



**October and November 2018**

**Seafood Ethics Common Language Group e-alert  
(amalgamation of news alerts issued to SECLG circulation list by email in Oct and Nov 2018)**

**Seafood Ethics Common Language Group**  
<https://www.seafish.org/article/ethics-in-seafood>

**UK and Ireland and the implementation of the ILO Work in Fishing Convention (ILO 188)**  
**Maritime and Coastguard Agency: New fishing vessel legislation to come into force. 29 October 2018.**

From this November, the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) will require UK fishing vessels to comply with the International Labour Organization's Working in Fishing Convention. This follows the MCA's public and industry consultation on these measures, which addressed all aspects of living and working conditions on fishing vessels – including decent crew accommodation, work agreements and regular payment of wages, medical fitness of seafarers, medical care on board and health and safety. The new legislation builds on existing standards for the industry, some of which (such as those on wages) are out of date and others are limited in application. Implementing the International Labour Organization's Work In Fishing Convention (ILO 188) provides a framework for protecting all fishermen, regardless of their employment status (whether employed or share fishermen). It will also allow the MCA to enforce these standards on fishing vessels over 24 metres which are registered in the UK and non-UK vessels calling in UK ports. Using the new legislation for safer working conditions for crew, the MCA will require personal flotation devices (PFDs) to be worn while working on deck unless a written risk assessment can demonstrate that the risk of going overboard can be eliminated. New MCA guidelines and Marine Information Notes are being published. See [here](#) For a useful timetable see [here](#)

**Court to hear allegations of human trafficking and labour exploitation on Irish fishing fleet. 15 October 2018.**

A case centred on alleged human trafficking and labour exploitation on the Irish fishing fleet is due before the High Court next month. The International Transport Worker's Federation (ITF) has brought proceedings seeking an immediate moratorium on the grant or renewal of work permits under the permit scheme for non-EU fishing industry workers. The Federation wants a moratorium pending a review of conditions attaching to the scheme. The ITF went to court after it identified a number of individuals who came here to take advantage of permits granted under the scheme and who were subsequently allegedly subjected to human trafficking and other severe forms of labour exploitation on Irish fishing vessels.

### **Consultations**

**ILO/ETI SURVEY: Invitation to participate in the ILO - ETI Seafood supply chains survey 2018. Deadline has been extended to the end of November.**

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. The link for this seafood/aquaculture and their products supplier survey is [here](#)

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If you are a buyer of seafood/aquaculture and their products, please see this second survey which is for buyers (not suppliers) the buyer survey is [here](#)

**[Feedback requested on the draft methodology for the new Seafood Stewardship Index](#). Deadline is 17 December 2018.**

The Seafood Stewardship Index is reaching out to individuals and organizations who have invested in the social dimension of the global seafood sector to hear your thoughts on the indicators in the draft methodology for the Seafood Stewardship Index. This process aims to measure the impact of the 30 largest seafood companies in the world towards achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an ambitious set of 17 goals for 2030 on sustainable development that were adopted by all 193 UN Member States. The Seafood Stewardship Index (SSI) will be a first of many benchmarks to be developed by the World Benchmarking Alliance and is aimed at moving towards a sustainable seafood production.

**[FAO and the ILO collaboration – and the development of guidance on social sustainability](#)  
[The Vatican joins FAO to denounce labour abuses in fishing industry](#). 21 November 2018.**

There are several broad fronts along which international efforts to combat labour abuses in the fisheries sector can be coordinated. An important one is adoption and enforcement of the ILO's Convention 188 on Work In Fishing; another important opportunity is presented by the FAO Port State Measures Agreement, which has entered into force and aims at stamping out IUU fishing: the FAO is also developing guidance on social responsibility in seafood value chains, which will be presented to the FAO Committee on Fisheries in 2020.

