

Peixes, Pessoas e Agua

Brazilian Testimonies and Interviews – August 2006

Interviews taken and transcribed by Branden Beatty,
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Included with document are two CD with 300 photographs of people and region as well as a CD with the complete interviews in Portuguese.

Each of the interviews was different, but some of the people had the same viewpoints, because of their similar place in the communities and in relation to the project. For example, the project partners in Belo Horizonte, like those who represented IBAMA, IEF and the Military Police, were noticeably remarking on the project from a different standpoint than the fisher people. Because of this factor, and for organizational purposes, the interviews are separated into four groups and summaries sometimes precede the interview to prepare the reader for the content. The interviews are grouped into the following four categories; Organization Partners, Facilitation Partners, Project Workers, and Project Stakeholders. For simplicity, the transcribed questions and answers were condensed.

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1.2 Arley Ferreira, Military Police Captain, Belo Horizonte

What changes has the project made in you institution and in your personal life?

In my personal life, the project has opened me to reflect and I can see that the military police need to better the form of fishing control and also better the relationships between fisher people and the military police, but we have still not objectively reached any significant changes in our institution. The changes are very slow.

What small changes have already happened in the military police around the rivers?

Today we have a better form of fishing control and our relationship with fisher people is better, but it is so slow and we need to advance more quickly. Some proof we have of results is that recently we made a decree to better the humanitarian efforts of the military police, which will lead to a better relationship with professional fisher people.

What do you think the ideal situation is in the future and what are the necessary components to achieve this?

A process to recognize fisher people as professionals and to give them conditions to integrate forces with the military police. Police and fisher people need to join forces as citizens of the river to protect the environment and the resources.

Have you seen any changes in the military police today that have affected the fisher people? Is there more respect?

Without question, the project PPA has contributed to a more humanitarian environment in the fishing communities. The fisher people are showing a larger capacity to organize and they have more interactive abilities and they are also showing an effort to better relationships with military police. The project was well worth it because the necessity of our people in terms of development is very large; our people suffer consequences until today since the colonization of Brazil. Diminishing the suffering is what PPA is doing. The project has left us with a very positive impression.

1.2 Hugo Godinho, Alexandre Godinho, UFMG

Hugo and Alexandre reflected a lot on the region and the problems of the country. They spoke little to the actual project, claiming that their role was very small and that the project was more of

the social area, where they have little experience relative to biological sciences. They claim that their major participation in the project was concerning the fish mortality.

With your experience with the project and your support, what are the principle results of the projects that you have seen so far?

I think the big result was to bring together institutions that were really separated. IBAMA, IEF, the military police, the fisher people. I think the participation was extremely important and thanks to the work of PPA, the participation and action was achieved. This was the greatest conquest of the PPA project. One problem that has to be realized still is the problem of the lack of some sort of fish registry.

In your perspective do you think that the project was long enough?

I think it has to be longer. With 3 years, change can happen, but with 20 years, much more can happen. I think the teaching of technical things is a very important achievement of PPA. Thirty years ago we did not have a scientific base in this state and the first project that came here had difficulties achieving objectives because of the lack of technicians. In reality, 3 years is very little because still there is no technical capacity of the partners who must carry on with the lessons that PPA brought.

Is PPA one of the first to work in the social area in fishing communities?

I believe so, I have not heard of other projects working in this area. Today there is not one institution in Minas Gerais that could do the same thing PPA is doing and I have not encountered one institution that could continue the work of PPA.

What is the ideal situation for the future?

Brazil is a developing country and we are very poor. Science in this area is only 30 years old, we do not have a strong foundation and so I think we need more technicals, more educated people working to better the way we live. Brazil has little resources and we cannot just develop one area, we have to develop together, all areas. I think we are losing in the environmental area. We have grown so much in the last 30 years and it is hard to keep up with the growing population, but the number of scientists is much larger than it was 30 years ago.

1.3 Marcelo Coutinho, IEF

Please tell me about how you have been involved in the project?

In 2000, I came here and met Yogi, there was a problem between the state and professional fisher people. The river is unable to support the same amount because of the pollution. Today, we are working for better planning, we are trying to start a stock assessment of fish and also better the system of professional fisher people registration. Today there are many fisher people with professional fishing licenses, but they are not professional.

What changes has the project stimulated in your institution and you personal life?

I have met many people and I have had the chance to go to Canada to see how the fish resource management is there. This has bettered our vision here. I think that the projects that WFT is putting forth in the communities, like the smoking fish program are great, there are positive and they are orientating the fisher people to be our partners so that we can work together. Our role here is to conserve diversity and sustain the resource for future generations.

What are the principle results of the project up until the day?

