

August and September 2018

Seafood Ethics Common Language Group e-alert

(amalgamation of news alerts issued to SECLG circulation list by email in August and Sept 2018)

Seafood Ethics Common Language Group

<http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/discussion-forums/the-seafood-ethics-common-language-group>

UK news

Implementation of ILO Work in Fishing Convention (C188).

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has published guidance on the progress concerning the implementation of the ILO188 Convention into UK Law. ILO 188 provides international standards for decent work on fishing vessels. It applies to all those working on fishing vessels of any size, with more prescriptive standards for vessels over 24m or operating on longer voyages (e.g. 3 days or more). The MCA is currently finalising Regulations and supporting guidance with a view to laying the Regulations this month. A number of new requirements will come into force on 31 December 2018, although there is provision for 'progressive implementation' of some of the Convention's requirements. For example, certificates evidencing medical fitness will be required for fishermen working on some vessels (vessels going into foreign ports and vessels 24m and above that are at sea for 7 or more days at a time) from 31 May 2019, but will not be required for fishermen working on the majority of the fleet until 30 November 2023. The submission of crew lists for vessels less than 45m will not become a requirement until 31 November 2019. However, requirements for minimum accommodation space on existing vessels and new builds (including those under construction or already plan approved) will come into force immediately on 31 December 2018 (MCA to work with owners to agree any changes required to ensure compliance).

Migration Advisory Committee's final report on EEA Migration in the UK. 18 September 2018.

This contains information and recommendations about the current state, and proposed future, of migration to the UK. A lot of the points raised will be of interest to the seafood processing sector which is heavily dependent on workers from other EEA countries. Other than agriculture, no individual sector is discussed in this overarching report. In general migration to the UK from Eastern European countries is primarily driven by differences in per capita income; there is little evidence of impacts of EEA migration on employment opportunities for UK-born workers; there is little evidence of impacts of EEA migration on aggregate wages for UK-born workers.

Debate in the House of Commons. 17 July 2018. Non-EEA Visas: Inshore Fishing

This debate followed a request from Conservative MP Douglas Ross (Moray) for the Government to reintroduce the successful scheme, which worked successfully from 2010 to 2012, in which non-EEA workers were able to work within the 12-mile limit.

Taiwan

Taiwan authorities confirm illegal treatment of migrant fishing crew. 4 October 2018.

A Fisheries Agency (FA) investigation has confirmed the veracity of recent allegations made against a Taiwanese fishing boat over poor working conditions, prompting the FA to fine the vessel's owner, provisionally revoke its license, and refer the case to prosecutors over possible human trafficking offenses.

[Crew Beaten and Sharks Finned on Taiwanese Fishing Vessel. 12 September 2018.](#)

The Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) has claimed to have documented gross human rights violations and serious illegal fishing offenses on board the Taiwanese fishing vessel Fuh Sheng 11. In May, the Fuh Sheng 11 became the first ever vessel to be detained under the International Labour Organization's Work in Fishing Convention C188. South African officials cited a lack of work agreements and crew list, rotten lifebuoys, missing anchors and generally poor health and safety conditions, but the situation is much graver than first thought, the EJF investigation revealed.

[EJF video Slipping through the net](#)

[Human trafficking, illegal fishing allegations tarnish Taiwan's distant fishing sector. 31 August 2018.](#)

Interview with Max Schmid from EJF about the efforts EJF is making to bring change to Taiwan's seafood industry in light of: the 2015 EU yellow card; the threat of a red card in 2016, the Greenpeace report in May 2018, [Misery at Sea](#) detailing poor labor standards, dire working conditions, and harmful fishing techniques in Taiwan's distant-water fishing fleet; the EJF investigative film, [Exploitation and Lawlessness: The Dark Side of Taiwan's Fishing Fleet](#) with harrowing stories of migrant fishermen (mainly from Indonesia and the Philippines) working aboard Taiwanese-owned fishing vessels and highlighted practices like under-payment and non-payment of salaries and heavy financial deductions for food, travel, medical checks, and accommodation.

[Asia](#)

[Thailand publishes list of fishing vessels to tackle human rights abuse. 25 September 2018.](#)

Thailand has published a list of all its registered and licensed fishing vessels as well as a watch list of vessels prohibited from fishing, that have been sunk or damaged, or sold to neighbouring countries, with the objective of tackling human rights abuse and illegal fishing. The country is one of the first in Southeast Asia to do so. The list contains information such as each vessel's registration number, owner's name, and port of registration. Making such information freely available is a crucial step in eradicating illegal fishing and human rights abuse in the industry, and marks Thailand out in the region for taking this progressive step, says the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF).

