

MARKET BRIEF · ECUADOR · 2026–2027

Power & Cold-Chain Demand in Ecuador's Fishing Industry

Prepared for international power generation and cold-chain equipment manufacturers · July 2026

1,300 MW

Projected generation deficit for the Oct 2026 – Mar 2027 dry season

171

Large industrial consumers legally required to install own generation

15 Dec 2026

Legal deadline set by Executive Decree 32

USD 1.85 B

Ecuadorian tuna & canned fish exports in 2025

01 · THE STRUCTURAL SHIFT

Ecuador has become a self-generation market by law, not by preference.

Roughly 70% of Ecuador's installed capacity is hydroelectric. That dependency turned a drought into a national industrial emergency in 2024, and the system has not recovered its margin since. Four facts define the current window:

- **Executive Decree 32** obliges 171 of the country's largest industrial electricity consumers to install partial or total self-generation capacity before **15 December 2026**. Government verification of project progress is already underway.
- **Colombia suspended electricity exports to Ecuador on 22 January 2026**. That supply had been covering up to 10% of national peak demand and was central to avoiding capacity cuts.
- **The national operator (Cenace) estimates an 18% probability of load shedding** during the dry season running October 2026 to March 2027. The Ministry of Environment & Energy projects a deficit of up to 1,300 MW; only 55 MW of new thermal capacity had been contracted as of mid-2026.
- **Replacement capacity keeps failing to arrive**. Between 2024 and 2026, nine generation contracts collapsed, keeping 871 MW out of the system. The Esmeraldas I thermal plant burned in June 2026 and will be offline for about a year, removing a further 125 MW.

The result is a market in which reliable on-site generation has stopped being a contingency purchase and has become a condition of operating.

02 · DEMAND ALREADY PROVEN

The 2024 crisis is the demand test this market has already run.

Between September and December 2024, Ecuador lived through scheduled outages that reached up to 14 hours per day. Industry associations estimated national losses of roughly USD 12 million for every hour without power; the Quito Chamber of Commerce put combined industrial and commercial losses at approximately USD 7.5 billion across two months. Generator sales surged to the point of delivery waiting lists.

The fishing sector was among the most exposed. The president of the National Chamber of Fisheries publicly warned that cold chains at the ports were compromised and that losses on a highly perishable product would have to be absorbed by the sector. Processing plants reduced shifts or halted lines entirely.

Companies that installed their own generation in 2024 did so under emergency conditions, at emergency prices, with whatever equipment was locally available. That is precisely the purchase the 2026 deadline is meant to replace with a planned one.

— **Blue Innovation Hub LATAM, market observation**

THE DECISION WINDOW

PERIOD	WHAT HAPPENS IN THE ECUADORIAN MARKET
Jul – Dec 2026	Compliance phase. The 171 mandated consumers must have self-generation installed by 15 December. Procurement is largely emergency-driven and locally sourced.
Oct 2026 – Mar 2027	Dry season. First time the system operates without Colombian imports. Whatever was installed in a hurry is tested under real load.
May 2027	Expopesca del Pacífico Sur, Manta. The industry meets after the season, with direct experience of what failed and budget cycles open.
Oct 2027 onward	Next dry season. Replacement, expansion and redundancy purchases — this time planned, specified and awarded to established suppliers.

Manufacturers positioning for a single transaction should target the first row. Manufacturers building a channel in Ecuador should target the third — that is where the specifying decisions for every subsequent cycle are made.

03 · WHERE THE DEMAND CONCENTRATES

Manta: the most power-critical industrial cluster on the Ecuadorian coast.

Ecuador is the world's second largest exporter of processed and canned tuna and has been the leading tuna supplier to the European Union. Exports of tuna and canned fish reached **USD 1,848 million in 2025**, growing 14.4% in FOB value and 12.8% in volume. The country processes about **691,000 tonnes** of raw tuna a year and ships more than **350,000 tonnes** of processed product from the plants of Manta and Posorja.

Manta concentrates the fleet, the processing plants and the specialised logistics. This is continuous-process food manufacturing tied to freezing, chilling and reefer export: the segment with the highest cost per interrupted hour and the lowest tolerance for voltage instability in the country.

