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Evaluation of Tilapia Philosopher Researches under Thailand Research Fund

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Abstract

Tilapia plays a crucial role in food security for the Thai people. The indigenous knowledge and innovation of Tilapia farmers are valuable to conserve. Years ago, Thailand Research Fund invested in a research project of the principles and synthesis of knowledge from Tilapia culture for sustainable development of Nile Tilapia in Thailand. The innovations of the 28 farmers, who are associated with high experiences in Tilapia aquaculture, are recorded and synthesized. Those farmers are considered as Tilapia philosophers. The study intends to evaluate the benefit of this research based on the economic surplus approach. Both researchers and farmers were interviewed to identify the benefits obtained from this research. The economic evaluation is performed by using the project analysis indicators i.e. the Net Present Value (NPV), Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) and Internal Rate of Return (IRR). The results illustrate that most Tilapia philosophers adopt the new technology by themselves, while the scientists under the research projects had opportunities to learn more from the Tilapia philosophers. The main benefits derived from the projects mainly are the scientific proofs by the researchers in terms of production cost saving. The ex-ante evaluation shows a positive net present value as long as the Tilapia philosophers tend to distribute their knowledge to other farmers. Consequently, Tilapia Philosopher research should be continued. In addition, policy makers should additional support in terms of financial budgets to publish and distribute the composed these indigenous knowledges to other farmers so that Tilapia aquaculture will be an alternative source to enhance food security in Thailand.

Keywords: Food security, impact evaluation, Thailand, tilapia research