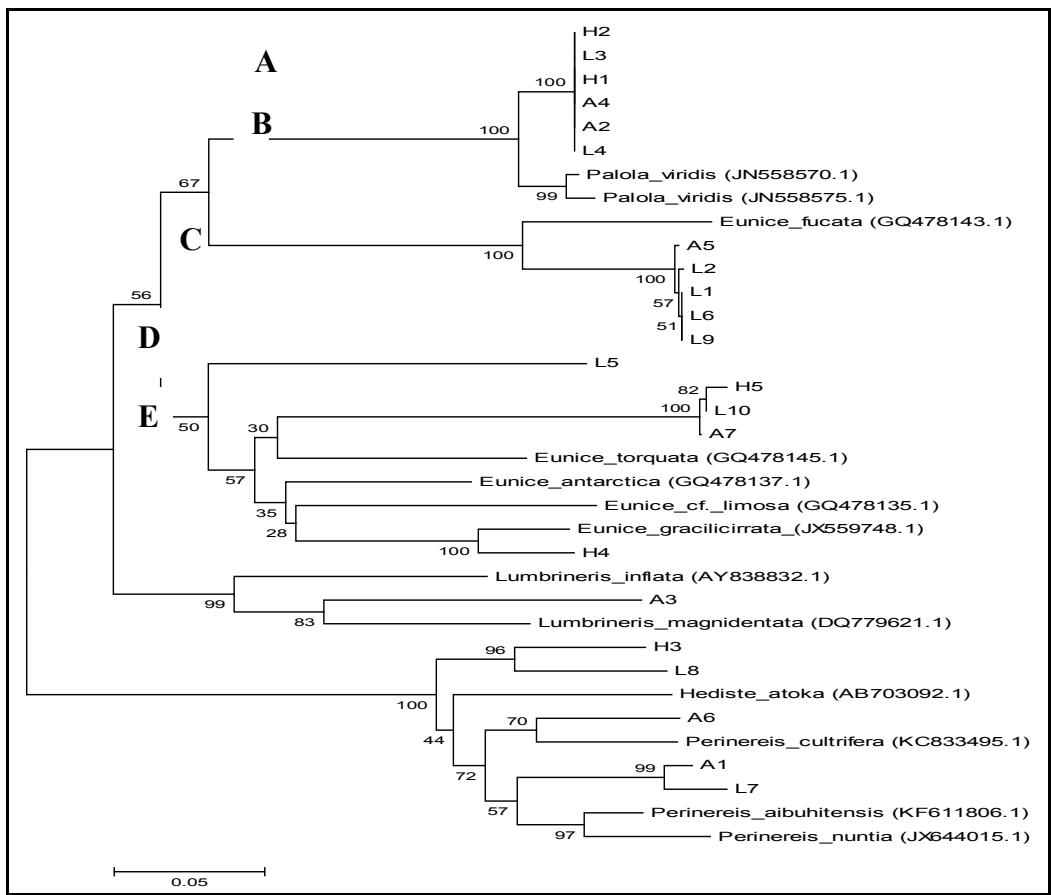
Thus, the samples of those Laor worm can be classified into 3 groups. The first group is Nereidae family having 2 antennas namely samples of A1, A6, H3, L7 and L8, may consist of *Perinereis* and *Hediste* genus. The second group is Eunicidae family having 3 antennas namely samples of A2, A3, H1, L4 and L9 or having 5 antennas namely samples of A4, A5, A7, H2, H4, H5, L3, L5, L6, and L10 which may consist of *Lysidice* and *Eunice* genus. The third group is Laor worms which do not have any antennas namely samples of L1 and L2. The third group cannot be grouped into a certain family because the head of the samples identified might be damaged, so the antennas could not be observed. Phenotypical Identification often has some difficulties because the Laor worms found are often damaged. The Laor worms are very soft and mushy, and the way of catching the samples using traditional tools (seser), so it can only catch the Laor worms in sea

levels, often swayed away by the waves or currents of sea water<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the molecular identification needs to be done to support the phenotypical identification result.