[Prawit expresses resolve to ratify fishing convention - Steve Trent meeting with Thai Deputy PM.](#)

Prawit gave the assurances to Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) executive-director Steve Trent as he tried to highlight Thai authorities' serious crackdown on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU). Prawit, who is also the defence minister, mentioned the C188 in response to Trent's suggestion that the ratification of the convention will be a big boost to Thailand's efforts to fight IUU and human-right abuses.

[EU to assess Thai fishing industry this month. 13 September 2018.](#)

The EU will assess Thailand's performance against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing again this month, which could determine whether it will lift the yellow flag against the country's fishing sector, reports the Nation. Thailand was slapped with a 'yellow card' for shortcomings in its fisheries monitoring, control and sanctioning systems in 2015. A red card would see Thailand's seafood exports to EU countries banned.

[Thai fishing boat slavery in spotlight at Toronto International Film Festival. 7 September 2018.](#)

The plight of workers trapped in slavery on Thai fishing boats will be cast in the spotlight at the Toronto International Film Festival, with the screening of a documentary aimed at making people think twice about the seafood they consume. Ghost Fleet, a 90-minute film backed by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, follows the story of a Thai activist and a slavery survivor from Myanmar who risked their lives to free fishermen, some of whom were trapped on boats for years.

[Manning Agents & UK Fisheries Supply Chain Investigative Report & Case Study of Non-EEA crew from the Philippines. August 2018.](#)

Human Rights at Sea has published a new case study exploring the issue of Philippine manning agencies supplying Non-EEA crew to the UK Fisheries industry and the issues this raises in terms of transparency of practice, due diligence to assure welfare safeguards for crew, and the necessary safeguards required to ensure decent work conditions. The charity spent time in the Philippines interviewing a number of government and non-government, civil society and commercial stakeholders for this first report. The charity aims to raise the profile of this long-standing route for use of Non-EEA crew in the fishing industry in order to ensure that greater levels of transparency and welfare support are made available to those working at sea.

[HRAS Case Study: Manning Agents and the UK Fishing Industry Supply Chain: An Investigative Report and Case Study of non-EEA crew from the Philippines.](#) August 2018.

Certification

[MSC announces changes to labour reporting, objections and stakeholder engagement. 31 August 2018.](#)

The Marine Stewardship Council has released its updated Fishery Certification Process v2.1. This includes several changes to its Fisheries Certification Process following a review that began in 2016. The Fisheries Certification Process contains the requirements that Conformity Assessment Bodies must follow when assessing fisheries against the MSC Fisheries Standard. The updated process will come into use after 28 February 2019, and will apply to all new assessments, as well as all reassessments, surveillance audits, scope extensions and expedited audits. The new labour requirements included in the update must be complied with by all fisheries in the MSC program by 31 August 2019. All fisheries in the MSC program must complete and submit a Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures template, detailing the measures they have in place to mitigate the presence of forced or child labour. This must be submitted to the Conformity Assessment Body by 31 August 2019. If the deadline is not met, the fishery will not be eligible for certification and existing certificates will be suspended. This is the first stage of a phased approach where the MSC will introduce auditing and requirements, on a risk basis, for the exclusion of forced labour in MSC-certified fisheries and supply chains.

[UK coalition recognizes risk of slavery in supply chains. 14 September 2018.](#)

Businesses in the UK's Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC) have agreed on commitments that recognize the risk of modern slavery and social responsibility in their supply chains. The SSC has updated its code on environmentally responsible fish and seafood sourcing with the following statements: SSC members recognize that social responsibility is another critical pillar of sustainability in the global seafood supply chain; Members comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 where applicable; Members have policies that consider social and ethical challenges in seafood sourcing in their supply chains.

Initiatives

[Human Rights at Sea and Stop Illegal Fishing announce collaboration to raise awareness of human rights protections on fishing vessels. 31 August 2018.](#)

Human Rights at Sea and the Botswana-based African NGO Stop Illegal Fishing (SIF) have entered into a mutually supporting collaborative partnership to continue to maintain and raise the global narrative on illegal fishing activities which include promoting human rights protections against abuses of crew.

