

# Productive inclusion in the perspectives of the members of the Fishery Sector Chamber of Tocantins

A inclusão produtiva nas ideias dos membros da Câmara Setorial do  
Pescado do Tocantins

*La inclusión productiva en las ideas de los miembros de la Cámara Sectorial del  
Pescado de Tocantins*

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**Abstract:** This article examines the concept of productive inclusion in the perspectives of the members of the Fishery Sector Chamber of Tocantins (CSP/TO). The research involved the collection of official secondary data from organs and institutions linked to CSP/TO, along with semi-structured interviews with its members. The results indicate that an effective action of productive inclusion requires the implementation of an overarching public policies to organize fish farmers into formal or informal groups. This aims to ensure the production of safe and quality fish, using new technologies, public and private slaughterhouses, complying with sanitary standards, and adding value to the product. This approach seeks to meet the demand of the consumer market, allowing fish farmers to reinvest their profits in new production cycles, contributing to improvements in income and family quality of life.

**Keywords:** rural development; fish farming; public policies.

**Resumo:** Este artigo analisa o conceito de inclusão produtiva nas ideias dos membros da Câmara Setorial do Pescado do Tocantins (CSP/TO). A pesquisa envolveu a coleta de dados secundários oficiais de órgãos e instituições vinculadas à CSP/TO, além da realização de entrevistas semiestruturadas com seus membros. Os resultados indicam que uma ação eficaz de inclusão produtiva requer a implementação de políticas públicas abrangentes para organizar os piscicultores em grupos formais ou informais. Isso visa garantir a produção de pescado seguro e de qualidade, utilizando novas tecnologias, abatedouros públicos e privados, atendendo às normas sanitárias e agregando valor ao produto. Essa abordagem busca suprir a demanda do mercado consumidor, permitindo que os piscicultores reinvestam seus lucros em novos ciclos produtivos, contribuindo para melhorias na renda e qualidade de vida familiar.

**Palavras-chave:** desenvolvimento rural; piscicultura; políticas públicas.

**Resumen:** Este artículo analiza el concepto de inclusión productiva en las ideas de los miembros de la Cámara Sectorial del Pescado de Tocantins (CSP/TO). La investigación involucró la recopilación de datos secundarios oficiales de organismos e instituciones vinculadas a CSP/TO, además de la realización de entrevistas semiestruturadas con sus miembros. Los resultados indican que una acción efectiva de inclusión productiva requiere la implementación de políticas públicas integrales para organizar a los piscicultores en grupos formales o informales. Esto tiene como objetivo garantizar la producción de pescado seguro y de calidad, utilizando nuevas tecnologías, mataderos públicos y privados, cumpliendo con las normas sanitarias y agregando valor al producto. Esta aproximación busca satisfacer la demanda del mercado consumidor, permitiendo que los piscicultores reinviertan sus ganancias en nuevos ciclos productivos, contribuyendo a mejoras en los ingresos y la calidad de vida familiar.

**Palabras clave:** desarrollo rural; piscicultura; políticas públicas.



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the literature, as well as in the realm of public policies, there is no consensus on the meaning of productive inclusion; nevertheless, it can be synthesized as a process that leads to the formation of citizens integrated into the world through work, with stable income generation and autonomy, especially associated with market dynamics (Sousa; Niederle, 2021). Aligning with this concept, as defined in the Organic Law of Social Assistance (LOAS), productive inclusion projects are aimed at populations in situations of socio-economic vulnerability (Brazil, 1993).

Thus, they feature financial and technical support for innovative initiatives, providing them with the means to enhance productive and managerial capacity for activities that promote food and nutritional security, quality of life, environmental preservation, income generation, and socio-productive organization (Brazil, 1993).

Actions for rural productive inclusion, in turn, not only offer support opportunities for collective enterprises in rural areas, focusing on agricultural production for the proper insertion of their products in formal markets but also contribute to the quality of life in urban areas. This is achieved by reducing migration flows to metropolises and the consequent overload on their housing, health, sanitation, transportation, among other variables (IBGE, 2015).

From this brief literature reflection, it is evident that the theme of productive inclusion is polysemic, as confirmed by some authors (Sousa, 2021a, 2022b; Sousa; Niederle, 2021). In this study, the analytical reference was Sousa's (2021b, p. 210) concept to guide the results and discussion of this research. Sousa proposes that rural productive inclusion is a "process that articulates all links in the production chain, especially by highlighting the integration of farmers into the market dynamics through access to public policies for rural development". Therefore, effective productive inclusion of farmers occurs when there is integration and involvement of farmers in all links of a particular production chain, resulting in their access to formal markets, especially institutional ones, through the support of agri-food public policies.

