

IMPACT OF COASTAL SHRIMP FISHING IN WOMEN AND YOUTH LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD SECURITY IN TÁRCOLES, COSTA RICA

Lucas Judson, St. Olaf College
Advisor: Vivienne Solís

This article focuses on how the renewal of the Eastern Pacific coastal shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*) resource has effected the socioeconomic lives and perceptions of women and youth in Tárcoles, Costa Rica, highlighting issues in conservation, food security, and traditional gender roles. It also examines the connection between fish resources in artisanal fishing communities and knowledge and perceptions of university students in the capitol of San José, Costa Rica. Interviews were conducted in Tárcoles with women and youth and at the University of Costa Rica with students. It was found that shrimp is a vital resource that is used to both feed families and improve economic situations of fishermen and women. Female respondents reported feeling content and comfortable as women and while most still fish with the company of a man, the culture does not require that a man be present. At the University of Costa Rica, many students had at least a basic awareness of social and economic realities in rural fishing communities. Knowledge about artisanal fishing from UCR students was found to be very limited, with many respondents believing that artisanal fishing communities have no impact on large cities in Costa Rica. Education efforts should be expanded to include more information on rural culture and livelihood in the country.