

## Background

The Egyptian Nile tilapia farming sector has **grown rapidly** over the previous decades placing Egypt as the world's **third largest producer**. With this rapid growth, the sector has undergone a process of intensification with supplemented feed and higher stocking densities. Although intensification is likely to compromise animal welfare, **little is known about the current status of tilapia welfare in the country**.



## Workshops

To establish the **standard handling and management practices** involved in the tilapia farming sector, a **series of workshops** were held in the Egyptian centres of tilapia production. Participants included **key stakeholders** (farmers, researchers, practitioners, etc.) and covered the **entire production chain** (including hatcheries). The aim was to identify **impactful interventions**.



## Main findings

**Not a single workshop participant was familiar with the concept of animal welfare** let alone **fish welfare**. The term in Arabic simply does not resonate with those in the field.

Outcomes of the roundtable discussions suggest that **the concept of animal welfare is sorely lacking** in Egyptian tilapia aquaculture and that there is **a need to raise awareness** amongst relevant stakeholders around the **importance of high welfare practices in improving tilapia health, productivity, and ultimately quality**.



## Opportunities & Challenges

The majority of participants expressed an **interest and willingness** to learn about **fish sentience and fish welfare** in particular.

Farm owners and workers also expressed an interest in **changing their practices** around **handling and managing** stocked tilapia.

The biggest issue farmers face is around **high mortality rates** and those in attendance were receptive to the idea that **improving management practices can at least partially address this problem**.



## Recommendations

Key impactful interventions could include:

1. Optimal **feed provision** (quality and distribution);
2. Stocking **lower densities**;
3. Eliminating **unnecessary handling**;
4. Regularly **monitoring water quality** and using **aerators** where possible;
5. Only obtaining **fry from reliable sources**;
6. Ensuring an **acclimatisation period** for transported fishes;
7. Continuous **monitoring of fish behaviour issues during the cycle**; and
8. Improving the **massive capture ('harvest') and slaughter processes**.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was funded by Open Philanthropy within the scope of the project 'Mapping the status quo of farmed Nile tilapia welfare in Egypt'.