There are many, for example the death of fish has brought about unity between groups. Votorantim, the municipality, IEF. Everyone is working together because the objective is to resolve the problem. Also, the water shed model and the education that has resulted from it. Also the opportunities that have resulted for those in the fishing communities.

Do you think that this project will help a lot in achieving necessary components for an ideal future?

I am sad because this project will end this year, I think it is early. What happens is that when you are developing a project like this, it is hard to continue with all objectives. Sometimes things get abandoned. However, things have changed a lot because people have another thought about fisher people and community members no longer see fisher people has predators. The work has been very good for the community, but who will continue on with it? There are many people who want to continue with the implementations but where will the resources come from?

1.4 Miguel Ribon Jr, IEF

“I work in Minas Gerais in every part of the management of fisheries and agriculture.”

Miguel was very specific about the bureaucracy of his institution, for more information I suggest listening to the recorded interview.

What problems do you think PPA was hoping to address?

There are problematic laws that were made by IBAMA while other contradictory laws exists that were made by IEF. I agree with many of the laws that IBAMA has set forth, concerning these I do not complain, these are federal decisions, but I feel that IBAMA knows little about the lives of fisher people and some laws they shouldn't be making. PPA was able to open up a dialogue between IBAMA and IEF to resolve some of these issues.

What changes has the project stimulated in our institutions and in your personal life?

Personally, I was able to experience Canada and the way they manage their programs and projects there. I had the opportunity to see Vancouver and Toronto and we got answers to hydroelectric questions, environmental questions, policing questions. When you talk about fisheries management, you are not working with people, you are working with classes, and this is very difficult. The number of fisher people is very many and the number of people as human resources in IEF is very little relatively. ...We are forming a network that began in Tres Marias. WFT, Municipalities, Environmental Organisations, Votorantim, IEF. IBAMA is not very present, but IEF and WFT have always been present.

Can you tell me some positive things that have resulted in the region and community because of the project?

The question of information. There was once so many questions but no one was answering them, now there is always someone who can answer them. The project for me has been interesting because it has been able to get environmental organisations to teach professional fisher people and also influence people to fish legally.

Do you think that since the project began, there is more policing?

Yes, I think it is interesting the way Canadians work. It is much like a dentist taking a tooth out of a patient. You pull and pull until finally the tooth comes out, Brazilians are more observers, we are more patient, but you guys, with your ways and your competence, are very capable of influencing change.

1.5 Roberto Carlos Rodriquez, Secretary of the Environment, City of Tres Marias

What changes has the project stimulated in your institution and you personal life?

In my life the project has changed everything, my perception primarily. I have experienced other ideas and I want to apply them but we do not have resources to do so. The institution has changed because today we make decisions with the input of many people. Today we meet with the community more and that way we know what they feel. Simply, the management of the community has changed as well. Participation has changed and this changes everything. These changes are very noticeable. Even with the ending of this project, the project will continue in the hands of other managers, though we are lacking resources to make management attainable.

In your perspective, what are the principle results of the project?

I think the smoking fish initiative is one that is very clear and very important. This is one of the strongest results and I believe that the program will have conditions to grow and be successful. The community participation is also a very strong result, before the project there was no network for mobilization, but today, one phones another and before you know it you have a large meeting organized. Another result is the question of gender; very important work as well.

What do you think of professional fishing in the Sao Francisco river today?

Professional fishing has changed a lot. Prior to the project we saw them as having problems but we never where able to accommodate their problems. Today, fisher people have a voice and an important point of view and their problems are being heard. I also think that the perspective of other citizens has changed concerning fisher people.

1.6 Roberto Messias, IBAMA, Belo Horizonte

What changes have you already encountered in the region because of the project?

I think that people have begun to form connections because of the encounters that have resulted from the project. When people talk they find a direction that they can all agree on and this is very gratifying. They have been able to agree on what is good for them and for the fish and this is a great achievement. Teaching people about the future and how their actions and the actions of others will affect the future is also another achievement of PPA. People no longer just think about how many fish they are going to catch in that day, they think about their impacts as well. I think the project has to be extended a little while because it is still very young.

What are the principle results have you experience in the region?

The first is the network that has been formed between authorities and the fishing community and the new knowledge that the fishing community has of environment and species that they encounter everyday. They are many more people today who understand why they have to preserve their environment and the river because of the work of PPA.

...We are working to arrive at an agreement between the state that will lesson the confusion of the contradicting laws that exist today. We hope to have this problem resolved by the end of the year.

2.1 Wesley, Secretary for the Superintendent of the Ministry of the Environment in Tres Marias

What is your role in the project?

I had a more involved role earlier on, but it became smaller as time went on. I think the project has met many expectations in the community I hope that it will be sustainable in the future. The help and support of the municipality and other project partners in the area can serve to continue the activities, but it is a shame that some Brazilian partners have not been able to give money; I think the project has been shortened because of this.