In this context, the aim of this article is to analyze the concept of productive inclusion in the ideas of the members of the Fishery Sector Chamber of Tocantins (CSP/TO).

The research began with the collection of official secondary data from CSP/TO member organizations and institutions, mapping strategic information to support the promotion of productive inclusion actions for existing fish farmers. Additionally, primary data were collected with the technical support of semi-structured interviews conducted with CSP/TO members.

## 2 THE THEME OF PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION IN THE NATIONAL POLITICAL AGENDA

The characteristics of socio-productive vulnerability in populations from developing countries have led to the proposal of productive inclusion initiatives focusing on rural activities. In Latin America, for instance, the poverty rate in rural areas reached 45.2% in 2018, compared to 26.3% in urban areas. Similarly, extreme poverty reached 20.0% in rural areas, contrasting with 8.4% in urban areas. The situation is even more critical for indigenous and Afro-descendant populations (Cepal, 2022). In Brazil, although there has been a significant reduction in the rural poverty rate from 71% to 29% between 1990 and 2014, this percentage is still high and has increased in recent years (Sousa; Niederle, 2021).

The achieved Brazilian indicators are a result of a combination of factors related to how the actions of the state and, primarily, public policies influenced and were reinforced by civil

society actors. In this regard, rural Brazil represents one of the spaces where the effects of this social construction are most noticeable, leading to changes in the rural population (Van Der Ploeg; Ye; Schneider, 2022).

In the 2000s, government initiatives supporting productive inclusion stood out with the release of non-repayable funds from the Social Fund of the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES). These initiatives focused on activities with relevant positive externalities that could not develop spontaneously based on market forces (Pinho et al., 2021).

With the establishment of the Secretariat for Articulation for Productive Inclusion (SAIP) in the federal government structure in 2010, productive inclusion actions became part of numerous types of public policies. Initially implemented by the Ministry of Social Development (MDS) to designate projects for job and income generation, and later by the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) as one of the strategic axes of the Brazil Without Misery Program (Sousa, 2021).

Therefore, productive inclusion is present in various instruments of national public policy, including agricultural, food and nutritional security, environmental, social and science and technology areas, territorial, social, rural, economically solidary, sanitary, institutional markets, among others. Examples of national policy inclusion initiatives include the Sustainable Development Program for Rural Territories (PRONAT), the Territories of Citizenship Program (PTC), the National Program for Strengthening Family Agriculture (PRONAF), the Crop Insurance Program, BNDES Social Fund for productive inclusion support, the Brazil Without Misery Program (PBSM), the Program for the Purchase of Food from Family Agriculture (PAA), the National Sanitary Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) with the “Productive Inclusion with Sanitary Security” program, the National Program for Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (PRONATER), Geo Web territorial mapping of programs attended by the National Food and Nutritional Security Secretariat (SESAN), the Family Agriculture Insurance (SEAF), the Family Agriculture Price Guarantee Program (PGPAF), the National Rural Housing Program, the National Family Agriculture Seal, and the purchase of food from family agriculture and their collective organizations for the National School Feeding Program (PNAE) (Sousa, 2022a).

Another notable action with a focus on productive inclusion is the National Program for Innovation and Sustainability in Family Agriculture, created in 2014 through cooperation between the Ministry of Agrarian Development. The agenda includes 169 targets representing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It provides concrete recommendations for areas such as food security, health, sustainable energy, production and consumption, among other topics associated with productive inclusion. This allows for proper collaboration between governments and civil society. Of the 17 SDGs, 7 are directly related to activities supporting productive inclusion, including: 1. end poverty in all its forms everywhere; 2. end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture; 6. ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; 10. reduce inequality within and among countries; 12. ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; 13. take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; 15. protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

These examples demonstrate how the theme of productive inclusion has been ingrained in the Brazilian political agenda since the early 2000s, despite controversies among policymakers and other actors in academia about what this concept entails (Sousa, 2022b).

