

The South America Welfare Association, an NGO founded by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, Recognized for Environmental Development

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The Paraguayan President and Family Fed church leaders release the native freshwater fish, Pacu, into the river during the Siembra de Pacu (Pacu Planting) event

On May 3, 2013 there was special event in Puerto Leda, Paraguay with the current Paraguayan president Federico Franco, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, local politicians and governors to release incubated native fish into the Paraguay River for the first time ever together with Family Federation for World Peace and Unification's (FFWPU) Japanese missionaries, the national messiah's of Paraguay.



Family Fed Paraguayan leaders and staffs working at one of the sites of artificial cultivation at Puerto Leda

The South America Welfare Association, an NGO founded by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, hosted this event. The event signified True Parents vision in South America for environment development.

One of the projects of South America Welfare Association was to artificially reproduce and raise in a laboratory setting the native, freshwater fish called "Pacu," which lives in the Paraguay River and is a relative to the piranha, and then release them into Paraguay River when they are 2 to 5 inches long in order to repopulate the river. This event marked the very first of its kind to release fish into the Paraguay River. The event demonstrated how humans could protect the environment and live together with nature.



The national Paraguayan newspaper, Ultima Hora (Last Hour), ran a story President Federico Franco's visit the Family Fed-affiliated event at Puerto Leda to release native fish into the Paraguay River

The NGO not only released the fish into the river but also donated the fish to Asuncion, the capital city, and taught the technique for artificially raising fish. Early trials for artificially incubating the Pacu fish posed problems. However with the efforts of the Family Fed Japanese national messiahs, who have a great love for Puerto Leda, together they worked with the National University of Asuncion's research team to successfully incubate the fish.



Japanese national messiahs researched how to successfully incubate the Pacu fish

The event was originally intended only for the University's research team and related people but it became a national event where even the country's president, Federico Franco participated. The Paraguayan news media reported this event with the titles such as "Unification Church's small city" or "President visited the land of Unification Church."

True Father said in his autobiography, *As a Peace Loving Global Citizen*, "The three greatest challenges of a modern society is solving the pollution problem, creating a consciousness for protecting the environment and increasing food production." For more than 20 years he had put a lot of effort into the Pantanal region, a wetland region that is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. True Father also emphasized that "we shouldn't just catch the fish but also make an artificial cultivation as well." In order to realize Father Moon's vision the pioneers and national messiahs in the Puerto Leda worked hard towards finally succeeding to incubate the Pacu fish.



President Federico Franco gives a greeting message during the Siembra de Pacu (Pacu Planting) in Paraguay River in Puerto Leda, Paraguay

Hosting a national event with a small number of Family Fed members proved to be a little difficult, however in the end the President Franco followed the tour provided by the Family Fed church instead of a tour prepared by his entourage and protocol secretary. The president showed his gratitude to people who worked very hard in Puerto Leda region to fulfill the artificial cultivation of the Pacu fish.