25 samples of Laor worms in marine areas of Ambon Island have been identified phenotypically based on the epitoke (body parts of the worms containing sex cells), namely the epitoke schizogamy (stolon) and the epitoke epigamy<sup>19</sup>. Those samples of Laor worm identified based on epitoke schizogamy consist of *Eunicidae* family including *Palola* sp., *Eunicidae* sp. 1, and *Eunicidae* sp. 2. Furthermore, on the other hand, Laor worm samples identified based on epitoke epigamy consist of five families namely *Eunicidae* family that including *Eunice* sp. 1, *Eunice* sp. 2, *Eunice* sp. 3, *Eunice* sp. 4, *Eunice* sp. 5, *Eunice* sp. 6, and *Lysidice oele*; *Euphosrinidae* family that including *Euphosrine* sp.; *Lumbrineridae* family including *Lumbrineris* sp. 1, *Lumbrineris* sp. 2, and *Lumbrineris* sp. 3; *Nereidae* family including *Ceratonereis singular australis*, *Compositia marmorata*, *Neanthes cf. Gisserana*, *Neanthes masalacensis*, *Neanthes unifasciata*, *Nereis* sp., *Perinereis helleri*, *Perinereis nigropunctata*, and *Solomonereis marauensis*; and *Scalibregmatidae* family including *Hyboscolex verrucosa* and *Scalibregmatidae* sp. The results of the identification indicated that there were a few Laor worm groups that could not be identified to the species level because of the lack of taxonomic information on Polychaeta in Indonesia.

**Identification based on 16S rRNA gene sequences**

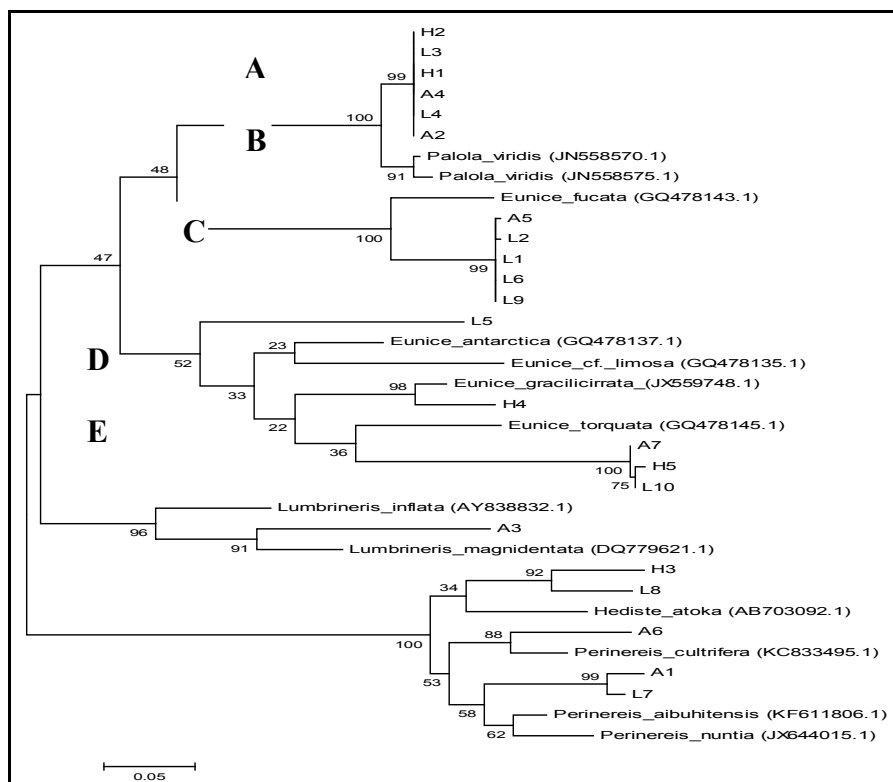
The identification of laor worms using 16S rRNA gene was carried out based on the results of phylogenetic analysis, genetic distance, and similarity value (similarity) of Laor worms. The length of 16 S rRNA gene successfully amplified from 22 samples of Laor worms ranged from 465 until 520 bp. The results of *multiple alignment* were then used to reconstruct the phylogeny tree using two different approaches, namely *Neighbor Joining* (NJ) (Figure 1) and *Maximum Likelihood* (ML) (Figure 2). The results of genetic distance and similarity calculation of Laor worms using the MEGA5.03 program Kimura 2-parameter models are presented in Table 3.



**Figure 1. Phylogeny tree of laor worms based on 16S rRNA gene sequences according to Neighbor Joining (NJ) approach (bootstrap 1000 replications)**

