

BACKGROUND

DIRECTIONAL EMPHASIS OF SECTOR

The Brunei government is moving towards a national policy of economic diversification to reduce the country's dependence on oil export revenues. The Economic Development Board (EDB), the Ministry of Development and the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources are encouraging local, joint venture, and overseas companies to participate in national development projects.

The Ministry of Development which oversees the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries is promoting investments in agrotechnology and aquaculture. Because only 15% of Brunei's land is under cultivation and manpower resources are limited, the government is seeking high technology projects which will provide greater agricultural and fishing production output than traditional methods. The 5th Development Plan (1986-1990) target is 30% self sufficiency for all agricultural goods. Currently, local production meets about 40% of the total demand for poultry, 90% for eggs and 70% for fresh fish.

In the area of agriculture, the Department sponsors the Young Farmers Scheme, an incentive program to encourage young adults to enter agriculture, and the model farms program. The Sinuat Agricultural Training Center, established in 1978, offers two year courses in a range of subjects including agricultural training, irrigation systems technology, fruit and vegetable development, as well as advisory and support services for farmers. The importance of these programs to national development will mean greater opportunities for Canadians to provide agriculture technical services and equipment needs.

The Kilanas Agricultural Research Center is actively developing the technology for padi planting, indoor mushroom farming, hydroponics, and tissue culture projects.

To reduce the country's dependence on imported foodstuffs, the government encourages foreign participation in these investment areas and others:

- Irrigation systems
- Rice production technology
- Crop mechanization equipment (e.g. ground and helicopter equipment for chemical spraying)
- Cattle and goat herd development
- Agricultural technical training and assistance programs

The Department of Fisheries aims to modernize and upgrade the technology for fish/crustacean cultivation, breeding, and processing.

Brunei's fishing limit extends to 320 kilometers and currently is confined to local activity only. The most productive areas are found about 20 miles out from shore within water less than 25 fathoms in depth. The 1985 Demersal Resource Appraisal Program estimates that these grounds have the potential to yield 9,500 tons annually of demersal fish of which 80% will be marketable.

Much off-shore area remains unexploited for fishing. Potential growth areas for Canadian investment include:

- Fresh fish hatchery/giant prawn farm technology and apparatus
- Artificial reefs
- Fisherman training and assistance programs
- Trawling industry

The government is also encouraging foreign participation in projects to process high value added fish, crop and livestock products for human consumption.