

Fishing as survival strategy of urban resident of small cities at the delta of Amazon River

Ed Carlos dos Santos Valota¹, Sandra Maria Fonseca da Costa²

¹Universidade do Vale do Paraíba – UNIVAP

edsjcgeo@yahoo.com.br

²Universidade do Vale do Paraíba – UNIVAP

sandra@univap.br

The economy of floodplain is based mainly on fishing, logging, ranching and agriculture. Its vegetation of flooded forests and weeds in lakes provide food and shelter for aquatic and terrestrial life, as well as natural pastures. There, in the lowland areas, survive about 1.5 million inhabitants, known as riparian zone, making use of its resources. Some of the residents living in urban areas, especially in floodplain sites, have a rural way of life due to the practice of extraction, featuring the country in urban and vice versa. Several Amazonian cities are located in the forest, located along of large rivers and drained by numerous small streams. In the city of Ponta de Pedras, located in the Marajó Island, in the Amazon Delta region, a riverside rural population triggered the Local Authorities in order to occupy a space in the city, because their children needed to have access to school and families also needed access to basic infrastructure (water, electricity and sewerage). More than a third of the urban area of the city of Ponta de Pedras sits on floodplain area bordering the river Armazém and Marajo-Açu River. This place is known popularly by Carnapijó neighborhood, however, this information is not official but a name made by the residents through a popular consensus. The Carnapijó neighborhood has riverside town characteristics more intensively, for instance its streets connected to the river (ending or going against it), than other places of the city. This place has its own dynamics connected to the Amazon region's, influenced by tide dynamic. The urban occupation of this neighborhood has grown over the years; however, the characteristics of the local residents have also changed, little, but changed. Earlier people who were living there were fishermen. Currently, many residents occupying the floodplains do not live from fishing but use

their condition as a survival strategy dependence on government benefits, and public or informal jobs. We could understand that the practice of fishing can be used both for consumption and for trade, purposed. In this sense, the goal of this research is to identify whether this culture is still used as a way of life in this floodplain neighborhood, as a main activity, since the younger population has interests in play urban work. The floodplain residents of the Amazon region survive on low income, are haveally depend on government benefits, deprives of jobs, and we believed they would have no choice but to rely on the practice of fishing to supply financial and food needs partially. Forms were applied to Carnapij6 households, because it is in a very characteristic floodplain environment. The households are houses typical of wetlands (stilts). Because the dynamics of river water, we applied forms only in parts of the district where there is existence of wooden bridges (stowage). We applied forms to 111 urban households located at this neighborhood in 2014, corresponding to more than 10% of 981 urban households counted by Census 2010. This form permitted to verify the socioeconomic profile (gender, age, origin, job and source of family income), among others. Considering the total household interviewed, 62% of head of the family are female and 53% are between 18 to 40 years old. Almost all respondents or at least someone in the house is fisherman, 83% of people working with this activity. This result characterizes the prevalence of the practice of fishing among residents of Carnapij6 neighborhood. The main source of income for 30% of this population is the government benefits, such as bolsa fam6lia and seguro defeso. Fishing, defined by 27% of households, is considered the second important source of income and only 74% of families earn up to one minimum salary. Most of the head of household of Carnapij6 neighborhood, 79%, are born in Ponta de Pedras Municipality, and 32% of this total were born in urban areas, while 47% are born in the country side (rural areas). Although some residents are younger and predominantly have urban life, we can understand that whatever they have more access to modern conveniences, greater possibilities of studies and jobs. They live in urban centers, still carry with them the fishing culture, which was inherited from their ancestors. It was identified that 82% of these fishermen have this practice in order to complement their food menu and 59% have some boat (big or small boat, canoe, "casquinho", etc.) to assist in fishing. Others,

who have no boat, and are depend on the loan or lease the ship from relatives and friends, or fishing in the surrounding area. It is understandable that these fishermen have no boat, and your monthly income is very small, which makes the purchase of a boat or even a motor difficult.