### 3 WHAT HAS BEEN STUDIED ABOUT THE PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION OF FISH FARMERS

In order to combat socioeconomic inequalities in Brazil, the contribution of public policies to the social construction of markets is of utmost importance. Opportunities created through institutional acquisitions, such as the National School Feeding Program (PNAE) and the Food Acquisition Program (PAA), stand out among the beneficiaries of the family farming category, which includes family fish farmers. In this context, the Family Agriculture Fish Marketing Support Program was created in Tocantins in 2013, aiming to bring together different institutional competencies to promote the insertion of fish from family farming into public policies supporting marketing (Sousa, 2022a).

Opportunities for promoting the productive inclusion of small rural producers have received special attention in recent years from institutions operating in the field, as a strategy to improve the performance of producers within the production chain. Thus, initiatives have been included, ranging from the establishment of associative organizations of producers, aiming for economies of scale, to initiatives for product differentiation through seals and certifications.

Another form of inclusion can be exemplified by actions of technology and knowledge transfer for the strengthening of family fish farming in the municipalities of Divinópolis and Abreulândia, in the state of Tocantins. Through stimulation and support to producers, it was possible, over a significant period, to investigate and analyze their problems, strengthen the development of fish farming, and make decisions related to the sustainability of the activity in the region. The result of this research project developed by Embrapa Fisheries and Aquaculture in the state of Tocantins pointed out the need to prioritize the development of associative models for small fish farmers, aiming for better inclusion in the formal market (Pedroza Filho; Barroso; Flores, 2014).

As another tool for productive inclusion, we have the solidarity economy, which can be exemplified by work carried out with small fish farming producers in the municipality of Itaporã-MS. The goal was to identify and analyze the professionalized management of solidarity enterprises, specifically regarding accounting procedures adopted in the activity. The support of the Incubator of Social and Solidarity Technologies (ITESS/UFGD), which develops actions in collective enterprises through an educational and dialogical process structured on the principles of the solidarity economy, promotes aquaculture and fishing in the Citizenship Territory of Grande Dourados/MS. It aims to set goals for the fishery chain, seeking improvements in the living conditions of the involved communities, encouraging the growth of fish farming in this region to generate employment and income (Santos, 2014). In the same perspective, in another study conducted by Medeiros et al. (2020), it was found that family fish farming in the Northeast of Pará, managed dynamically, enables sustainable rural development, particularly when associated with the principles and practices advocated by the solidarity economy.

Another form of productive inclusion is the pursuit of added value in products, especially those with geographical indication, complemented by traceability, focusing on reducing information asymmetry and restoring consumer trust (Mendes; Oliveira, 2020). For example, organic certification, as a way to apply the management plan for participatory certification in rural family units, represents an activity with great potential for diversifying production, adding value, and consequently improving income for small producers. However, there are obstacles such as implementing proper management and obtaining the organic seal for them to achieve such inclusive results (Lourenço; Gazolla; Schneider, 2023).

In general, the aforementioned studies reflect the different possible ways to articulate productive inclusion actions as a means of reducing the poverty of excluded fish farmers and increasing their integration into markets.

#### **4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The presence of different interpretations of the term “productive inclusion” generates distortions in the formulation, implementation, execution, and evaluation of public policies related to this theme, as described by (Sousa; Niederle, 2021). The lack of clarity identified in the literature can result in the implementation of uncoordinated actions, which hinders productive inclusion without effective reach.

In the state of Tocantins, various actions for the productive inclusion of family fish farmers were reported in a study by Pedroza Filho, Barroso and Flores (2014), where strategies of productive inclusion are understood as initiatives capable of improving the performance of producers within a production chain, either through increasing the added value of their products or by entering new, more lucrative markets.

In this context, with the aim of analyzing how the Fishery Sector Chamber of Tocantins (CSP/TO) is contributing to promoting actions for the productive inclusion of fish farmers, the field research reached 18 out of the 22 CSP/TO members, equivalent to 81.8% of the respondents. They promptly responded, demonstrating enthusiasm and engagement throughout their participation in the research.

The representatives who were not included in the research provided personal justifications, such as recently being appointed as representatives of the institution in CSP/TO and not yet being familiar with the topics discussed in the meetings, in addition to lacking knowledge about the PDP/TO. The absence of responses from these members did not compromise the analysis of this research, considering the proportionality of each social group analyzed.

