



February 2021

**Seafood Ethics Common Language Group e-alert**  
(amalgamation of news alerts issued to SECLG circulation list by email in February 2021)

**Seafood Ethics Common Language Group**

<https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/seafood-issues-groups/the-seafood-ethics-common-language-group/>

<https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/social-responsibility-in-seafood/>

### **Reports and initiatives**

**Modern Slavery Toolkit launched. 17 February 2021.**

Shiva Foundation and STOP THE TRAFFIK have launched a free toolkit to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) mitigate their risk of exploitation. The toolkit includes a simple risk self-assessment, practical steps to protect employees, and clear guidance on how to report modern slavery concerns.

**FishWise is relaunching the Roadmap for Improving Seafood Ethics (RISE) and looking for additional resources. February 2021.**

FishWise is looking for additions to the 'resources' section of the new site! If your organization has a social responsibility resource, tool, or case study that should be shared, please send it to [RISE@FishWise.org](mailto:RISE@FishWise.org) 26 February.

**Issara Institute report. Top five labour abuses in 2019 -2020 in Thailand. January 2021.**

This 'Field-Based Analysis of Worker Reporting and Business Responses in Thailand' shares anonymized, aggregated analyses of thousands of grievances and requests for assistance, as reported by jobseekers and workers through the various Issara worker voice channels. The report provides insights on the quality of business responses to these worker grievances.

**Issara update on the COVID-19 Situation for Migrant Workers and Business Responses in Thailand**

Issara is guiding workers, employers, and recruitment agencies through the crisis, while providing unconditional cash transfers to stranded, unemployed, and/or underemployed foreign migrant workers.

**New initiative to promote social and environmental sustainability in small-scale shrimp farms in Southeast Asia. 22 January 2021.**

This collaboration between the Asian Seafood Improvement Collaborative (ASIC) and the certification assessment body NSF International supports the launch of the ASIC Shrimp initiative, a stakeholder-driven improvement framework built by seafood sector stakeholders from Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, and the Philippines.

**US Department of Labor to award USD 10 million grant to address labour violations in Illegal, Unregulated and Unregistered (IUU) fishing. 15 January 2021.**

The grant will support efforts to increase understanding of opportunities, development of approaches drawing from identified best practices, demonstrated effectiveness of approaches, and increased awareness and adoption of approaches to strengthen systems to address labor violations associated with IUU fishing in the Latin American and Caribbean regions.

**[Marks and Spencer: Taking Action to Support Workers in our Supply Chains. 14 January 2021.](#)**

M&S asked Oxfam to conduct a 'gap analysis' of their supply chain in India and the UK to better understand the true worker experience and identify the changes needed to in house operations and those of their suppliers. M&S has shared the actions they will and have taken against each of Oxfam's specific recommendations.

**Events and dates**

**[New organisation to provide labour certification for fishing vessels launches 60-day public consultation \(Deadline for responses is 8 March 2021\)](#)**

A number of seafood industry players worldwide have united to develop a voluntary, independent and accredited third-party certification program for labour practices on fishing vessels called the 'FISH Standard for Crew'. Mike Kraft, Director of Sustainability at Bubble Bee is the new Executive Director.

**[Free webinar. Respecting Human Rights: the corporate responsibility. Wednesday 24 February 2021. 12.30pm to 1.30pm GMT.](#)**

This webinar organised by Ardea International will look at why the corporate responsibility to respect human rights is now business critical. This will cover the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and how they provide a framework to implement respect for human rights.

**Latest news**

**[US seafood associations respond to human trafficking task force recommendations. 9 February 2021.](#)**

Commercial seafood organisations have begun responding to a US Justice Department task force report on human trafficking in international waters. The report includes 27 recommendations for the federal government to eliminate loopholes or strengthen policies, some of which include the need for congressional legislation. One recommendation is to create a temporary worker visa programme that would ban 'recruitment fees' paid by workers on American vessels that fish in international waters but deliver products in US ports.

**[New rules fall short of protecting migrant workers in Korea's distant water fishing fleet. 29 January 2021.](#)**

A group of 15 NGOs welcomed the new rules, which came after a [major report](#) by the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) and the Advocates for Public Interest Law (APIL) revealed widespread human rights abuses on Korean distant water fishing vessels. However, they have warned that there are a significant number of loopholes which continue to leave migrant workers vulnerable to abuse. The new rules govern the recruitment system for migrant workers, prevent excessive working hours, set a minimum salary, and ensure necessities such as clean water.

**[Exploited Indonesian fishers repatriated and the vessel de-listed from Marine Stewardship Council \(MSC\) certification. 26 January 2021.](#)**

Human Rights at Sea (HRAS) flagged the case of two exploited Indonesian fishers of the Chinese-owned, Fijian-flagged He Shun 38 (No.00359) vessel on 16 January 2021. It is now reported both crew have been repatriated to Indonesia with some wages paid, and the MSC has stated that the Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) has de-listed the He Shun from MSC certification.

**Research studies**

**[How fighting slavery can contribute to sustainable development? February 2021.](#)**

The Developing Freedom study by United Nations University examines the need for anti-slavery interventions to achieve sustainable development. It includes a case study on the seafood industry in

the Philippines, Bangladesh, India and Thailand. It concludes that governance efforts that address modern slavery risks have tended to do so in narrow labour-management terms, without addressing related questions of smallholder vulnerability and agency, or the institutional drivers of underlying exploitation strategies.

**[Why is it so difficult to stamp out seafood slavery? There is little justice, even in court.](#) 28 January 2021.**

The research undertaken by researchers at Monash and Trobe University in Australia states .....the main responses to seafood slavery have centred on trying to improve supply chain transparency rather than focusing on justice itself, such as securing compensation for the fishers, supporting them through the legal process and effectively criminalising traffickers. The new Australian National Plan of Action to Combat Modern Slavery has a significant focus on justice.

**Seafish news and publications**

**[Background briefing on fishery observers.](#) November 2020.**

This literature review looks at the role of a fishery observer and the rules governing fisheries observer programmes; the issues being raised; the most recent prominent cases; the repeated calls for reform; the current situation in 2020 and the impact of COVID-19.

**[Seafish summary of fishing references](#) in [2020 Trafficking in Persons Report.](#) 25 June 2020.**

**[Seafish Social risk assessment information.](#)** This reference document provides an overview of the metrics and scoring methodologies of different open and closed sources of information that offer insight on the social risks posed to UK businesses by seafood trading partners in third countries.

**[Country profiles.](#)** To understand the social risk landscape of countries supplying into the UK seafood market, a series of profiles covering main supply regions are available. There are currently 19 profiles.

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