I think the network of cooperation is helping to find a solution for the problem of the mortality of the fish. People now have a focus to find solutions. The participation has dropped a lot, but those who are participating want to really find solutions.

So you think the main change in the community is the network that the community has helped to create?

Absolutely, the project has entered an immobilization part. Now, when someone calls on people, everyone participates. The project has entered into a stage of trust with the participants.

Have you seen a change in the lives of the fisher people?

I can't speak clearly to this because I do not work very close to the fisher peoples. But I believe that there has been because now the fisher people activities are supported. There are always conflicts in collectives but I believe the conflicts have diminished.

Do you think the perspectives of the community members concerning fisher people have changed?

I believe so because the community members are seeing that the fisher people are taking action and have potential to grow.

Are there any areas that the project could improve in?

This question would require a larger evaluation to be answered but I believe that the project entered into an area that was very deficient and there was a lot of integration that was required in the beginning between the three main groups in the project; UFSCAR, WFT and the fisher people. Because of the difference between the groups, it was very hard in then beginning to integrate.

2.2 Thais Fernanda Leite Madeira, Gender and Race research

“In the beginning the role of the women in the encounters and workshops was secondary, they always seemed to be left on the side. Because of this, I wanted to find out what was their role in this society.”

Why do you think this work is as important in the same way that the environment interests PPA?

Because the equality of men and women is a theme discussed across the entire world. Here it is even more visible because women do not have public policies here in Brazil.

Therefore, your work will help to empower women in the community?

Yes, because the direction of my formation was to contribute to my community. It is the formation that I was given by my mother. It is the small things that have to be supported in the lives of women in order to give them value in their lives.

Tell me some things that you are doing to give value in the lives of women while working for PPA?

I am working with the smoking fish program with women who I have already worked with in the project in the past concerning community reporting and leadership. These women have advanced greatly, but now they no longer introduce themselves as the wife of “so and so”. This change has still not happened in Ibiai. Women there still live under the shadow of their spouses, but, recently I was able to distribute cameras to women along the river between Pirapora and Tres Marias to give value to their actions. These women have never been included in the project nor have the women in Barra do Guaicui because there has never been a strong project presence there.

Are you seeing a difference in the actions of the women in the community?

It is a slow process because it is a social process. Today you can see that the project has influenced their future perspectives. They have rights and can access future education. Working with this project has opened avenues for them to work and study and dream about other things. In many cases some women are leaving the house alone for the first time without asking their husbands, to attend meetings and learn. Today, you can go to the house of women who have taken part in the project and notice a strong difference between those homes and the homes of women who have not taken part in the project concerning the individual freedom of participating women.

Do you have any comments about the ending of the project?

I particularly feel strongly about the ending of the project because we are only now beginning the gender work. These questions could have been asked earlier on in the project, but now with the project ending in November, we have to work on the same paths we laid out in order to arrive at a final project. I think one more year of the project would be good.

2.3 Barbara Johnsen, Project Organizer, Tres Marias

In your perspective, what are the great changes that you can see as a community member?

For me, the greater changes were in the participation of the fishing sector with the environment politicians and with fishing politicians. We have problems with fish death and fisher people are now organizing a way of discovering the cause for this problem. This international relationship made possible this conversation between the authorities and individuals experiencing these problems. This network was constructed by PPA.

Why do you think Brazilians need an international group to help with these problems?

I have always thought that a third person helps when there is a bad conflict between two parties. Canada is very well thought of worldwide in conflict resolution, it isn't just an international group, because it could be the Swiss, but they aren't as well known for conflict resolution as Canada.

Do you think that since the beginning of the project, people in this community have learned more about the environment?

No, I do not think it is because of the project. I think the project has done a lot in the fishing sector, but Tres Marias had already completed a lot of work in environmental education. For minor groups, I think there has been total changes, like student groups, youth groups; here we have already planted something, but in the municipality I don't think there has been much change.

In Bairo Rio, what do you think the community would recognize as a major change in their community?

I think that there, community development is strong. The smoking fish program is very strong. PPA has done many workshops and courses that people now go to together. I think community development is going to lead to economic development.

Do you think that gender work is relatively new area of work in international projects like PPA?

In general, yes. It is total new that gender and youth are now being recognized as a relevant part in these types of projects. PPA suffered because the Brazilian side did not provide the funding they promised, so we probably will not achieve the level that we hoped to achieve because we lacked many technical resources. Because of this, the question of gender may get enough resource focus, if we had more funding, perhaps gender good have been focused on earlier.

Do you think that everything we have learned during this project will help future projects in realizing their objectives?

I think that because of lack of financing, it seems like the project has lacked a piece. I have certainty that if the period of the project was extended a bit, we could add this piece back to the project. Certain governmental organisations were not present really, and the gender question is only arriving at the end of the project.