In recent years, the theme of “productive inclusion” has been frequently discussed in the context of rural development, both in the Brazilian political agenda and in academic-scientific studies. However, as mentioned earlier, there is no consensus on its meaning. This lack of consensus was evident in the responses of the 18 interviewees, revealing the absence of a uniform conception of what constitutes productive inclusion. However, since these interviewees are members of a group that has been meeting regularly in CSP/TO for four years, there is a noticeable trend for them to be somehow aligned with the theme of productive inclusion of fish farmers in Tocantins. The responses were synthesized in Table 1 with the aim of analyzing the perceptions of each member.

Table 1 – Synthesis of the main ideas about what the interviewees understand by productive inclusion of fish farmers

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Understanding of productive inclusion</b>
1	Secretaria da Agricultura, Pecuária e Aquicultura (SEAGRO)	Integration into the production chain
2	Secretaria da Fazenda (SEFAZ)	
3	Secretaria de Indústria, Comércio e Serviços (SICs)	Social innovation, cooperative management

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Understanding of productive inclusion</b>
4	Secretaria de Meio Ambiente e Recursos Hídricos (SEMARH)	Social innovation, cooperative management, public policies access, and subsidies
5	Instituto de Desenvolvimento Rural do Tocantins (RURALTINS)	Social innovation, cooperative management, public policies access, and subsidies
6	Instituto de Natureza do Tocantins (NATURATINS)	Social innovation, public policies access and subsidies, Integration into the production chain.
7	Agência de Defesa Agropecuária (ADAPEC)	Public policies, access and subsidies, technological innovation
8	Fundação Universidade Federal do Tocantins (UFT)	Social innovation, cooperative management, public policies access, and subsidies
9	Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (Embrapa Pesca e Aquicultura)	Inclusion in Markets
10	Faculdade Católica do Tocantins (FACTO)	Social Innovation, Integration into the production chain.
11	Universidade Estadual do Tocantins (UNITINS)	Inclusion in Markets, cooperative management.
12	Agronorte – Indústria de Rações	Technological innovation, Integration into the production chain.
13	Associação Bom Peixe	Inclusion in Markets
14	Casa do Piscicultor	Social and technological innovation, Integration into the production chain.
15	ATECK- Consultoria e Representação para Piscicultura	Social and technological innovation, Integration into the production chain
16	Frigorífico Piracema	Technological innovation, Integration into the production chain.
17	Aquicultura Fazenda São Paulo	Technological innovation, public policies, inclusion in markets
18	Bonutt Fish	
19	Superintendência Federal da Agricultura no Tocantins (EFAP-TO/SAP)	Technological innovation
20	SEBRAE – Tocantins	
21	Federação das Indústrias no Tocantins (FIETO)	Social innovation, Integration into the production chain
22	Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Rural (SENAR)	Technological innovation, public policies, commercialization, social innovation

Source: Research data (2024).

In Table 2, a synthesis of the main ideas of productive inclusion that permeate the different social groups of the interviewees is presented. These data were compiled from 18 interviews conducted during the field research of this project, involving four distinct social groups from CSP/TO, active participants in regular meetings.

Table 2 – Synthesis of the main ideas about what the interviewees understand by productive inclusion of fish farmers presented in social groups

	<b>Social Group</b>	<b>Main ideas associated with productive inclusion</b>
1	Public Institutions of the State Government	Social and technological innovation, public policies, and integration into the production chain.
2	Research, Technology, and Innovation Institutions	Social and technological innovation, integration into the production chain, markets.



	<b>Social Group</b>	<b>Main ideas associated with productive inclusion</b>
3	Private Initiative and Social Organizations	Social and technological innovation, integration into the production chain and markets.
4	Other Members	Social and technological innovation, public policies, integration into the production chain, and markets.

Source: Research data (2024).

Overall, social group “1”, composed of representatives from public institutions of the State Government, provided quite uniform responses, with definitions of the concept of productive inclusion related to social innovation issues. They emphasized that improving the quality of life for producers through fish farming is directly linked to access to public policies, which can stimulate the initiation of the activity and boost production. Additionally, they highlighted the importance of greater involvement with actors in the production chain. Another aspect mentioned was access to technological innovation, which allows the fish farmer to have access to all links in the chain.

Social group “2”, composed of “Institutions of Research, Technology, and Innovation,” conceptualizes practically the same ideas as social group “1,” with the difference of not directly emphasizing that public policy actions can promote productive inclusion but adding that access to the market is of great value for the understanding and effectiveness of the concept.

Social group “3”, composed of representatives from the “Private Initiative and Social Organizations”, whose participants are directly involved in promoting social inclusion actions, defines it similarly to social group “2”, demonstrating alignment with the research actors.

