



Project FSCFT - 23

**IMPROVING MARKETING EFFICIENCY OF ARTISANAL
FISHERMEN
IN CENTRAL AMERICA, MEXICO AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**2nd Progress Report
January – July 2007**

24th August 2007

1 - Introduction

Project activities have evolved satisfactorily during the first seven months of 2007, in continuation to the activities performed since April 2006 (see 1st progress report).

Activities were undertaken in the three benefited countries, with good results regarding the project objectives.

2 – Results attained

Many project objectives, in the different components were already close to be attained in July 2007. The situation of the project components was as follows:

Component 1: Training in fish handling, fish processing and fish marketing, and quality control of the communities

Objective 1: *preparation of an overall analysis of the fishermen community working conditions*

The overall analysis of the three fishermen communities were already prepared by the end of 2005 , even before the official launching of the project, as well as in March and in October 2006 as already mentioned in the 1st project report document and in the specific activities reports of the FAO LDED missions. These analysis were used in the preparation of tailor-made training activities, according to the needs that were identified during the surveys.

Objective 2: *effective training in fish handling, fish processing, fish marketing and quality control*

Training activities in Mexico and in Honduras were realized in March 2007, benefiting directly 22 persons in Tamiahua and 35 in Tela. In Cuba training activities were realized in April 2007, benefiting directly 63 persons of the fishermen community of Playa de Florida (75% of whom being women)

In Tamiahua, the training course had an immediate effect on the working routine of the fishermen cooperative, with the adoption of simple working rules, much needed to improve the quality of the products sent to the markets. Working tools (including fish boxes) and clothes for the workers of the cooperative were purchased at this occasion.



Pictures 1 and 2: fish boxes and some clothing and tools purchased for the cooperative of Tamiahua



Pictures 3 and 4: training course in Tela, with preparation of smoked products



In Tela, Honduras, the training course also included the aspect of smoking local species. Smoking fish was until then an unknown processing possibility to the local fishermen communities.

Also in Playa de Florida, Cuba, new ways of processing fish were demonstrated, in particular salting and smoking, as well as the need of utilizing ice for a better conservation of the catches.



pictures 5 and 6: practical training in fish handling and processing, in Playa de Florida



Component 2: Demonstration of equipments helping the quality assurance

Objective 3: *identifying building materials and equipment suppliers (3 ice plants, one for each community)*

This objective was already attained in 2006 (see 1st progress report)

Objective 4: *building the landing facilities*



Pictures 7 and 8: the landing facilities at the fishermen community Los Cerritos (by the end of 2006 and in March 2007)

The building of landing facilities at the fishermen community of Los Cerritos, with the material provided by the project, is finished. As for the installation of the ice plant in Tela, a new local was identified by the municipality nearby the municipal market. Some civil work needed to install the ice plant is under way with material provided by the project.

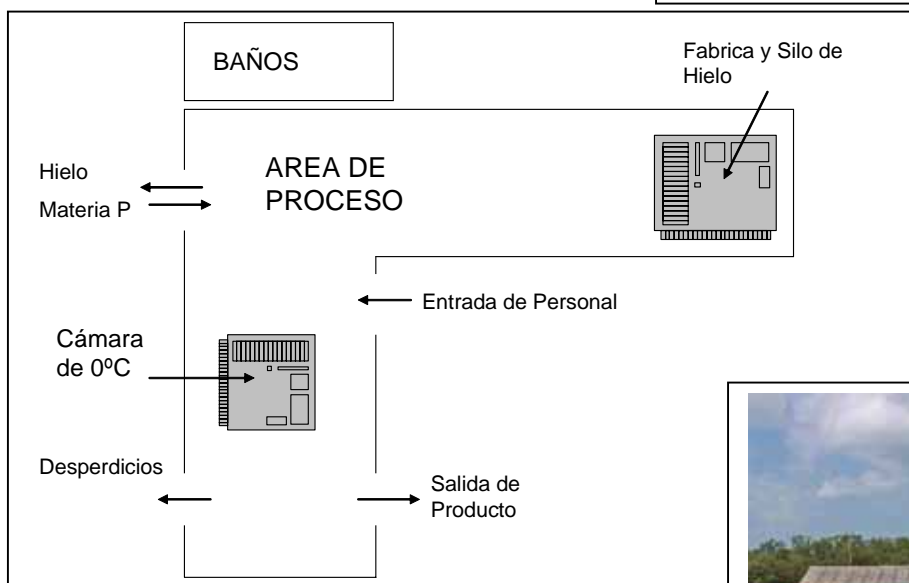


In Tamiahua, the civil work for the upgrade of the landing facilities of the Cooperative is foreseen to implemented at the same time than the installation of the ice plant. Meanwhile a stainless steel working table was purchased and installed in the facility, allowing to improve he quality of the products that, until then, were processed directly on the floor.



