

## Minister Promises Brazil Will Soon Become a Big Fish Exporter

Contributed by Alana Gandra  
Sunday, 14 December 2008

Brazilian Minister of the Special Secretariat for Aquaculture and Fisheries, Altemir Gregolin, considered the fishery sector balance positive this year. He pointed out two indices to prove this evaluation: greater consumption and sales (around 15% a year) of fish products in supermarkets over the last three years and the rebirth of the fishing industry in the country.

According to Gregolin, this year, 35% of the Ministry of Agriculture federal inspection services for the construction of new industrial plants were in the fishery sector.

"This had not happen for at least 20 years. That is, the moment is very positive, it is favorable, the government bets on that and is investing in the development of fisheries and aquaculture."

Gregolin recalled that one of the guidelines of the 2008/2011 Plan for Sustainable Development of Fishery and Aquaculture is the Policy for Territorial Development and Fishery and Aquaculture, launched in November, to stimulate the prospecting and the consumption of fisheries.

The target is to increase the national production of fisheries from 1.050 million tons to 1.430 million tons, and the consumption of fishery from seven kilograms (15.4 lbs) per person per year to nine kilograms (19.8 lbs) per person per year.

The minister said that Brazil, with almost 200 million inhabitants, has enormous potential for expansion of fishery consumption. "We already have fisheries to supply the domestic demand. What we need to do, apart from expanding consumption, is to stimulate production."

He explained that the objective is to develop the Brazilian potential, which may be translated into water in abundance, noble species and favorable climate, as well as the government decision to support the sector, which is a source of riches and of generation of income and labor. "That is what we are betting on."

The plan forecasts investment of 1.75 billion Brazilian reais (US\$ 748 million) by 2011. This represents a fivefold increase when compared to the period from 2003 to 2007. And the plan also includes the transformation of the secretariat into the Ministry for Fisheries, whose project is in progress at the National Congress. The establishment of the Embrapa Aquaculture and Fisheries is also forecasted.

"We will have a respectful institution developing research in aquaculture, coordinating the national research system. And

this establishes conditions for the transformation of the fishery productive chain, as Brazil did when it transformed the beef, pork and chicken productive chains, which are now competitive worldwide."

Gregolin showed certainty that Brazil may soon become a great exporter of fisheries. Shipments should rise from 1 million tons to at least 20 million tons of fishery products.

"This will place Brazil among the main producers of fisheries, alongside China, Peru and Chile," he said. For this, according to the minister, it will be necessary to increase the fishing of deepwater fish, like tuna, and to expand the production of fish products, on land and in the sea, "where Brazil has greater potential".

ABr