Do you think that the objectives of the project were constantly changing during the project?

I think this is a positive thing. For example the death of fish was something that no one expected, and it brought an opportunity to help, and also the smoked fish program was never an original objective. Small things do not change the reality of an entire region between here (Tres Marias) and Pirapora. The perspective of 26 000 habitants won't change because someone came for a month to teach a workshop, but workshops do change the reality of some people, they change totally.

If there existed an ideal reality, how do you think we could achieve this reality?

I have always understood PPA to be a journey and never completely focused on exact objectives. It is a construction of relations and this has happened regionally because of the project. It has been a spectacular reality that PPA has brought.

2.4 Ceica-Maria da Couceicao Bezerra Correia, Project Worker, Tres Marias

What changes can you see in your community that were a result of the work of PPA?

All the question of environment, survival, dignity, these questions interest me deeply. This project here in Tres Marias has had totally positive activities and results here in the community. The project has been able to raise the level of marginalized professional fisher people. People did think that they were a little bit better than fisher people, they had all kinds of presumptions., but I think the project has lightly changed the perspective of non-fisher people in regards to professionalism of fisher people.

Do you think the fishing community perceives some kind of change in their own perceived treatment?

Perhaps from my perspective I see only the positive, because I have perceived in this region that fisher people were always thought to be destroyer of the environment. However, I have perceived a small change in this.

Do you think the projects could have done better in any area?

For me, in the city, in the region, we lack a lot of education. Education is the base of any system. What the project could have done, it did, but the project was limited because it was a continental problem and sometimes funding was a problem. This project was a helping hand for professionalism and dignity. ...The project did change its objective and it was confusing. The change marked new directions for the objectives; it is true that in the middle of the project it started asking other questions. The project incorporated some tasks that were extremely large and I think the project could have had more effect if it made its objectives into stronger focal points. But this is not negative, just a different perspective because I do know that this project also has a flexible intellect and so it was capable of many tasks.

How do you begin a project like this without thinking you are going to change your objectives?

Almost all the projects I have had experience in change their focal point. However, I have observed that the public always thinks that the project is performing things that were planned and strategized. It is hard to make a bureaucratic project in a country like Canada and then apply it in a country like Brazil.

Do you think that this information that you are learning will help other projects? How did you think you could use this information to better other future projects?

I sincerely believe that we can pass on to others all kinds of research. We can trade information and experiences to better both parties and future projects. I think we have to do this.

Do you think that the Brazilian partners gave the same amount of effort since the project began?

No, I do not believe that the Brazilian put in the same effort in helping the project continue. My evaluation is positive and I believe that the project has done something amazing. Canadians coming to Brazil and sitting at the table of Brazilians and speaking equal to Brazilians. People receive Canadians like family today, this is a grand Humanitarian victory. The capacity to enter and make groups and give structure is such a victory and no one can take this away from PPA.

2.5 Erika de Castro, Consultant, WFT, UBC

Can we talk a little about your experience with these types of projects? How do people continue on with the same passion that the project installed in the community?

This was one of the first points that I mentioned when I was more engaged with the project. We should prepare for the sustainability of the gains by getting the municipalities involved. In this project the Brazilian partners have been very weak, normally in a project of this nature you have a strong network of local groups that are going to carry on. In the case, the local partners are very few, the only thing there is are the leadership in the communities to continue on to sustain the gains. I wouldn't say that this is a total failure, but we have noticed that this is not enough. Because of this, our last effort has been trying to involve the local university because you have to have a back up in terms of volunteering time in projects like this once they end. This was not a mistake that WFT did, I just think there was no plan B or even a plan C. You have to seek out partners to be by your side and take your place when you leave.

What about resource funding after the project ends?

Well, this is a catch 22, we are talking about a bilateral project and about an intervention that has a start and a finish line. This was never intended to be a substitution for a local indigenous initiative. What the project offers is ample number of initiatives, which can be started and nurtured during the period of the project and then carry on by themselves. Thinking there is an obligation to continue on with the objectives of the project after the project defeats the purpose of a development project. If we are going to carry on with financial support it defeats the purpose, we are not a bank. We had problems with Brazilian

partners, but this was more a problem for Local Brazilian partners and the Canadian partners in determining who are potential partners in Brazil.

With your experience in projects such as these, would you say that this project has found itself in a difficult place because there are so few resources left for fisher people?

