

2nd Pathways to a Sustainable Future: Day 10

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July 13, 2016



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We focused on two projects today to experience more of what they do here in Leda and help with their future plans. They have 80 thousand hectares of land and the majority of the land is nature. We had a piece of land in which we had to clear out all the trees and weeds using axes and machetes, which was difficult work. The soil is very hard and tough which made it challenging to dig out the big trees. It took a lot of teamwork to pull and dig the tree stumps out and to clear the piece of land. We got soaked with sweat from working so hard! This land takes a lot of patience to work with and can only be cleared by working with a group of people. By the end we had a lot of branches and weeds piled up which we put on fire to get rid of since there is no garbage system here in Puerto Leda.

Our second project we did after lunch which was a very exciting and new experience for all of us! We all gathered in a line by the fish farms, put on life vests, and gloves to go in the water and gather all the fish. Each person had to hold on tightly to the net and make sure that it stayed close to the ground while in the water. After we lined up with the huge net along the side of one of the fish ponds, we slowly went into the pond which was shoulder deep for many people especially in the middle. It took a while to get all the way across the pond with the net because we had to make sure we didn't leave any opening for the fish to swim under, which was difficult because the water was all murky. As we got close to the other side we could feel the fish moving around more and more until we were close enough to go in with smaller nets and scoop out or grab the fish to put them in a big bin. It was very exciting for all of us to experience and be able to take part in. This was a high-adrenaline activity that left us all very dirty and muddy, but happy. We all were eager to catch all the fish, and it was so satisfying to throw the caught fish into the bin on the truck!

After putting all the fish in the big bin, we went to an area with long tables to wash and gut the fish for storing. For many of us it was something we had never done before and was definitely something to remember. We all got the chance to gut some of the pacu fish and at the end, we took a group picture of each of us holding a fish, our prized position!

Today gave all of us a taste of fish farming and clearing the land for agricultural use. We got filthy dirty but it was all worth it and very enjoyable!