

FACTORS OF WELL-BEING OF ARTISANAL FISHERMEN FAMILIES AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN A MID-PACIFIC COASTAL VILLAGE OF COSTA RICA

Ruth Dolan, St. Olaf College

Advisor: Vivienne Solís Rivera

Some of the poorest communities in the world consist of small-scale fishermen. The community of small-scale fishermen in Tárcoles, Costa Rica is unique because its members were able to organize into a cooperative in 1985. Because of its distinct form of organization, many case studies have been carried out in Tárcoles to compare it to other fishing communities in Costa Rica and around the world. In 2011, Costa Rican Institute of Fishing and Aquaculture (INCOPECA) recognized an area near Tárcoles as a marine responsible fishing area. After the recognition, large-scale fishing boats were no longer able to enter the area from the shore to 15 meters of depth in addition to other management actions proposed by the local fishermen. For this study, the small-scale fishermen were interviewed about their family history with fishing, factors of well-being, and opinions about the responsible marine fishing area. The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the fishermen feel as though the marine responsible fishing area has improved the fishing situation and provided economic and social benefits to the community. Overall, the study shows the fishermen perceive that the fishing, social, and economic situations in Tárcoles have improved since the recognition of the responsible fishing area in 2011, however, the social conditions in Tárcoles have not improved to the same extent as the marine life.