BUYER SEGMENT	WHAT THEY NEED
Tuna processing plants	Prime and standby generation, load-sharing, sized for continuous operation
Cold stores & freezing facilities	Standby power with fast transfer; failure means direct product loss
Port terminals & reefer yards	Clip-on and standalone reefer gensets, container power points, mobile units
Export logistics operators	Reefer gensets for road transport and staging; ice plants
Fishing fleet & shipyards	Marine-grade auxiliary sets, dock power, service and spare parts
Fishmeal & feed plants	High-load industrial gensets, lighting towers, plant infrastructure

04 · THE ENTRY PROBLEM

Why capable manufacturers still underperform in this market.

Most foreign equipment reaches Ecuador through opportunistic orders placed by third-party importers. The unit arrives, but the margin, the customer relationship, the brand and the after-sales revenue stay with the importer. When the next purchase cycle comes, the manufacturer is not in the room.

In this sector the buying decision is not made on catalogue price. It is made on **who the plant manager already trusts, whether spare parts exist in country, and how fast a technician can reach Manta**. That is a relationship and channel problem, not a product problem — and it is solved by being physically present in front of the industry, not by email.

There is a second layer that no public report contains: **which companies are actually buying, what they are specifying, and which local operators are in a position to represent a foreign manufacturer here**. That is the part we work on directly.

05 · THE ROOM WHERE IT IS DECIDED

Expopesca del Pacífico Sur + Blue Innovation Hub LATAM

Expopesca del Pacífico Sur is Ecuador's benchmark industrial fishing expo, produced by Xpocorp across **27 years and 15 editions**. Blue Innovation Hub LATAM operates inside it as the innovation and market-entry engine — so an international manufacturer enters with institutional legitimacy and direct access to decision-makers, instead of cold outreach from zero.

The buyers here are unusually concentrated. In one room, over three days, sit the owners and general managers of **more than 95% of national tuna production**, together with the port operators, cold-storage companies and logistics groups that serve them. Win the right handful of relationships and you have effectively covered the market.

XV EDITION · MAY 12–14, 2027 · CENTRO DE CONVENCIONES DEL PACÍFICO – ULEAM · MANTA, ECUADOR

2,800+

Attendees at the 2026 industrial expo

>95%

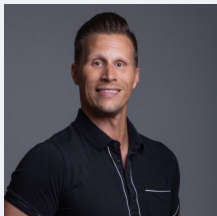
Of national tuna production represented

10

Top-tuna general managers in curated one-to-one meetings

25

Countries represented



"For an innovation company, it cuts months — even years — of commercial work and validation. Direct access to relevant players, an understanding of the business context, and real opportunities to collaborate. We advanced conversations toward pilots and visited facilities."

Jason Hendsch · Sales Director, Trace Register · United States

"For the first time in history, every magnate of Ecuador's tuna industry was in the same room. The general managers themselves acknowledged it. It had never happened before."

Julio Tigua · General Manager, Envasur

06 · HOW YOU ENTER

Convene → Accelerate → Prescribe → Continue

Expopesca convenes the industry. The curated one-to-one rounds accelerate it: meetings matched by strategic fit and briefed in advance, so the people across the table arrive to buy, not to browse. Innovation as a Service prescribes and accompanies adoption inside the plants. Blue Hub 365 keeps the relationships and the pipeline alive between editions.

Participation is structured by category and assigned in order of confirmation — both exhibition space and curated meeting slots. That is why a short conversation comes first: it establishes whether Ecuador is a real fit for your company in 2027, and what form of participation actually matches your objective.

NEXT STEP

The 20-minute Fit Call

A realistic go / no-go on Ecuador for 2027 — the buyer map for your product category, how comparable manufacturers have entered this market, and the participation format that fits your objective.

Isidro Mendizábal · Innovation Director, Blue Innovation Hub LATAM
hello@bihlatam.com · bihlatam.com · xpocorp.com

Your equipment already works. What is missing is the room where it gets specified.

Sources: Executive Decree 32 (June 2025); Cenace (National Electricity Operator); Ministry of Environment & Energy of Ecuador; Central Bank of Ecuador; CEIPA (Ecuadorian Chamber of Tuna Industrialists and Processors); FAO; National Chamber of Fisheries; Guayaquil Chamber of Industries and Quito Chamber of Commerce; Xpocorp / Expopesca del Pacifico Sur registration data. Figures for the Oct 2026 – Mar 2027 season are official projections, not outcomes. Compiled July 2026.