**Table 3. Genetic Distance and Similarity of Laor Worms**

| No. | samples | Genetic distance | similarity | Species                         | Group |
|-----|---------|------------------|------------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1.  | A2      | 0,03851          | 96,14897   | <i>Palola viridis</i>           | A     |
| 2.  | A4      | 0,03851          | 96,14897   | <i>Palola viridis</i>           |       |
| 3.  | H1      | 0,03851          | 96,14897   | <i>Palola viridis</i>           |       |
| 4.  | H2      | 0,03851          | 96,14897   | <i>Palola viridis</i>           |       |
| 5.  | L3      | 0,03851          | 96,14897   | <i>Palola viridis</i>           |       |
| 6.  | L4      | 0,03851          | 96,14897   | <i>Palola viridis</i>           |       |
| 7.  | A5      | 0,11620          | 88,37970   | <i>Eunice fucata</i>            | B     |
| 8.  | L1      | 0,11313          | 88,68650   | <i>Eunice fucata</i>            |       |
| 9.  | L2      | 0,11636          | 88,36392   | <i>Eunice fucata</i>            |       |
| 10. | L6      | 0,11313          | 88,68650   | <i>Eunice fucata</i>            |       |
| 11. | L9      | 0,11313          | 88,68650   | <i>Eunice fucata</i>            |       |
| 12. | A7      | 0,22234          | 77,76618   | <i>Eunice torquata</i>          | C     |
| 13. | H4      | 0,06210          | 93,79001   | <i>Eunice gracilicirrata</i>    |       |
| 14. | H5      | 0,22936          | 77,06362   | <i>Eunice Antarctica</i>        |       |
| 15. | L5      | 0,20177          | 79,82255   | <i>Eunice Antarctica</i>        |       |
| 16. | L10     | 0,22200          | 77,80039   | <i>Eunice Antarctica</i>        |       |
| 17. | A3      | 0,17423          | 82,57723   | <i>Lumbrineris magnidentata</i> | D     |
| 18. | A1      | 0,10993          | 89,00702   | <i>Perinereis aibuhitensis</i>  | E     |
| 19. | A6      | 0,09455          | 90,54519   | <i>Perinereis cultrifera</i>    |       |
| 20. | H3      | 0,14445          | 85,55492   | <i>Perinereis aibuhitensis</i>  |       |
| 21. | L7      | 0,10689          | 89,31143   | <i>Perinereis aibuhitensis</i>  |       |
| 22. | L8      | 0,12805          | 87,19476   | <i>Perinereis aibuhitensis</i>  |       |



**Figure 2. Phylogenytree of laor worms based on 16S rRNA gene sequences according to *Maximum Likelihood* (ML) approach( *bootstrap* 1000 replications)**

The reconstruction of the phylogeny tree of Laor worms based on the nucleotide sequence of 16S rRNA gene using the *Neighbor Joining* (NJ) and *Maximum Likelihood* (ML) approaches shows the same topology tree but having different *bootstrap* values (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The results of phylogenetic analysis of 16S rRNA gene sequences using NJ and ML approaches show that the samples of Laor Worms are grouped into 5 groups (A, B, C, D, and E).

Related to NJ approach group A of Laor worms consists of samples A2, A4, H1, H2, L3, and L4 grouped to *Palola viridis* having a bootstrap value of 100%. Group B consists of the samples A5, L1, L2, L6, and L9 grouped to *Eunice fucata* having a bootstrap value of 100%. Group C consists of samples A7, H4, H5, L5 and L10 grouped to the *Eunice* having bootstrap value of 50%. Group D consists of sample A3 grouped to *Lumbrineris magnidentata* having a bootstrap value of 99%. Group E consists of a samples of H3, A1, A6, L7 and L8 grouped to Nereidae consisting of *Hediste* and *Perinereis* having a bootstrap value of 100%.

Related to ML approach group A of Laor worms is grouped to *Palola viridis* having a bootstrap value of 100%. Group B is grouped to *Eunice fucata* having a bootstrap value of 100%. Group C is grouped to the *Eunice* having a bootstrap value of 52%. Group D is grouped to *Lumbrineris magnidentata* having a bootstrap value of 96%, and Group E is grouped to Nereidae consisting of *Hediste* and *Perinereis* having a bootstrap value of 100%. Based on a phylogenetic analysis conducted related to Nereidae-Polychaeta, it was found that the bootstrap value was 1-100%<sup>14</sup>. *Bootstrap* value below 50% cannot be categorized that the results of topology are proper to be used to determine the species<sup>20</sup>.

The calculation results of genetic distance as well as similarity of the 22 Laor worm samples find out that genetic distance ranged from 0,03851 - 0,22936 with the highest similarity value of 96.14897% and the lowest similarity value of 77.06362%. Based on the calculation of genetic distance and similarity values, Laor worm samples can be classified into 5 groups. Genetic distance and similarity values uncovered in this research are below 100% but those values can illustrate the closeness of Laor worm samples to particular genus or species documented in the GenBank. Referring to the GenBank data the group A samples are grouped to *Palola Viridis*, the group B samples are grouped to *Eunice fucata*, and the group C samples are grouped to *Eunice*. Furthermore, the group D sample is grouped to *Lumbrineris magnidentata*, and the group E samples are grouped to Nereidae belonging to *Hediste* and *Perinereis*. The lowest and the highest genetic distance of Laor worm samples are 0,03851 or 3,851% and 0,22936 or 22,936% respectively. Species having >3% genetic distance were classified into different species<sup>21</sup>.