**[FAO Podcast: Trapped at Sea: The fight against slavery in the fishing industry](#). November 2018.**

This shows Rahat, a Thai fisherman who was caught at sea for years before he was finally rescued from an Indonesian island in 2015. It also covers a talk with victim advocates and international experts pushing for decent labor standards and stronger inspections aboard these trawlers, and explores why trafficking and forced work remain so pervasive in the global fishing industry and what fishers stand to gain from a new collaboration between FAO and the International Labor Organization - a partnership that joins the fight against human trafficking at sea with the fight against illegal fishing.

**[Vigo Dialogue on decent work in fisheries and aquaculture](#). 2 October 2018.**

**Decent Work for Human and Labour Rights: Towards Social Responsibility in the Seafood Industry**

Numerous international and national initiatives are now calling for increased social responsibility and improvements of social and labour conditions in fisheries value chains. Such initiatives are increasingly supported by governments, non-governmental organizations, industry, certification schemes and international governmental organizations and agencies. The COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT) has a specific mandate to promote social sustainability in fisheries value chains, mainly the recognition and protection of human and labour rights in national and international value chains, and to collaborate with international partner organizations. In July 2018 it was decided that the guidance on social sustainability should be developed in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, including industry and fish worker associations, building on experience from the development of the OECD/FAO – Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains. The Vigo Dialogue aimed to facilitate an open discussion to enable feedback and inputs from stakeholders in order to address the challenges and complexity of this topic, and in particular the Dialogue will focus on the mandate from COFI on social responsibility and the process and roadmap for the guidance development and stakeholder involvement. The final outcome of the guidance development process will be presented to COFI-FT in 2019 and COFI in 2020.

### **Modern slavery reporting in the UK**

#### **Retailer Protocol for Handling Reported Cases of Modern Slavery in the UK Supply Chain.**

**November 2018.**

Developed in partnership by the British Retail Consortium (BRC), the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and Stronger Together, as well as through consultation with supply chain partners, the Retailer Protocol for Handling Reported Cases of Modern Slavery in the UK supply chain, is an advisory document to help both retailers and suppliers to apply good practice when responding to cases of hidden forced labour. The protocol gives suppliers confidence that their retailer customers will provide the appropriate support if a case of modern slavery is reported. The document establishes principles of good practice and a procedural protocol for retailers in responding to reported cases of forced labour, human trafficking, debt bondage, and other forms of modern slavery.

#### **For quick reference: three pieces of legislation introduced in 2015 form the pillars of the UK's statutory framework for tackling modern slavery.**

The [Modern Slavery Act](#), the [Human Trafficking and Exploitation \(Criminal Justice and Support for Victims\) Act \(Northern Ireland\)](#) and the [Human Trafficking and Exploitation \(Scotland\) Act](#).

This legislation provides a statutory framework for the UK's response to human trafficking and modern slavery. Complementing this legislation is a wide range of policy and guidance, for the multiple professions who are impacted through it.

#### **BHRRC. FTSE 100 companies and the Modern Slavery Act.** November 2018. **Businesses pushed to meet requirements of UK Modern Slavery Act.**

The Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, has reviewed the modern slavery statements of the FTSE 100 largest companies listed on the London Stock Exchange and found in "the vast majority of companies' reported efforts are wholly inadequate. The findings show that the MSA has failed to deliver the transformational change many hoped for.

#### **Modern slavery reporting: Is there evidence of progress?** October 2018.

This report on modern slavery statements looks at a group of 150 companies last analysed in April 2017 to see if their statements have changed. This has been supplemented with interviews with leading companies to assess if reporting is driving change within businesses.

18 months since the last analysis, only 54% of companies had produced a new statement. The Modern Slavery Act states that companies should report every year.

Of those companies that had produced a new statement, 58% had incorporated what we regard as substantial changes to content such as descriptions of new due diligence processes or the outcomes of risk assessments or actions taken to mitigate risks. The rest of the statements contained either minimal changes or no amendments at all other than to change the date of the statement.

Statements are getting longer but not necessarily more informative. The quality of reporting in terms of content, scope and detail has remained the same with no appreciable change in quality.