No, No. I think the main thing that a project can realistically expect is change of attitude and how people understand their own realities and how they understand their capability of changing their realities. This should always be an aim of project like these and this project achieved this. There were so many changes, people think differently about the river, about themselves, about their own potentialities. It is an incredible thing, people feel differently about their lives because of the project, and you can see that they are fighters, so we are giving them tools. "You can't make good bread without good flour". People know who they are supposed to look for when there is a problem and they know there are so many more opportunities. People, women are establishing a kind of network that is empowering because they now know that they have opportunities that they weren't aware of before. This empowerment was a parallel project; we toss around ideas and some take and some don't.

Are objectives in projects like this concrete or are they more floating?

You can never start any project without knowing clearly the kind of objectives you want to achieve but your objectives cannot be concrete in form, they cannot request quantity, for example "I intend to have X number of women attending school", this is unrealistic. Brazil does not have enough wheels from government institutions to support the initiative of women. Our job is also to seek out other sources of funding for this community once we are gone, and I think we will achieve that with the SOLTEC group from Rio de Janeiro.

Would you say that one of the achievements of this project was to pave the way for other projects, can other project learn from this project, is their an infrastructure for that?

Hopefully, for example the project in Santo Andre is already being requested to help other communities in developing the same kind of project in their communities.

Do you see World Fisheries Trust and CIDA continue partnership here in Brazil?

Yes, if WFT and CIDA or IDRC were not to continue together, there would be a great loss in intellect, and there is so much need and so many opportunities. We have been talking about developing a project with WFT and maybe another Canadian partner with group of Brazilian who are interested in artisanal fisheries. WFT has accumulated such immense knowledge in terms of knowing what is happening in Brazil and establishing networks.

The main goal was to try together with our main partners, who are the colonies, to together try and design alternatives for them. We should concentrate, from now on, on exploring to see if we can get the colonies the minimum support they need so that they can continue on. Laws are another thing to try and attempt to change, it is unrealistic to think in such a short period of time an international project could change laws. Exploring and discussing and discovering new knowledge is the only way that we can actually do anything.

2.6 Raimundo Feirreira Marcus, President of the Federation of Fisherman in Minas Gerais

In your perspective, what are the most important changes in this community caused of the project?

I think that the workshops and forums that give fisher people free will to speak their problems with governing bodies was very important and it helped bring about change. These opportunities gave fisher people the realization that they can discuss their problems and they are equal to those who are working in governing organisations.

Do you think that fisher people perceive changes in their life?

I think that the fisher people are receiving benefits and better conditions of life but they do not have any perception that it is the project that is bringing these things. Some fisher people have the understanding that the project is to thank for the dignity and respect that the authorities now give the fishing community.

Do you think fisher people are more open than they were?

I think fisher people suffer a lot and sometimes they do not know what is around the bend. I think that some fisher people have not began working on any effective part in their community or their jobs and they may not yet feel very close to the project, but, even at the end of the project, we really have the ability to unite the fisher people and maintain that unity.

What do you think about teaching fisher people technical things?

I think that a change in habit is hard, the people do not have this life expectation, just like when taking a fish out of the water it would not survive. The same applies to fisher people. I think that fisher people are not hurting the environment, because fishing is one of the oldest professions in the world.

Do you think today fisher people are more able to talk to the authorities?

Yes, because today we have been able to meet with these organisations. By meeting together, we have been able to start dialogue and there is more respect between the two. The government needs to speak to its people, today both side are more involved.

Do you think this community has the will to continue with the implementations of the project?

I think that in reality, in the expectations of the project we haven't achieved all the desires of the project and there is a larger objective that we still hope to achieve. I think we need to do more projects to continue with the hopes of PPA. We haven't received all the help from the Brazilian government that we hoped for, so this has not helped in our desire to achieve specific objectives. We are seeing that after 3 years of the project, the Brazilians side is not participating as much as hoped, but the international side has not lacked any will or initiative since the beginning, and this is an inspiration. I think that we won't see the end of the project because we are in a phase where the Canadian side will leave, but we still have the will to learn more.

2.7 Renata Viera, Coopertec

"We are trying to development the human and social side of fisher people and help each fisher person grow socially and financially."

What kind of opportunities are you giving people?

We are going to build a center for work and acquire equipment for work. We are helping women and kids by teaching and helping them learn to take care of the river, and take care of the fish and learn the ways of fishing.

Do you think that the presence of PPA will help you in your initiative?

Yes, a lot because this coopertec project is now entering an area that is very structured as a result of the work of PPA. I think many fruits will result because of the structure already here. I do not have very much information about the current project objective in PPA but I think entering into contact with them before they complete their work would be good.

Do you think that there have been strong results because of PPA in the last 3 years?

Absolutely, the relationships between groups and between authorities has improved greatly. Fisher people and these organisations used to be enemies but today they are friends. This network is a result of the work of PPA.

3.1 Ana Maria Carvalho da Silveira Neves, SAAE, Pirapora

"We do not have a complete sewer system here in Pirapora., so this is why it is important to teach people about run off and that is why we built the watershed model for the Pirapora region."