Regarding social group “4”, composed of entities from the “S” System and Federal agencies, it presents ideas of inclusion quite similar to Group “1”, since the understanding is that, by being linked to the same area of activity, even in different spheres, the conceptual proposal for productive inclusion for these groups follows the same principles. In summary, all have the same perspective regarding the concept of productive inclusion, as will be better demonstrated below.

In the context of social group “1”, productive inclusion refers to the connection of the fish farmer with the production process, being essential to improve the family's quality of life. Some initiatives that have the potential to enhance the economic performance of fish farmers are highlighted, especially through organized groups such as cooperatives, associations, and consortia. These collective structures aim to maximize access to public policies, as exemplified in the following excerpts:

*productive inclusion is a way to reach producers who are in informality or excluded from a process, to seek the formalization of these processes. It can happen spontaneously, through the producers themselves in the form of associations or cooperatives, and it can be induced through public policies (Sics response).*

*productive inclusion is bringing small producers into the production chain, adjusting all the links involved, fingerlings, feed, marketing, and making them part of it (Seagro response).*

In the view of social group “2” and social group “3”, productive inclusion involves the possibility for the producer to organize into associations or cooperatives, enabling the purchase of feed at a lower cost and, consequently, selling fish with higher added value. In addition to providing conditions for the fish farmer to produce and commercialize as a means of sustaining the activity through social mobilization around an objective, whether informal or formal (Niederle;

Schneider; Cassol; 2021). This is confirmed in the response of a representative from Unicatólica:

*I understand that it is placing fish farmers within the production circuit. Smaller fish farmers are often sidelined because they have few resources to compete, and they usually end up buying slightly more expensive feed. Including fish with a less competitive price is not feasible due to the low production volume. So, this inclusion is what is important to be put into practice for fish farmers (Unicatólica response).*

For representatives of social group “3”, specifically the aquaculture input sales company “Casa do Piscicultor” and the aquaculture assistance companies, ATECK, they express concern for the fish farmers in Tocantins, especially the small-scale ones, regarding the cost of inputs in the production chain. They emphasize the importance of proper productive inclusion to facilitate access for fish farmers through the establishment of collective ventures for purchasing inputs under better conditions and even at production cost. This is what will enable fish farmers to be more competitive because “when we talk about inclusion, we are referring to vulnerable people, as we have small fish farmers who depend on the activity as a source of family income” (Ateck's response).

From the perspective of groups “1” and “3” to be included productively, fish farmers need to obtain, in addition to financial subsidies, access to various public policies such as credit and continuous technical assistance. They also report that policies should not be specific and timely for a particular link in the production chain but should be considered on a “macro” level within the state's reality. Thus, aquaculture is considered one of the main activities to be developed, from strategic planning for regional development to the allocation of budgetary resources for the implementation of this public policy. The SEMARH representative reaffirmed this perspective in their response:

*The productive inclusion of fish farmers occurs when it is considered within the state as one of the main activities to be developed. I understand that in public policies, we have to remember the budgetary aspects, infrastructure development. Development and technology are also geared toward this public and productive arrangement in a general way. So, productive inclusion is like a macro vision of larger planning in this region, where aquaculture stands out, with equal or similar weight or in its proportion of financial or equitable participation compared to other productive sectors (Semarh response).*

The response from the member representing Fazenda São Paulo reinforces the importance of providing access to public policies to all fish farmers without distinction in terms of scale, from small/family to large. This demonstrates that this company, which sells fingerlings throughout Brazil and is at the beginning of the production chain, is concerned with the inclusion of all, regardless of size and regionalization, through promotion actions. In this way, “productive inclusion promotes equality in access to all policies and benefits, fairly and regardless of where the state is located” (Fazenda São Paulo's response).

In social group “4”, an interviewee representing SENAR presented their perception of productive inclusion, emphasizing the need for the application of public policies by promoting promotion actions through parliamentary amendment resources. As an example, they mentioned the possibility for the producer to start the activity with the increase of production inputs, so they can promote a productive cycle and, after this stage, carry out commercialization, with an improvement in family income. According to Sousa (2022a), the proper productive inclusion



of audiences from family farming, including family fish farmers, requires access to different typologies- agricultural, social, and market-related- such as PRONAF, PNATER, PAA and PNAE, to enable achieving productive autonomy. Interviewees from social group “1” associate the term productive inclusion intrinsically with the Agricultural Technical Assistance Service (ATER), by transferring technological innovation, even if it involves technologies in the public domain, as it contributes to fish farmers envisioning innovative advances in aquaculture production.