Picture 9 :current landing facilities of the cooperative, to be upgraded in Tamiahua,

Picture 10: the stainless steel working table installed in Tamiahua



Picture 11 : proposed upgrading of landing facilities in Playa de Florida, jointly prepared by project experts and the cooperative direction.

Picture 12: external view of the building to be upgraded in Playa de Florida



Finally, in Playa de Florida, the upgrading of the landing facilities discussed in previous field missions were depending on the government authorization of the purchases of building materials. The supplier of the needed building material was identified in Camagüey. The particular Cuban rules for payment of any purchase in the country has led the PEA to transfer the needed amount for this purchase to the account of the FAO

Representation in Havana, in order to allow a local payment by cheque. However, even so, a formal authorization of the Ministry of Industrial Fisheries, in accordance to the Ministry of Cooperation (MINVEC) is needed and it was still not given.

Objective 5: *installation and demonstrative operation of equipment*

In July 2007, the ice plants of Tela and of Tamiahua were purchased and on the way to be installed in the project sites.

As for the ice plant to be installed in Playa de Florida, the Cuban government expressed its preference for Chinese equipment. The import of this equipment must be done through the MINVEC, in accordance to national regulations. However, until July, there was no sign that an agreement has been reached between the Ministry of Fisheries and MINVEC regarding the import of the equipment.

Component 3: Promotion of values that can be added to the product

Objective 6: *Study on the social, cultural and environmental aspects of the fishermen communities*

The result of the studies realized in the three countries are already being used in the preparation of the promotion material (see objective 8).

Objective 7: *Study on specific markets for the traditional and value-added products both on the international and the domestic market*

Besides the market study realized in Southern Texas for Tamiahua's seafood products (see specific report and 1st progress report), a survey was conducted in Cuba regarding the specific marketing conditions of the country. The main results of his survey were published in the magazine *INFOPESCA Internacional* (nº 30 – April/June 2007).

Objective 8: *preparation of a set of promotion material regarding the products of the fishermen communities, based on the studies results*

The first set of promotion material is the brochure promoting the Fishermen Cooperative of Tamiahua and its products (see the brochure attached). It was first used at the PESCAMAR 2007 fair realized in Mexico City (4th to 6th July 2007). This fair was dedicated to the supply of seafood to the restaurant and catering sector. Through our project, the representatives of the Fishermen Cooperative of Tamiahua were able to attend the fair and promote their products at the booth of CONAPESCA's, which is the national counterpart of the project.

This promotion of Tamiahua's products at PESCAMAR fair was followed by a visit to Nueva Viga, which is the main seafood wholesale market in the country. The brochure was also distributed to the main seafood wholesalers of the capital.

The success of the Tamiahua Cooperative participation to PESCAMAR 2007 has encouraged it to envisage its participation to the fair AQUAMAR 2007, in Vera Cruz in November 2007.



Pictures 14 and 15: Tamiahua's Cooperative representatives and the PEA expert at the fair PESCAMAR 2007 in Mexico City.



In Cuba, promotion activities are foreseen in a much more modest stage in the town of Florida (and also possibly in Camagüey), where the Cooperative of Playa de Florida envisages to manage a fish store. Naturally, the marketing planning and implementation will follow the Cuban system but some innovations seem to be possible in the existing context.



Picture 13: the fish store in the town of Florida, foreseen to be managed by the Cooperative of Playa de Florida

Component 4: Assistance in the Application for Loans

Two objectives are under this component:

Objective 9: Identification of national banks to act as partners to the CFC

Objective 10: Support to local fishermen communities for their loan applications

Both will be treated by the end of the project, once the benefited fishermen communities are well aware about their investment possibilities.

Component 5: Dissemination of the Project Results

The dissemination of the project results is a crucial component as it intend to inform fisheries authorities and artisanal fishermen communities throughout the continent about how three different fishermen communities, with the support of the project, have improved their activities through a better quality and visibility of their products and how they managed to improve their incomes this way.

Two objectives are under this component:

Objective 11: dissemination through national and regional media

For the time being, besides some articles published in the magazine *INFOPECSA Internacional*, the coverage of project activities by the national medias is still not very effective. However, the preparation of press releases, in cooperation with the national authorities will soon change this situation.

Objective 12: Dissemination Seminars

Four seminars are foreseen, one in each of the benefited countries and also a regional seminar. They will naturally be prepared and implemented after the conclusion of all other activities.