Is the watershed model being shown to people?

No, today it is still being worked on, but it is almost ready. We would like to choose a group of students who can teach people about the watershed model. There are things we still have to do.

What is the ideal solution for the problem of runoff in the region?

A complete sewer system is required and a water treatment place but unfortunately resources are few and therefore we have to continue with the methods we use today and try to diminish the amount of harmful run off that enters the river by teaching people about the affect they can have.

3.2 Patrick Nasimento Valnim, SAAE, Pirapora

“I worked with the youth to create the watershed model. Now, the youth are equal to our partners here in the community, we learned together.”

What is the most important change that you have experienced in the community?

The youth participating together with SAAE; I never thought we would be working together with some of the partners in the project and I think it is because of this project we will be able to maintain a great network.

What is the ideal situation in the future and how will you achieve this?

I think we have to teach as many people as possible about the watershed model and the nature of runoff. The more people that know about it, the better. We will have to travel with the watershed model and teach people about it to achieve this.

Do you think that there are other areas were the project could have worked more in?

I think working more in the schools would be a great way to get information out and it would really work to teach large groups all at once. This is what we hope to do with the watershed model.

4.1 Antonia Ramos Magalhaes, Community Member, Ibiai

What are the greater problems that exist in the community?

There exists great social problems and a lots of unemployment, today at 80%. A reason for this is because of the dependence on the river that so many people have.

Do people who loose their job in the community turn to the river to survive?

Yes they do. Sometimes they are not registered, but today laws aren't always followed. Most of these people do what they have to do to survive and I understand this. I remember during the time when the fish were dieing, a boy came to my door to sell fish and he said “Wow, I saw so many fish dead on the river” and I said, “boy, if you want to sell fish, you can't be telling people this”.

When was the last time that fish were dieing?

2 to 4 months back. In August they started and they stopped in March.

What do you think will happen to Ibiai if the fish continue to die in the area and people loose their fishing jobs?

I think that if the government doesn't start focusing on Agriculture in Ibiai, and give incentives for agriculture, then Ibiai will become bad. People have no reason to begin agriculture and so they don't.

What would you do if you came across many dead fish in the river?

I would try to have meetings and denounce this problem. I think people know how to discuss these problems but no one knows how to resolve these problems. I think this project is very good for Ibiai, it has helped bring a solution.

What do you think about the death of the fish, do you think it comes from up river?

Yes, you have to think of everyone on the river. You cannot just think of yourself because there are other people suffering the same thing as you. If the dead fish are coming from above, chances are that problem is above as well.

What does the community outside of the fishing community think of fisher people? Is there prejudice?

No, there is no prejudice. We are united in the community, but sometimes people ask “why do you fish?”. A boy came to my home with 2 kilos of tiny fish, well under the allowable size, and I asked him why he was selling all these small fish and he said he had no other choice, so I bought the fish. When we have no other choice, we have to this sentiment of helping people.

4.2 Aparecida Dutra Gomes (other women), Smoked Fish program, Tres Marias Aparecida spoke a lot about the process and technique of smoking fish.

Do you think that smoked fish will enter a new market successfully?

I think it has to because smoked fish can only be sold by the kilo and will have to enter another market, perhaps in another community in another type of market.

Before this type of preparation did you already prepare fish?

I have already worked with fish, I work everyday with fish. I fry, make cake, anything you want I do with fish.

What changes have you witnessed in your community since the project PPA started?

I have noticed that the potential of the project will only be realised if “I” want it to. For example, there are many people in the community but not enough participation because of lack of interest. I was invited by Sr. Norberto, but not everyone who is invited participates.

Do you think that participating in the project has been a good experience?

For me yes, because I want things to change and get better.

Why do you think people are uninterested?

Lack of interest and money, money, money. Many won’t go because they don’t think they will make any money, but I have interest in growing so I attend and participate.

What did the research say about what people think of smoked fish?

I just glanced at the paper but, 362 people tasted the fish, one person said it was good, some did not know, but the majority said the fish was great.

How much will one gram of smoked fish cost?

More or less 16 reais/kilo. This fish will be more for people with more money.

4.3 Bruno Santos de Bouros, Camila Karen de Brito, Tiago Santos, Rejane Santos Rodrigues, Debora Aparecida Atunes Pereira, Community Reporters, Youth Association, Pirapora

...Debora Aparecida Atunes Pereira

I was able to go to Canada because of my work with the community reporters, but it was not a trip from the tourist point of view, it was to see some activities in Canada that we lack here, that perhaps after getting to know we could begin here. One important thing that I saw was in Vancouver, the way that the youth fight for funding, this taught me a lot about what we need in the community.

...Everyone

What do you think about professional fisher people?