The public sector emphasizes its responsibility to promote inclusive actions in the productive intervention processes in which it operates, seeking greater proximity to fish farmers and the entire chain. This presence occurs through technical guidance, allowing access to all segments of the activity, both to increase productivity and produce healthy food and to articulate which market to enter and which policies to access. For the representative of ADAPEC, productive inclusion is:

*It is nothing more than fish farmers having access to inputs and fingerlings more conveniently, especially for producers who will fatten fish. It also includes the issue of technical assistance because consulting firms are emerging that are supporting fish farmers in our state (Adapec's response).*

All the “social groups” analyzed show unanimous agreement that the technological innovation actions mentioned promote good practices in fish nutritional management, productive planning, and even the commercial and professional management of the activity. These factors are essential to ensure the success and profitability of production according to each regional reality. ATER agents have the role of investigating and analyzing problems and development possibilities in fish farming, as well as making decisions related to the sustainability of the activity in the region (Sousa; Porto, 2022).

According to the representative interviewed from AGRONORTE, the only fish feed manufacturer in the state, productive inclusion happens when all links in the chain are in harmony. This is facilitated by ATER agents who can identify the needs of fish farmers and provide assistance in accessing technologies and public policies according to the production reality.

*I understand that it is about putting all the links in the production chain in contact, from fingerling producers to feed producers, the price trader, the slaughterhouse, the technical chain, and even the academic network, making this contact with everyone (Agronorte's response).*

All interviewed social groups have a similar perception that productive inclusion is related to integrating the fish farmer into the production chain and their insertion into markets. In the first case, productive inclusion plays a fundamental role in coordinating all links in the production chain through continuous assistance provided by the Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Service in the initial stages of production. Technical and economic feasibility is highlighted as crucial to encouraging fish farmers to adopt the activity, including environmental regularization, access to inputs and equipment, as well as participation in the formal processing and marketing market.

Actions of productive inclusion aim to create suitable and dignified production conditions for fish farmers, allowing them to integrate into different segments of the production chain. These actions aim to prevent interference from intermediaries at any stage of the chain that could result in high prices for inputs, equipment, and even the final sale of fish, making formal market trading unviable for fish farmers. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to implement measures that promote better management practices, such as increasing the added value of products and

seeking entry into new markets. This will allow fish farmers to have a better competitive position and ensure the success of their activities (Pedroza Filho; Barroso; Flores, 2014; Sousa, 2022b).

The idea of market access was highlighted by social groups “2, 3, and 4” as a way to enhance productive inclusion, according to the perception that one cannot only think about producing but also plan where to sell. It emphasizes the need to reach one of the last segments of the production chain, which is access to processing, by adding value to the generated products and, as a result, access to formal markets. Nevertheless, the interviewees from social group “3” represented by the private sector and social groups, also emphasize the need to seek alternative markets that meet the specificities of fish farmers, primarily represented by institutional purchases. The representative of the Bom Peixe Association highlighted this:

*The productive inclusion of fish farmers is a way to improve the production of our enterprise, include us in family farming, and fully include our fish in school meals, daycares, hospitals, among other non-profit organizations served by government institutional purchases (Bom Peixe's response).*

Considering that fish farmers and their collective organizations seek to place their fish in institutional purchases, such as PAA and PNAE, it is important to emphasize that these programs offer better remuneration based on the weight of the fish produced and have a strong social aspect for both sellers and beneficiaries. In this way, this marketing strategy provides both economic and social benefits, encouraging fish farmers to participate in these initiatives and contributing to productive inclusion by ensuring fair remuneration for their work. In this logic, the idea of market integration was recurrent among all interviewed social groups, except for social group “1” composed of representatives from the State Government, who made it clear in their responses that productive inclusion of fish farmers is understood as an environment with facilitated conditions for fish production, meaning “that the fish farmer can add value and bring food security, with an excellent quality product and be able to market a product that meets the requirements of the local market” (Seagro).

Analyzing market access, we can observe that productive inclusion is related, on one hand, to a modern production chain approach and access to conventional markets. On the other hand, alternative experiences stand out, based on the creation of alternative marketing circuits. These alternative approaches aim to promote productive inclusion through the valorization of sustainable practices, proximity between producers and consumers, and the establishment of more direct and fair commercial relationships. Thus, there is a diversity of paths to promote productive inclusion, either through traditional markets or through alternative initiatives that value socio-environmental aspects and promote producer autonomy (Sousa; Porto, 2022).

