Honduras: fruitful efforts

The following letter from Jorge Varela of the Committee for the Defence and Development of Flora and Fauna of the Fonseca Gulf (CODEFFAGOLF) was published in Late Friday News nr. 53, a publication of Mangrove Action Project (MAP). In 1999, Jorge was one of the seven environmental and human rights activists to receive the Goldman Prize 1999. In his letter he expresses:

"Tegucigalpa, Honduras, December 8, 1999

Good News From Honduras!

With so much satisfaction, we send you an affective and cordial greeting. We are about to end the year 1999 and want to share with our friend and partner organizations, the happiness that we feel in having attained the following achievements:

It has been possible to diminish the coastal wetlands' destruction in the Gulf of Fonseca.

This year there have not been murders of fishermen related to the shrimp farming industry.

The Government of Honduras has officially approved the preservation of seven ecosystems of coastal wetlands within the Gulf of Fonseca as RAMSAR sites. The Gulf of Fonseca has been placed as "Ramsar Site 100".

A national front for the defence of sovereignty has been formed, and through this formation, the sale of our coastal marine territory to foreigners has been stopped, pending consideration of plans to protect the interests of native communities and the environment.

As a Christmas gift, after 12 years of struggle, on December 2nd, the National Congress of Honduras declared as conservation zones more than 757 sq.km of coastal wetlands (mangrove forests, lagoons, islands, biodiversity, local communities...).

These achievements have been reached because of the moral support that friend and partner organizations such as MAP have facilitated, and because of this our triumphs are shared with you.

Thanks, thanks a lot.

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