

# Fishermen benefited by seeding mollusks

Project was implemented with support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Written by Fredy García/Collaborator of La Prensa Gráfica journal. 17/03/2010

“Collecting mollusks in mangroves was difficult, as we were only able to harvest three dozen clams.” **Dolores Hernández, small scale fisherman**

Small scale fishermen in the Bay of Jiquilisco, in Usulután, have been benefited by the project for the production of mollusks, initially raised in laboratory. This approach is being promoted in El Salvador by JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). “Harvesting mollusks by hand in the mangroves was very difficult, as the most we could harvest were three dozen in a considerable period of time. This makes the work scarcely profitable, because we are not able to cover the economic needs of our families,” said Dolores Hernandez, project beneficiary.

## Beginnings

The Project began about 10 years ago, with the construction of a laboratory located on the Island of La Pirrayita. The Project activities began with early trials for the reproduction and production in laboratory of mollusks (clams, and several other varieties of shellfish). The project was completed last year, and technicians from the Japanese mission withdrew from the project. However, the Center for Development of Fishing and Agriculture (CENDEPESCA), of the Ministry of Agriculture took over operations of the laboratory.



Today the project has a number other installations on the small pier in Puerto El Triunfo. The Pirrayita Installations is being negotiated with a number of educational centers, including the **University of El Salvador**, where the researchers may continue their activities.

## Areas of work

In the Puerto Ramirez mangroves, reproduction of mollusk is underway in an area of 2,200 square meters, divided into 12 parcels measuring 10 by 20 meters. Clams and several varieties of other shellfish are growing in these parcels. The life cycle of these mollusks is of 2 years to be ready for sale and consumption. There is no difference between the naturally occurring clams and the Japanese clam cultivated in laboratory. The variety of mollusk is providing opportunities for small fishermen to improve their incomes.

In addition, there are sub products being produced by a group of women fishers who are working in a cooperative, located within a collection point.

