



REBYC Highlights

Reduction of Environmental Impact from Tropical Shrimp Trawling, through the Introduction of Bycatch Reduction Technologies and Change of Management (REBYC)

October 2006

Success story from Nigeria


Bycatch reduction project paves the way for re-certification

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One of the largest shrimp exporting countries in Africa, Nigeria lost its certification for export to the US market a few years ago. Its neighbouring country, Cameroon, has no certification to export to the US market and lost its certification to the EU recently. Since then, Nigeria has been afraid also to lose its final market, the EU. Therefore Nigeria has been very anxious to obtain re-certification for the market in the USA, with the thought that an additional benefit of such a certification also might reinforce the existing export to Europe. The certification to the US market is directly linked to the correct use and implementation of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in the industrial shrimp trawl industry.

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Filming on documentary for Earth Report starts

Television Trust for the Environment (TVE) starts filming in Mexico and the Philippines for the documentary video on "Reducing the impact of shrimp trawling on the marine environment". The documentary explores new fishing practices, approaches and technologies to reduce bycatch and decrease negative impacts of shrimp trawling, as well as partnerships and collaboration to put an end to unsustainable shrimp trawling practices. The 22-minute documentary will be included in TVE's Earth Report series which is broadcast via BBC World television. 


National coordinators meet in Manila

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The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines is hosting the Global National Coordinators Review Meeting on 8-15 October 2006. The meeting will be attended by representatives from the twelve participating countries, the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).



Global Coordinators Meeting in Mexico, 2005.

The meeting will be an occasion to exchange knowledge on results achieved in the project and develop joint regional work programmes. The twelve participating countries are Indonesia and the Philippines in Asia; Cameroon and Nigeria in West Africa; Bahrain and Iran in the Gulf Region; and Colombia, Cuba, Costa Rica, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela in Latin America and the Caribbean. 

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In November 2004, the Nigerian Institute of Marine Research, NIOMR, and FAO conducted a successful workshop on fish bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) in Lagos in relation to the REBYC project. In connection with the workshop, it was agreed with the partners in Nigeria to make an active plan with the goal of obtaining re-certification for Nigeria for export to the USA. The American inspection team is scheduled to perform inspection in September 2006.

At the workshop in Lagos 2004, an inspection revealed what the US inspectors also previously had realized, that although TED use was mandatory in Nigeria, these were not adopted by the industry. Moreover, the rigging of the TEDs inspected made it clear, that the industry did not have sufficient knowledge on how to rig and work with TEDs. When used, the TEDs caused unacceptable shrimp loss for the industry of up to 50%. This is a general fault throughout those developing countries who legislate for the use of TEDs. TEDs are complicated technical devices that need training and guidance in order to work and be adopted by the industry. TED legislation alone will not work because few countries have the capacity to perform the necessary control at sea.

Thus, the main problem is really to educate the industry on how to use TEDs without shrimp loss, and to facilitate cooperation between industry, fisheries research institutions and law enforcement. This has been done in connection with the REBYC project in a number of countries, and more TED workshops are planned.

In relation to the Nigerian plan for re-certification, an international workshop was conducted at the flume tank in Hirtshals in February 2006, where TED experts and industry representatives from Nigeria, Mexico, the Philippines, Venezuela, Madagascar and France worked together with the leading experts from the USA. During the test trials in the tank where the international experts worked closely as a team, new knowledge was generated on the rigging of TEDs and good connection and understanding of mutual problems was created between the US experts and those responsible for the TED implementation.

In March 2006, a large TED workshop was conducted in Lagos with more than 150 participants from the industry, research and enforcement. The focus was on TED implementation and also the requested issue of Vessel Monitoring System (VMS).



Tuning of TED-units at the NIOMR net loft.

One full day was allocated to practical, technical instruction on TED rigging in the large net loft of the Nigerian Institute for Marine Research (NIOMR), where large trawler companies hung up their TED units. The units were carefully adjusted by our Australian consultant, Steve Eayrs, in front of a highly interested audience, and tested the next day at sea with perfect results. Also the Nigerian flume tank was started up and was used to demonstrate the TED geometry under simulated towing. After this workshop, the industry has responded very positively.

Very recently, I received a letter from Dr. Bolu Solarin, leader of the section for fishing gear at NIOMR and technically responsible for the REBYC program in Nigeria, about the conduct of the inspection and their expectations of a favourable outcome.

Another encouraging development from the REBYC project is the collaborative program between Nigeria and Cameroon that has been recently put in place. For a long time, vessels from Nigeria and Cameroon have been fishing in the same waters, but nothing has been done towards collaborative management of their fishery resources. Now the scientists and fisheries departments of the two countries are working together and the collaboration is increasing and getting better. 🦐

REBYC is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This publication serves as a venue for sharing results, experiences and lessons from the field. For more information, visit our website at:

<http://www.fao.org/fi/gefshrimp.htm>