PROJECT SUMMARY

Ref No.: MRIC/SISM-BG-17	**Title:** Postharvest processing of shellfish from local sources: an automated facility for oyster depuration and storage
Local Company: Mauricoast Ltd	
Project Leader	
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TECHNICAL ABSTRACT

Shellfish has been a reliable source of aquatic protein for Mauritian consumers. They are harvested by local fisherfolks and also farmed by few local aquaculture companies. Shellfish are filter feeders; they filter water and accumulate all the solid particulate matters in their guts while expelling out the seawater. Most of our shellfish such as oysters are harvested either in barachois, lagoons or coastal waters that are very often subjected to organic and inorganic pollution coming from the land. These contaminants accumulate into the oyster guts and can pose a real health hazard to consumers.

The Food Act 1999 provides the baseline for maximum allowable metal contaminants and also microbiological standards for shellfish in Mauritius. However, to date, most of our shellfish harvested locally (with few exceptions from medium sized oyster farms) do not go through a proper process of depuration where these contaminants are eliminated prior to consumption.

The present project proposes to set up an innovative depuration and storage facility for shellfish at the Grand Barachois of Poudre d'Or. Mauricoast Ltd, intends to set up the first state-of-the-art shellfish depuration facility in Mauritius and to develop a prototype of a small scale depuration kit that can be easily accessible to local shellfish fisherfolks and farmers.

Key Words: Shellfish, Microbiological, Innovative depuration