

Project Title: Support for sustainable coffee production of organised small coffee farmers in the municipalities of San Cristóbal and Tamahú in Alta Verapaz

Location: San Cristóbal, Tamahu, Santa Cruz, Tactic of Alta Verapaz

- Production 5,200 bags
- Coffee varieties Caturra, Catuaí and Bourbon
- washed processing
- classified as HB, SHB

Project Partners: Integrated Rural Development Project ALA 94/89 (EU/SCEP) ACTASA (Association of Coffee Farmers Tamahú/San Cristobal) International Coffee Partners GmbH (ICP)



Project Duration: 4,5 Years;
from 10/2001 to 04/2006

Project Value: EURO 1,174mio
of which ICP contributes 46%, other contributors are Project ALA of the EU, SCEP, GTZ and ACTASA.

Problem Description: Coffee is merely the only cash crop for the small-scale farmers in the project area. It is grown under shade on plots from less than 1 ha up to 3 ha with very limited agricultural inputs achieving only rather moderate yields. As a consequence the standard of living is low in particular in the remote areas of San Cristobal and Tamahú. Farmers neither participate in added value generating processes nor in the commercialisation of their coffee. The processing infrastructure for producing washed coffee at the level of cooperatives is weak and needs to be overhauled.

Project Approach: Based on activities of a development project of the European Union the intervention of ICP has been designed to support ACTASA to make efficient use of the washing stations and to produce and commercialise high quality parchment coffee. These stations are converted to environmentally friendly units by introducing recycling and treatment of washing water as well as promoting composting of coffee pulp. The project provides material and skilled expert knowledge whereas the benefiting farmers contribute with unskilled labour to realise required constructions. ACTASA is assisted in establishing a sound and transparent commercial operation. This includes administrative and organisational support as well as training in the organisation of the coffee flow, the adequate control of coffee quality and thorough business management practices. Sustainable coffee production techniques are promoted among the farmers and initiatives of

diversification of agricultural production supported through the provision of inputs such as planting material for forestry activities and ornamental plants. Several woman groups are strengthened and trained, specifically in market oriented production of maguey handicraft raising their families' income. Contacts have been established to governmental and non-governmental funds and projects active in Alta Verapaz to identify synergies and to cooperate on coffee related as well as socio-economic activities.

Beneficiaries: About 500 mostly indigenous coffee farmers and their families are beneficiaries in a direct way from the project while being organised in groups and the two associations ACTASA and ASILCOM. Further inhabitants of the target area will benefit mainly through improved marketing channels.

Project Coordination: EDE Consulting

Project Office: San Cristóbal, Alta Verapaz