

A new life as aquaculture producer



J.F. Mexilhões

In Portugal, as in several other European countries, the global economic crisis had severe impacts on employment and many people lost their jobs. João was one of them. Previously employed by a public administration, Axis 4 helped him start a new life as an aquaculture entrepreneur.

Seizing this difficult situation as a challenge, and harbouring a life-long fascination with the sea, João approached the Oeste FLAG with the idea of creating an aquaculture company, producing mussels on hanging ropes, a technique new to the area. To develop his project he partnered with a retired fisherman who helped him navigate the fisheries and aquaculture sector and advised him throughout the project. The FLAG supported João to apply for the necessary funding to acquire the equipment needed to initiate activities. It also helped him develop a network with experienced entities in the area. João is now starting his project, placing the first ropes at sea and the first production of mussels is expected for early 2015. If everything goes well, he is counting on a production of 160 tonnes a year.

OESTE FLAG, PORTUGAL

RESULTS (AFTER 1 YEAR):

- > João has created a job for himself and a part-time job that capitalizes on local fisheries knowledge
- > SME-led innovation in local aquaculture (rope grown mussels), in partnership with research institute
- > Good practice exchange with other aquaculture producers in Portugal

SUCCESS FACTORS:

- > Involvement of an older and experienced fisherman to gain respect in the community
- > Unique and innovative character

TOTAL PROJECT COST: €82 749.51

- > EFF Axis 4: €37 237.28
- > National / Regional co-financing: €12 412.40
- > Other/ Private: €33 100

Project promoter

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