



January 2022

**Seafood Ethics Common Language Group e-alert**  
(amalgamation of news alerts issued to SECLG circulation list by email in January 2022)

**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/>

### **UK and Ireland news**

**Defra clarifies issues on new regulations for 'economic link' licence conditions due to come into effect 1 April 2022 (7 January 2022)**

The UK Government has introduced the new regulations that will mean some UK-registered fishing vessels will be compelled to land 70% of their annual catch into the UK if they want to keep their current crewing arrangements. There has been some confusion over what this means – for some vessels to employ a crew of over 70% UK nationals would put a huge strain on their ability to carry on their operations, as most whitefish and nephrops trawlers rely on foreign crews.

**British Standards (BS) Institute consultation. BS 25700 Organizational responses on modern slavery – Guidance (23 December 2021. Closing date for comments is 23 February 2022)**

BS 25700 provides organizations with guidance for managing the risk of modern slavery, including prevention, identification, response, remediation, mitigation, and reporting modern slavery in its operations, supply chains and its wider operating environment. For further information a [webinar](#) has been arranged for 10am on Friday 28 January, where the expert panel will provide an overview of the clauses and content of the standard which is open to everyone.

**US Customs and Border Protection agency asked to investigate forced labour links to Irish seafood (16 December 2021)**

Liberty Shared, a US non-governmental organisation, has petitioned the United States Customs and Border Protection agency to investigate the possibility that seafood imports from Ireland may be the product of forced labour. This move has been welcomed by Michael O'Brien, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). "It is a logical and necessary step....and flows from the US State Department's rating of Ireland as 'Tier 2 watch list' for the second year running in this year's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report. Fishing is cited as an area of trafficking and labour abuses. Abuses of migrants working in the Irish fishing fleet should be investigated externally as a matter of urgency."

**New landmark scheme to regularise long-term undocumented migrants in Ireland (3 December 2021)**

The Irish Minister for Justice has announced a scheme to regularise thousands of undocumented migrants and their families who are living in Ireland. It will enable eligible applicants to remain and reside in the State and to regularise their residency status. The [scheme](#) be open to applications on 31 January 2022 and will be open for six months, closing on 31 July 2022.

**[International Transport Workers' Federation \(ITF\) welcomes scheme but says major anomalies must be addressed for fishers \(3 December 2021\)](#)**

For many undocumented fishers, the major questions are the cost and whether to reveal themselves to the authorities. The ITF lists three scenarios where migrant fishers and others have been in the state for four years or more but appear to be ineligible for the scheme.

**General news and views**

**[Global problem of modern slavery highlighted in fishing industry \(15 January 2022\)](#)**

Global maritime charity Stella Maris held a webinar on Modern Slavery and Exploitation in the Fishing late last year. They highlighted an ongoing case they had been involved with in which seafarer officers were recruited from abroad by overseas agents to come and work on a fishing vessel based in Scotland.

**[Labour issues seen as a top concern for fishing industry in 2022 \(23 December 2021\)](#)**

John Connelly, the president of the National Fisheries Institute, has called out labour issues as a top concern for the industry in 2022 in his annual address.

**[EU Commission launches €1.5 billion six-year plan to promote human rights and prevent silencing of defenders \(20 December 2021\)](#)**

This programme steps up EU support in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, the rule of law and the work of civil society organisations and human rights defenders around the world during the period 2021–2027.

**[What is on the business and human rights agenda for 2022? \(20 December 2021\)](#)**

Ergon Associates mentions in particular the ongoing push for mandatory due diligence legislation and the prospects for new legal requirements on human rights; certification bodies under scrutiny to bolster social standards; an increased focus on the human rights impacts of climate change; supply chain due diligence; the ILO to add occupational safety and health as a Fundamental Right; and for the living wage to remain a live issue.

**[50 Vessels join the Fishing First Safety Management Project \(16 December 2021\)](#)**

The Seafarers' Charity has reported that the project to develop safety management onboard fishing vessels to the standard of the Fishing Safety Management (FSM) Code is well underway. The new service called Fishing First Safety Management System by SafetyFolder, is being developed to improve safety in the UK fishing fleet and, at the same time, increase supply chain transparency.

**[Update to US National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking \(3 December 2021\)](#)**

The National Action Plan outlines a three-year comprehensive approach to track and prosecute human trafficking on fishing vessels and in onshore seafood processing facilities. Under the plan, the US Department of State will ramp up its efforts to encourage other countries to put in place bans on imports of goods made with forced labour.

**Reports and resources**

**[Closing the gap: Evidence for effective human rights due diligence from five years measuring company efforts to address forced labour \(18 January 2022\)](#)**

With the growing momentum for mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence (mHREDD) this report, by KnowTheChain, shows voluntary efforts to eliminate forced labour from global supply chains are failing. The analysis looks at benchmarks on 129 companies over five years and provides new evidence of the urgent need for voluntary action to be strengthened, with robust regulatory requirements for companies to identify human rights risks and prevent abuse.

**Scientific paper. Social and Economic Outcomes of Fisheries Certification: Characterizing Pathways of Change in Canned Fish Markets (13 December 2021)**

This reports on the pilot application of a new survey tool for understanding what motivates stakeholders in fisheries to undergo Marine Stewardship Council certification, and the changes to management, value chains and markets they observe through the certification process, and as a result of certification.

**Stamping on seafarers rights during the COVI-19 pandemic (10 December 2021)**

This review by Human Rights at Sea chronicles core violations of seafarers' rights during COVID-19 over a 20-month period. It also critically reflects on how governments, agencies, stakeholders, welfare organisations and the media have perceived and responded to the adverse treatment of seafarers during this challenging period.

**Webinar recording: Business and human rights – the interconnection with climate change (8 December 2021)**

There's a pressing need to recognise the links between climate induced migration and modern slavery, track climate-induced migration, and include climate-induced risks of modern slavery in the tracking of displacement.

**United Nations (UN) Working Group on Business and Human Rights launch roadmap for next decade of business and human rights (29 November 2021)**

As the UN Guiding Principles (GPs) turned 10 in June 2021, the UN Working Group have taken stock of the first decade of implementation. The UNGPs 10+ Roadmap for the next decade includes recommendations for the next decade, building on analysis of previous achievements and existing challenges for business.

**COVID-19 has made life even more precarious for migrant workers (22 November 2021)**

A new report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) reflects on the significant impact of the global pandemic on migrant workers, particularly those employed in precarious, low-wage sectors.

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