I think they have to continue, because it is how they survive. I think that principally in the Sao Francisco river, there is a lot of pollution that the government has to give attention to and this affects fisher people.

People sometimes think that fisher people are lazy and have such a good life. But sons and daughters of fisher people are now looking for other work because fishing isn't strong enough to support more professionals. A lot of people complain, but when the weekend arrives, everyone wants to go out and eat fish, and how do you think they would be able to eat this fish without fisher people.

Do you think that PPA has already helped to change the negative perspective some people have concerning fisher people?

I think that the project has united the fisher people which gives them more credibility in the community.

What has been the larger change in the community that you have noticed?

I think that youth now have pride to say that they are the son or daughter of fisher people, this is quite a difference.

I think that people are more sensitive to the question of professional fisher people because they see that PPA is a respected organization and it means that with the support of a respected organization the group must be important and professional.

It has changed the lives of people who have taken part in the project too. For example, the youth group has learned a lot and we have taken action. For example we speak out when we see someone polluting the river, and deforestation along the river banks. There are very few people who do not know of the work that PPA has done.

I think that the work of PPA has helped out the community greatly because it has invested into the youth and teachers of the community. It will be a shame when the project ends.

4.4 Dona Maria Jose, Community Member, Tres Marias

Dona Maria spoke mostly about the processing of smoking fish, but she struck me as someone very interested and keen on learning and explaining what she had learned as a result of attending the smoking fish workshops.

4.5 Emanuel Leite, Community Member, Tres Marias

"I support the women and youth workshops; the project has given the youth more of an imagination and interest in their community"

Have you perceived a change in the fishing communities in the live of fisher people?

It has bettered a lot; people are taking more of an interest in their community and in their livelihoods. The participation of Canadians gives people interest in participating. The smoked fish program as well, and I am noticing that people are taking part who I would have never thought would be involved.

Do you think the the fishing community has a better relationship with organizations like the municipality, IBAMA, IEF and the military police?

Absolutely, the municipality for sure, not much with IBAMA and IEF, because they rarely attended encounters. I think that the presence of the military police has bettered a little, but a lot of the problems are because of the division problems between municipalities of Tres Marias and Bairro Rio.

Do you think that the people of the community are more conscious about the environment?

I think that the project has brought a lot of information and lessons about the environment and people have been exposed to it and already I see a change in the amount of garbage in the river. When you have group like PPA or a University come to Tres Marias, we learn so much and it is very important for us.

4.6 Jose Vira Souza da Silva (Ze de Nos)

Ze de Nos was my guide for many days throughout Minas Gerais, I learned the most from him about the lifestyle of fisherpeople.

“Yesterday, I was watching a report where various people wanted to legalise the cutting of wood in the Amazon, there are many more people who want to use the environment than preserve it.”

Do you think people who live closer to nature have more respect for the environment?

You need an education, it has to start in the first year of life. People have fear about changing their life as well. There is also a lot of difficulty for municipalities and other governments to take people who are destroying the environment and give them other options.

The Sao Francisco river, today there are many things that are produced by the river but what are we going to do about the degrading environment?

4.7 Josemar Alves Duries, Colony President, Ibiai

What changes have resulted in Ibiai since the beginning of the project in 2003?

The first fundamental impact for fisher people was the creation of the colony in Ibiai. We have also done a lot of courses, traded a lot of experiences with other communities and formed networks with other people experiencing the same problems.

Do you think the people of the fishing community know more about the environment today than before the project?

With certainty, because before we lived sort of isolated and we did not have information, but now we work with an environmental concern, we try to fish sustainably; we take, but also preserve the resource.

What do you think about the results of the project?

I am concerned about the ability of this community to continue with the implementations after the project is finished. What we could have learned we learned but I do not think the project reached the heights it hoped for; the project was very short relatively. We will try to do the best we can and I think the fishing class have learned a lot and only benefited from the project.

4.8 Luciene Anton Santos da Silva, Smoked Fish Program, Tres Marias

Luciene spoke mainly about the process of smoking fish.

Tell me a little about smoking fish?

“It has been a very good experience and I hope this fish will be accepted well here in Tres Marias. This is the only experience I have had with the project and I have learned so much since I started. We will pass the fish into market and it will do well because the fish are delicious. I have enjoyed the experience because it has united the group.”

4.9 Maria Jose Alves Costa, Fisher Person, Community Reporter, Tres Marias

How have you already participated in this project?

I am a professional fisher person, I fish beside my husband. In this profession, when you have a project like PPA, many workshops come to help and teach us very positive things. We have had a co-management workshop teaching us how to work together. We have also been trained how to be community reporters.

I have heard a lot of people complain and worry that when the project finishes, the participants will be unable to continue on, but I believe we already have the lessons and we have the skills. We have been taught and we now have the information we need.

