

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ON THE IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENETICALLY IMPROVED FARMED TILAPIA
AND THEIR DISSEMINATION IN SELECTED COUNTRIES**

On 2 February 2005, the Director General, Operations Evaluation Department, received the following response from the Managing Director General on behalf of Management:

1. This is in reply to your memo dated 12 January requesting for Management's response on the subject. It is noted that an extensive consultation with ADB departments concerned has been made in preparing the report. Based on OED's report, Management recognizes that ADB has served as major catalyst in the regional collaboration and development for tilapia's genetic improvement and in the technology dissemination to the poor farmers. Management finds the lessons learned valid and endorses OED's recommendation to further support regional collaboration for application of fish genetic improvement to increase fish production in Asia-Pacific aquaculture. In fact, we are providing continued assistance to support agriculture research, including fish genetic improvement in Asia-Pacific countries.

2. Management also recognizes the importance of (i) promoting public-private partnerships in fisheries research and technology development, seeding production and marketing development; and (ii) conservation of aquatic biodiversity and genetic resources. We have already incorporated these into the design of a new aquaculture project in Indonesia that emphasizes public-private partnerships in aquaculture development and biodiversity conservation. Some more specific comments follow.

3. ADB financed the WorldFish Center (formerly ICLARM) under RETA 5279 and RETA 5558 for the development of genetically improved farmed tilapia (GIFT). The assistance, which was completed in 1997, provided research and dissemination work for about a decade, demonstrating to participating national partners that rapid genetic improvement of farmed tilapia is possible through selective breeding. The technology has been rapidly adopted in participating countries, i.e., Bangladesh, Fiji Islands, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Networks among the collaborating countries at various levels accelerated the dissemination of GIFT, GIFT methods, and information on improved tilapia farming practices. The investment in the development and dissemination of GIFT has proven attractive economic returns. This impact evaluation study provides a good source of knowledge, demonstrating that with a mere RETA investment of just over \$1 million over a 10-year period (1988–1997), the long-term income, nutritional, and socioeconomic impacts on small-scale farmers are significant.

4. It is also noted that the GIFT program has been a major breakthrough that could contribute to meet the protein needs of the poor, and to their food security. ADB, in partnership with the WorldFish Center, played a catalytic role in this effort. The production rate of GIFT seeds seems to be fairly high and promising, and now account for a substantial share of the seed market of all tilapia production in the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam, and PRC.