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## [SSNC campaign to save mangroves and the communities who depend on them](#)

The shrimp industry has boomed over the last 20 years as the result of production on large industrial shrimp farms, which have devastating impacts on mangroves as well as causing countless human rights violations against the people who live in and depend on these ecosystems.

The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) launched the Anti-Scampi campaign (scampi is a term used to refer to large shrimp or prawns) in 2011 with the goal of influencing a change in the consumption of shrimp in Sweden.

Kajsa Garpe of the SSNC provided an overview of the campaign in an article for the Redmanglar Internacional newsletter. "In spite of our efforts, combined with the noteworthy efforts of our partners, the demand for shrimp has continued to grow. Imports of frozen penaeid shrimp increased 600% between the years 2000 and 2010."

To give a new twist to the campaign, the SSNC decided to try to raise awareness through a short and straightforward but entertaining "infomercial" that was launched from the new campaign website, [www.antiscampi.se](http://www.antiscampi.se), with a bit of extra help from a number of influential bloggers who had been recruited to the campaign. So far, the Swedish version of the short video has received more than 115,000 views on YouTube, while the English version (Keep tiger prawns off your plate,) has received almost 22,000 views. The Spanish version (Langostinos fuera del plato,) uploaded in December 2012, has already been viewed 2,300 times, Kajsa reported. The video was subsequently broadcast pro bono on a number of commercial television networks.

The SSNC campaign site on Facebook quickly reached more than 10,000 people.

The campaign then moved on to a new stage, explained Kajsa, with an examination of cases of shrimp farms in Bangladesh and "organic" shrimp production in Ecuador through the report "Murky Waters"

([http://www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/sites/default/files/dokument-media/murky\\_waters.pdf](http://www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/sites/default/files/dokument-media/murky_waters.pdf)), as well as a film with the same name (), and with the report "Do You Know What Your Dinner Ate for Breakfast" on the production of fish meal for use as feed for shrimp farms ([http://www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/sites/default/files/dokument-media/do\\_you\\_know\\_what\\_your\\_dinner\\_ate\\_for\\_breakfast.pdf](http://www.naturskyddsforeningen.se/sites/default/files/dokument-media/do_you_know_what_your_dinner_ate_for_breakfast.pdf)).

The report and the videos reached a large audience, the videos being broadcast in peak viewing hours in the Swedish media and elsewhere (such as the U.S. satellite television network Link TV).

The SSNC has also invited NGOs and members of affected coastal communities to share their testimonies and speak with members of the SSNC and the Swedish public. These visits have been greatly appreciated and were very important for the campaign. For example, noted Kajsa, "When we published an interview with Gautam Mondol, a farmer from Bangladesh whose life has been ruined

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by the expansion of shrimp farms, it was almost immediately shared by over a thousand people.”

During 2012, the campaign inspired NGOs in Norway and Spain to organize their own campaigns against the consumption of farmed tropical shrimp.

The campaign has achieved both quantitative and qualitative results. According to information provided by Kajsa:

- Four of the five main retail supermarket chains in Sweden have stopped selling tiger prawns.
- The same has been done by the International Society of Restaurants, hotel chains and a long list of restaurants.
- Some companies have not only stopped selling farmed shrimp or prawns, but have also helped to share information and raise awareness about the environmental problems they cause.
- The campaign has initiated a public movement for the dissemination of information to restaurants and supermarkets.
- The public movement is committed to the cause and works to spread the SSNC’s messages both online and offline, in restaurants and supermarkets.
- A significant decrease in tiger prawn consumption has been observed, at the local level and among wholesalers who have stopped selling shrimp.
- The campaign has also been endorsed by nationally and internationally renowned chefs and TV personalities.

One of the pillars of the campaign, reported Kajsa, is that it has been built with contributions from local organizations in areas affected by the problem, such as Redmanglar Internacional in Latin America, CODDEFFAGOLF in Honduras and C-CONDEM in Ecuador. Thanks to them, the SSNC “has learned a great deal about industrial shrimp aquaculture and its impacts. We have read their reports, talked with them and listened to their stories. And most importantly, they have ensured that we come into contact with the reality of the affected communities. As a result, the strength of the campaign is its authenticity. We know what we are talking about, because all we are doing is transmitting the voices of the coastal communities who have been affected.”

This article is based on “La campaña sueca contra los langostinos”, Kajsa Garpe, SSNC, produced for Redmanglar, available

at <http://www.redmanglarinternacional.org/sitio/images/documentos/humedales.pdf>