

ECUADOR

OYSTER CULTIVATION CONTINGENCY MEASURES TO FACE CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC

Presenter

Cooperativa de Pescadores Artesanales «Virgen de Regla»

Description

Among the main challenges farmers face due to climate change, there is the increase of the seawater temperature and the increase of the marine currents, which then lead to a prolonged presence of predators (i.e. Chancho, "Perforador") in the sea, with increased mortality of oysters.



Unfortunately, also the spread of COVID-19 had many negative impacts on the production of farmers: it mainly caused a decrease in their work activities and sales, thus causing the lack of maintenance of cages, which consequently caused loss of production due to lack of cleaning, which attracts predators, and also loss of sales of oysters' production.

In order to cope with the pandemic and to try to mitigate its negative impacts as much as possible, farmers had to carry out the work activities with all the protection measures, but also to carry out the labor activities with less personnel to cover their remunerations in this crisis, as well as, to do cleaning activities to combat predators and maintain future production of oysters for sale. Moreover, several methods were implemented to sell the product through internet with social networks and telephone communication in general.

Because of COVID-19 farmers experienced a drop in sales, but they are looking for the best measures to maintain their product. It united them as workers, making them more supportive and it strengthened their social relations. The pandemic helped farmers realize that together they can overcome their needs and survive such a difficult situation.

Results

- Maintenance of activities with fewer resources: mainly cleaning of cages to lower the chance of attack from predators.
- Several work methods to maintain and preserve the production that will be kept after the pandemic.
- Diversification of sales channels.



Climate smartness

The major challenge is the increase of oyster predators, which is due to climate change. In addition to promoting climate adaptation, the initiative has supported producers to access new markets, thus improving their incomes. The Cooperativa de Pescadores Artesanales «Virgen de Regla» initiative includes a set of practices that contributes to Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) main objectives of adaptation and productivity through income increase.