[Podcast – Tools for building ethical and sustainable supply chains. 4 July 2018.](#)

Verisk Maplecroft's Erin McVeigh, Head of Products and Data Services, joins a panel discussion including Tony Harris, Global Vice President SAP Ariba. The podcast explores the exploding

sophistication in the ability to gain insights into supply chain risks. The panel examines new tools and methods that can be combined to ease the assessment and remediation of hundreds of supply chain risks – from use of illegal and unethical labour practices to hidden environmental risks.

Events

[Issara Global Forum 2018. 7-9 November 2018. Bangkok, Thailand.](#)

The theme is innovation in human rights and responsible sourcing. The forum will look at: what it takes to effectively and ethically use worker voice solutions that lead to results on the ground; steps companies can take to implement a financially viable “employer pays” model of ethical recruitment within their supply chains; the characteristics of the most effective public-private partnerships that address labour issues in supply chains; promising technologies to support more responsible sourcing; and what do workers see as solutions to their problems?

Consultations

[ILO/ETISURVEY: Invitation to participate in the ILO - ETI Seafood supply chains survey 2018. 24 September 2018. Please respond by 15 October 2018.](#)

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ethical Trading Initiatives (ETI) are asking suppliers to the seafood, aquaculture and fish industry globally to take part in an anonymous survey around purchasing practices and business models and how these may impact on suppliers and on workers. This study will test the reporting of seafood buyers’ practices against the reporting of seafood suppliers. The work will be looking at practices from buyers and suppliers that adversely/positively impact on workers and what can be done to better protect workers. The work will particularly look at buying practices that may force suppliers to act against the interests of workers. They therefore need suppliers and buyers to provide a very honest commentary on their experiences and practices (this is why the survey is strictly anonymised, to protect supplier identities). This research looks at the seafood industry globally, but we will hope to use the learning in Thailand specifically as a current hot spot. Please access the online survey [here](#). This anonymous and confidential survey will take you 30 - 40 minutes to complete. Please, provide answers in English where a written response is required.

[ILO SURVEY: Mapping of existing initiatives in Southeast Asia to protect fishers' rights and combat labour exploitation. 18 September 2018.](#)

The ILO SEA Fisheries Project, which aims to reduce forced labour, human trafficking, and exploitation in the Southeast Asian fishing industry through regional collaboration, is mapping existing initiatives working to empower Southeast Asian fishers and reduce exploitation in the fishing and seafood industry. They are asking for key stakeholder involved in ongoing efforts to help them compile a database by completing a [short questionnaire](#) (5-10 minutes). The questionnaire has been designed to identify the [key issue\(s\)](#) the initiative is working to address and the [mechanism\(s\)](#) through which the initiative is addressing the issue(s). This mapping exercise aims to create an online searchable database of initiatives working to reduce slavery in the fishing and seafood industry, which we hope will be a valuable tool for future collaboration and coordination in the region. A scoping survey of current initiatives has already been conducted, identifying your project as a key stakeholder. The questionnaire seeks to validate the data collected (to ensure an accurate, up-to-date database) and to identify further initiatives that may have been overlooked.

[PUBLIC CONSULTATION: Development of the IFFO RS Chain of Custody Standard V2.0. 18 September 2018. Closing date 18 October 2018.](#)

In order to safeguard the IFFO RS CoC standard’s relevancy, robustness and credibility, as well as satisfying market requirements, the IFFO RS Governing Body Committee agreed with the proposal to undertake the development of the new IFFO RS CoC version 2.0. Proposed changes to the standard will cover effective integrated management systems, subcontractors, labelling and logo control,

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personnel competencies, social and environmental aspects. In addition, traceability and mass balance exercises will be included in the new version and the activities of the users such as traders, refiners, storage will be differentiated.

[TIP Report 2018 summary](#)

The 2018 U.S. Department of State Department report on human trafficking, the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, was published on 28 June 2018.

Seafish Insight: Fish or fishing is mentioned in association with forced labour in 49 countries (same as 2017, 51 in 2016). Countries that have been singled out specifically with regards to fishing include Cambodia, Fiji (moved down from Tier 2 Watch List to Tier 2), Ghana (up from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 2), Indonesia, South Korea, Laos (down from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 3), Papua New Guinea (down from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 3), Solomon Islands, Taiwan and Thailand (up from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 2). Countries where fishing has been mentioned as a risk this year (but not in 2017) are Costa Rica, Israel, Malaysia, Mauritius, Senegal and the USA. Thailand has moved up to Tier 2 after moving up to the Tier 2 'Watch List' from Tier 3 in 2017. 'The Government of Thailand does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period; therefore Thailand was upgraded to Tier 2.'

This is an amalgamation of the news alerts issued in August and September 2018.