This condition was reported by Ruraltins (2020), where 43% of the total state production does not undergo full processing, without adding value to its products, which can decrease their earnings from the activity. Due to some production fragilities, such as the acquisition of inputs at high prices and the lack of suitable volume and production scale to meet the demands of the formal market, these producers face difficulties in competing with private initiatives and even with larger and established fish farmers. Thus, fish farmers who are not beneficiaries of inclusion policies, i.e., the smaller and poorer ones, would need more favorable market conditions to sustain their activity. Aligned with this market view, the representative of EMBRAPA Fisheries and Aquaculture states that:

*The productive inclusion of fish farmers is to provide the means for them to produce and market. Just producing is not enough, doing bad business, a bad sale, is not enough. So, for me, productive inclusion is to provide the techniques, be they management or commercial, so that this producer can produce a quality product, market it, and sustain themselves, making it an economic activity where they can survive (Embrapa's response).*

Thus, from this interviewee's perspective, an appropriate action for productive inclusion would be the implementation of public policies, allowing family fish farmers to organize socially in formal or informal groups. The expectation is to produce fish more regularly and fractionally, using innovative technologies that promote collaboration among producer groups to have better conditions for placing their production in the consumer market. One of the issues addressed concerns marketing channels, such as public slaughterhouses and fishmongers, which enable proper fish processing, complying with sanitary requirements and adding value to the product. This allows the fish farmer to reinvest their profits in new production cycles and improve their family's quality of life.

Overall, CSP/TO members demonstrated that productive inclusion is intrinsically linked to the need for access to various public policies to improve fish farming activities. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of collaboration between various chain links, both governmental and non-governmental, to promote the development and improvement of fish production and marketing in the region.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

Some conclusions about CSP/TO's performance as a space for discussion and deliberation on public policies and innovative actions in the sector. The research demonstrated a cohesive understanding of the concept of productive inclusion among members, with some slight variations between social groups. This can be justified due to the scope of action and interest of each institution in promoting productive inclusion actions in the fish farming sector.

The research also showed that 50% of CSP/TO members are still founders (i.e., have been there since the organization's establishment) and are knowledgeable about PDP/TO, following its guidelines. On the other hand, the others were replaced due to management alternation and institutional changes, which may have led to ruptures and a lack of alignment with the initial actions carried out by CSP/TO to achieve PDP/TO.

The result of the field research analysis makes it clear that CSP/TO plays a fundamental role in coordinating and promoting fish farmers' productive inclusion actions, as a factor in the state's fish farming development. Actions such as streamlining environmental regularization for fish farming, allowing the cultivation of the "tilapia" species, developing tilapia farming in the state, fiscal incentives for ICMS exemption for fish marketing, access to credit, online issuance of GTA and Invoice, reduction of electricity fees for fish farmers, promotion of sector fairs and events, technical assistance for fish farmers, legal security for new investors, were implemented by CSP/TO with the participation and engagement of members, contributing to the productive inclusion of fish farmers in the development of fish farming in the state of Tocantins.

The divergent responses presented by some members also demonstrate that, in the perception of some interviewees, actions are not having the necessary effect, being specific and not meeting the expected speed. This viewpoint reveals the desire of some members to see a

complete transformation in the effectiveness of PDP/TO actions.

After all, despite efforts to develop fish farming in the state, actions occur in a disjointed manner among institutions, even though they operate within the same proposal, i.e., promoting the development of fish farming activity in the region. There is a need to establish effective partnership or network work to establish a more directed work dynamic towards the sector's demands and the state's reality. Obviously, this is not a task for a single institution, hence the importance of intersectoriality to establish adequate productive inclusion of fish farmers in markets.

The conclusion of the results of this work in the interviewees' ideas reveals that appropriate productive inclusion action would be achieved through the implementation of inclusive public policies from different spheres, to socially and productively organize fish farmers into formal (or informal) groups. The goal would be to produce safe and quality fish through new technologies, with regularity and fractional production, going through public and private slaughterhouses and fishmongers, meeting sanitary requirements and with added value, in conditions to supply the consumer market, so that the fish farmer can reinvest their profit in a new production cycle and also have the conditions for improvements in income and family quality of life.

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