I would like a community radio for our community. My objective is to work to establish this radio. I will not stop with this idea and I always am talking and asking for one. When communication is better, the community can grow, this is my goal.

4.10 Noberto Antonio de Santos, Maria Jose de Santos, Members of Fishing Community, Tres Marias

“I am working and collaborating with the project the most I can because I think the work is positive for the region, I have much faith in the project and I have made many relations because of my participation.”

Do you think you will continue with things like smoking fish after the project ends?

We hope to but it is a little expensive. Also a problem could be the prime material which would be the fish but we have that so it will be possible to continue with these initiatives.

What changes has the project stimulated in you community and you personal life?

Our expectations of the smoked fish coop is very high and I think that it will be achieved by the time the project is completed.

What do you think is the most important thing that professional fisherman need to achieve here in Brazil?

Professional fishing here is very large but it is becoming difficult because sediment from deforestation and lack of sewer systems in cities have affected the fish population. The PPA project has helped a lot but there are political problems here and therefore it is difficult to develop without political change. In Brazil, technical workers do not have active work because usually politicians are not interested in their work and will not support them. In Brazil as well, industry control the politicians and industry and business do not want to help it seems.

What would be the ideal situation in the future and what components are necessary to achieve this?

I think that one of our worries is that the project work will not continue after the project ends. We have to work with fish, people and water, but we worry that things will return to the way they were because fisher people do not have the ability to open the doors to the government and industry. We will try to continue with what we have learned but it will be difficult without Canadian help. However, we will always teach and pass on what we have learned and that is important. The time of the project has been short and still there are so many people who do not know about the project.

What changes in professional fishing has resulted in the region since the project began?

I do not think there has been any changes in the region but there are been stronger relations built between the fishing community and authority organisations. We are still working in so many areas, for example marginal lake problems; there are many things that the project could have worked on that maybe it did not have time to reach. One of the better achievements that the project has had is bringing together environmental groups with the fishing communities and teaching us how to take care of our environment.

Do you think that Votorantim and other industries are treating the environment differently because of the project?

I think they are because the project brought the BBC, which brought the spotlight onto the region.

4.11 Osana Alves Costa, Youth Association, Tres Marias

Have you already seen results in your community?

Yes, I think the community is learning how to work together and learn that changes are not just for one person or one group but for everyone. I have participated in many workshops and I have participated in management, capacity and community reporting workshops. I feel that we are not very well structured and so we may have problems continuing on once the project ends.

4.12 Sergio Leite, Gislane Leite, Tunia Leite, Jaqueline Leite, Aviea Silva, Youth Association, Tres Marias

This group of youth took me to a church in Bairro Rio to the completed watershed model and told me all about it. We also spoke about the barriers of getting into university.

“This is a watershed model for us to use to educate people about the environment and what happens to the run-off in this region”

How do you intend to educate people using this watershed model?

It is difficult because few people will have access to this work and few people have interest in the environment, especially adults. For kids, it is easier because they are already in school and therefore it is

easier to teach them, but every Sunday at the end of Church the watershed model is open and many people look at it.

What other parts of PPA have you participated in?

We are also community reporters and we participate in meetings and the network of communication. I think this watershed model and other activities of the project have already helped out so much in the community because of the investments it has made in the people who are involved.

I think that the world we live in today, the fishing world, is not worth entering for us youth because of how little the actual resource can support today.

How have you changed your habits as a result of what you have learned?

I never put toilet paper in the toilet anymore. We are much more aware of what happens to waste and this has affected our actions.

What do you think about the next steps with this watershed model?

We should put together a project about the watershed model, we should work more in the city teaching about the environment. Maybe in a school using the watershed model as a tool to teach. We need to seek out investments though, because it will cost money to do this.

Do you have any more comments?

Our greatest worry is what is going to happen when Sarah goes away, because we have done so many great things, but who will help and organize after the end of the project. We do not have support like the Canadians have in this country. We will continue on, absolutely, but it will be difficult.

4.13 Matilde Mendes Mesquita, Community Member, Tres Marias

Matilde spoke mostly praise for the project and the opportunity that it has given her and her community.

“I like and I have interest in everything that is related to the environment. If I had the opportunity I would have like to study this in school, but I never studied this, though I feel PPA has given me a chance to really participate”

What are the greatest changes in the region that you’ve already witnessed?

I can see that the project has already helped the fishing community so much. The fisher people have always had problems but today they are stronger and more able to talk about them because of the voice PPA has given them.

What do you think of the life of a professional fisherman?

I have seen a great change in the life of a fisher person, they are now more recognized as professionals. Today fisher people have more pride as well. The next steps do not depend only in the actions of the fisher people, they depend on the authorities and the community working together.