### **The Comparison of the Results between the Phenotype based Identification and the 16S rRNA Gen Sequence based Identification**

According to the results of the phenotype identification based on the number of antennas, the Laor worms were classified into 3 groups: Laor worms having 2 antennas identified as Nereidae family, Laor worms having 3 antennas or 5 antennas identified as Eunicidae family, and Laor worms having no antenna. The results of the tree phylogeny analysis, genetic distance, and similarity analysis based on the 16S rRNA gene sequences show that the Laor worms grouped into several species, such as: *Palola viridis*, *Eunica fucata*, *Eunice torquata*, *Eunice gracilicirrata*, *Eunice antarctica*, *Lumbrineris magnidentata*, *Perinereis aibuhitensis*, *Perinereis cultrifera*, and *Hediste atoke*. The results of the analysis of phylogeny, genetic distance, and similarity explain that the Laor worm having no antenna, namely sample L1 and L2, are grouped into *Eunice fucata* species.

Based on the results of the analysis of phylogeny, genetic distance calculation, and similarity analysis (the result of 16S rRNA gene sequence analysis), it is found that the Laor worms grouped as samples A1, A6, H3, L7, L8 having 2 antennas tend to be closer to Nereidae consisting of *Perinereis aibuhitensis*, *Perinereis cultrifera*, and *Hediste atoke*. The results of this analysis are similar with the phenotype identification consisting of *Perinereis* and *Hediste*. On the other hand samples A2, H1 L4, L9 having 3 antennas, and the samples A4, H2, L3, A5, L6, A7, H4, H5, L5, L10 having 5 antennas tend to be closer to *Palola viridis*, *Eunice torquata*, *Eunice gracilicirrata*, *Eunice antarctica* (based on 16S rRNA gene sequences) are included in Eunicidae. The results of molecular analysis show that only *Eunice* or *Palola* are matched with the phenotype identification. On the other hand *Lysidice* (*Lysidice oele*) cannot be traced to the molekuler identification because the species as well as the genus has not yet been listed in *GenBank*. Sample A3 having 3 antennas, which is closer to the *Lumbrineris* including *Lumbrineris magnidentata* (based on 16S rRNA gene sequences),

is apparently different from the phenotype identification results grouping the sample to Eunicidae. Samples L1 and L2 having no antennas, which cannot be identified phenotypically are closer to Eunicidae particularly *Eunice fucata* (based on 16S rRNA gene sequences). Based on the explanation above, it can be stated that the molecular identification of the Laor worms can complement the phenotype identification particularly relating to the number of antennas.

## Conclusion

1. The Phenotype of Laor worms inhabiting marine areas of Ambon island waters vary from body shape, body color, and body size. Based on the number of antenna, there are 4 group of Laor worms: those having 2 antennas (samples A1, A6, H3, L7 and L8), those having 3 antennas (samples A2, A3, H1, L4 and L9), those having 5 antennas (samples A4, A5, A7, H2, H4, H5, L3, L5, L6, and L10) and those having no antenna (samples L1 and L2).
2. The results of phylogenetic analysis based on the 16S rRNA gene sequences (NJ and ML approaches), the distance calculation and genetic similarity analysis of Laor worm samples show that those worm are grouped into 5 groups: group A (A2, A4, H1, H2, L3 and L4) identified as *Palola viridis*, group B (A5, L1, L2, L6, and L9) identified as *Eunice fucata*, group C (A7, H4, H5, L5 and L10) identified as *Eunice*, group D (A3) identified as *Lumbrineris magnidentata*, and group E (H3, A1, A6, L7 and L8) identified as Nereidae. Phylogenetic analysis using NJ approach get the *bootstrap* values of 28-100%, and ML approach get the *bootstrap* values of 22-100%. The results of genetic distance calculation of Laor worm samples range from 0.03851-0.22936 with the highest similarity score 96.14897% and the lowest similarity score 77.06362%.
3. The results of the Laor worm identification based on the phylogeny analysis, genetic distance calculation and similarity analysis complement the phenotype based identification particularly relating to the number of antennas. The first group having 2 antennas, namely samples A1, A6, H3, L7, L8 tend to be closer to the Nereidae consisting of *Perinereis aibuhitensis*, *Perinereis cultrifera*, and *Hediste atoke*; the second group having 3 antennas, namely samples A2, H1, L4, L9, as well as those having 5 antennas namely samples A4, H2, L3, A5, L6, A7, H4, H5, L5, L10, tend to be closer to the Eunicidae consisting of *Palola viridis*, *Eunice torquata*, *Eunice gracilicirrata*, *Eunice antarctica* included in Eunicidae; sample A3 having 3 antennas, which is closer to Lumbrineridae including *Lumbrineris magnidentata* is apparently different from the phenotype identification result grouping the sample to Eunicidae; the third group consisting the samples having no antennas (sample L1 and L2) are closer to Eunicidae (*Eunice fucata*).

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