



Tropentag, October 11-13, 2006, Bonn

“Prosperity and Poverty in a Globalised World—
Challenges for Agricultural Research”

Assessment of Perceptions and Attitudes Changes of the Post-tsunami Community on the Use of Aquatic Resources in Ranong Province, Thailand

HEP SOKHANNARO

Royal University of Agriculture, Faculty of Fishery and Aquaculture, Cambodia

Abstract

Fisheries is an important issue because of severely declining stocks driven by world market demands. While worries about unlimited extraction of resources have led to a number of measures being tested, most attempts have been unsuccessful. The December 2004 Tsunami affected coastal people severely. However, it may provides us a small window of opportunity to divert attention from going back to fishing if the fisheries are provided with alternative livelihood options. The objective of this study was to understand whether and how the perceptions and attitudes toward fishing in coastal areas may have changed since the tsunami. Five coastal villages in Ranong Province, Thailand were selected because most of impacted people are fishermen or coastal aquatic resources users. A combination of research tools was applied including RRA, field observation, a semi-structured questionnaire and key informant interviews; all applied to measure perceptions and attitudes of the local community. A total of 247 households were contacted, with 494 responses. The analyses indicate that, the recently Tsunami disaster did not influence changes of community's perceptions and attitudes, in particular elder fishermen, in terms of going back to fishing. It was also noted that the majority of fishermen still highly satisfied with their occupation in the hope that fishery resources still available for them. The satisfactions were confirmed with the indicators that fishermen would reinvest in fishing once they have opportunity even their love one or they were severely injured, their fishing facilities were totally destroyed, and their properties were completely damaged by the disaster. The important reasons for not adopting an alternative occupation for these fisher folks relate to fishing as their main source of income, their low levels of educations, the high number of years of experience they have in fishing, and their age. It is difficult to convert them to have alternative occupations which are not related to fishery activities. There is a need to provide alternative sources of income, to relieve dependency on coastal resources or it should have some of the same characteristics as those considered desirable in fishing.

Keywords: Aquatic resources, community perception, Post-Tsunami effect