3 – The evolution of counterparts in the three countries

In all three countries benefited by the project, some changes have occurred during the first seven months of 2007 regarding the national counterparts.

in Mexico

At CONAPESCA's level, even if the National Fisheries Commissioner did not change, many changes have occurred in the institution organization and in the composition of its staff. A new Law on Fisheries and Aquaculture was also promulgated in the country.

At the Tamiahua Cooperative level, a new direction was elected and has assumed.

These changes at both levels did not affect the good development of the project in Mexico. The new persons in charge, related to the project, were briefed about the content of the project and its objectives and have manifested their interest and good will to cooperate to its success.

in Honduras

A new director was appointed for DIGEPESCA. He assured his full support to the good continuation of the project activities.

in Cuba

There were no apparent changes in the counterpart institutions. However, there seems to be a problem in the relationship of the Ministry of Fishery Industries (MIP) with the Ministry of Cooperation (MINVEC) as they did not seem to have reached an agreement regarding the procedures of importing the ice plant and of authorizing the payment of the construction material for the upgrading of the landing sites. This money is already in Cuba, waiting on the account of the FAO representation for the disbursement authorization of Cuban authorities. In consequence, the achievement of Objectives 4 and 5 of the project were so far not possible in Cuba.

4 – Conclusions and next steps

Project activities are in general being developed satisfactorily, according to the project document.

The only real problem is the ignorance of how long it will take to the Cuban authorities to authorize the payment by the project of the foreseen civil works and to proceed with the import and installation of the ice plant, which must be performed by the MINVEC. An intercession of the CFC with the Cuban government in this sense would possibly help.

Regarding the project budget, the financial reports are being issued separately, in accordance to the CFC procedures. It appears however that substantial savings were possible, mainly regarding the purchase of equipments. The main reason is the fact that the ice plant installed in Honduras was actually “inherited” from the previous project CFC/FSCFT/19.

The surplus attained in the budget category of “machinery and equipment” could possibly be redistributed in other categories in order to reinforce the training activities (category “Technical Assistance”). In this particular, the Supervisory Body of the project has proposed the preparation and the publication of a manual for Latin American Artisanal Fishermen. This would be perfectly possible to achieve, once the due authorization of the CFC can be provided.

Pescadores de Tamiagua



El sabor natural del Golfo

Un lugar privilegiado

La laguna de Tamiahua se encuentra sobre el Golfo de México, en el norte del Estado de Veracruz. Esta laguna es un sitio RAMSAR, lo que significa que se encuentra protegida por la convención internacional sobre humedales en pro de su conservación y de su uso racional.

Las comunidades de pescadores que viven alrededor de la Laguna de Tamiahua, desde la ciudad de Tamiahua hasta Tampico, administran la pesca de forma coordinada, cada cual teniendo su zona de capturas.

Los productos pesqueros de la Cooperativa "Pescadores de Tamiahua" provienen de la zona 7 de la laguna.

La comunidad pesquera de la Laguna de Tamiahua utiliza únicamente equipos de pesca selectivos asegurando una pesca responsable, con un fuerte compromiso ecológico y especies con los tamaños requeridos por el mercado.



Los pescadores artesanales de Tamiahua han transmitido sus conocimientos de padres a hijos por generaciones, lo que garantiza un suministro confiable de productos.



Productos

La cooperativa “Pescadores de Tamiahua” posee 350 lanchas para realizar la captura de las diferentes especies presentes en la laguna.

Los productos pesqueros más abundantes son:

- ✎ ostiones (*Crassostrea virginica*)
- ✎ camarones
 - camarón café (*Penaeus aztecus*)
 - camarón blanco (*Penaeus setiferus*)
- ✎ jaibas
- ✎ pescados: cabezudo, cascarón, cazón, corvina, chavela, chucumite, churro, lebrancha, mojarra, negrilla, pargo, róbalo y sargo.



Calidad

Los artesanos-pescadores de Tamiahua cuidan con esmero al camarón, al ostión, a la jaiba y al pez para que lleguen a su restaurante con la máxima calidad.

La calidad de los productos de los pescadores de Tamiahua está garantizada por:

- ✎ La excelente calidad de las aguas de la laguna
- ✎ Una jornada de pesca de pocas horas
- ✎ La conservación de peces y camarones en hielo desde el momento de la captura
- ✎ El establecimiento de un plan HACCP en la cooperativa
- ✎ El transporte inmediato de los productos a los clientes

Tiene el sabor de
Tamiahua y de las
aguas del Golfo



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La cooperativa “Pescadores de Tamiahua” cuenta con el apoyo de INFOPESCA y del Fondo Común de Productos Básicos en su proceso de modernización de actividades de procesamiento y de control de la calidad.