#### **Home Office tells business: open up on modern slavery or face further action.** 18 October 2018.

The Home Office is writing directly to chief executives of 17,000 businesses telling them to open up about modern slavery in their supply chains, or risk being named as in breach of the law. The Home Office intends to publish a list of non-compliant companies failing to publish a Modern Slavery Statement at the end of the financial year.

#### **2018 UK annual report on modern slavery.** 18 October 2018.

This report provides an overview of modern slavery in the UK and explains how the UK has responded to this threat over the last 12 months.

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**[Contacts database for guidance on modern slavery reporting.](#) 15 October 2018.**

A new modern slavery contacts database provides guidance and resources on producing a modern slavery statement. Anyone who registers their details on the contacts database will receive email updates every six weeks from the Home Office to help develop and improve their modern slavery statement. Practical guidance, including: updated Home Office statutory guidance on reporting; a framework to help you evaluate the quality of your statement; and best practice case studies and details of events, as well as reminders to help plan and publish a statement on time will be provided.

**Reports and initiatives**

**Responsible Recruitment Toolkit full website now launched. November 2018.**

The Responsible Recruitment Toolkit (RRT) supports labour providers, labour recruiters and in-house recruitment/HR teams to recruit responsibly; enabling you to achieve business goals whilst delivering exceptional jobseeker and worker experience.

**2017 Findings on the worst forms of child labour report by the U.S. Department of Labor.**

**November 2018.**

This discusses the efforts of 132 countries to eliminate child labour and forced labour. The report notes that the crime persists in every sector of the global economy, with almost half of the 152 million children in child labour worldwide engaged in hazardous work. While the worldwide trend of child labour is decreasing, it is rising in some regions such as sub-Saharan Africa.

**Scientific paper: Modern slavery and the race to fish. 7 November 2018.**

Labour abuses, including modern slavery, are 'hidden subsidies' that allow distant-water fishing fleets to remain profitable and promote overfishing, new research from the University of Western Australia and the Sea Around Us initiative at the University of British Columbia has found. By combining fisheries data from the Sea Around Us initiative at UBC with country-level data on modern slavery, the researchers found that countries whose fleets rely heavily on government subsidies, fish far away from home ports, and fail to comprehensively report their actual catch, tend to fish beyond sustainable limits and are at higher risk of labour abuses.

**Anti Slavery Partnership Toolkit**

In 2017 research from the University of Nottingham and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner demonstrated that although multi-agency anti-slavery partnership work was developing across the UK, it lacked consistency and resources. In addition, very little monitoring and evaluation of partnership activity was occurring, and it was unclear what constituted 'good' practice. This toolkit is an attempt to help fill that gap, by providing a checklist to assist in reviewing partnership activity, a governance library to improve accountability and performance, access to the UK Training Library, plus a range of information, web-links and case studies to assist with other important aspects of anti-slavery activity.

**Launch of Stop the Traffik Analysis Hub**

This is a collaboration to more easily facilitate the exchange of information about human trafficking across organizations, specifically NGOs, financial institutions and law enforcement. The Traffik Analysis Hub is a partnership with IBM.

**Stronger Together Progress Reporting Tool (PRT)**

This is a pioneering online self-assessment tool which supports companies to measure progress made and to highlight their next steps in addressing modern slavery risks within their businesses and supply chains. The tool benefits businesses by: **giving** a clear picture of progress in addressing modern slavery risks in their business and supply chains, measured against a set of UN Guiding Principles framed questions. It creates clear downloadable reports and analytics to track progress

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over time and benchmark performance against peers and competitors in your sector, as well as providing steps and progress made that you can report in modern slavery statements. The tool enables suppliers to benchmark their progress against their peers and retailers to benchmark the data of their supplier base against all other industry data, as well as view specific supplier data when shared.

**[Thai CSO survey reveals progress and gaps of fishery reforms.](#) 17 September 2018.**

A group of national CSOs has come together and formed a CSO Coalition for Ethical and Sustainable Seafood – supported by the Freedom Fund and Humanity United – aiming to address human rights and environmental sustainability issues in the Thai fishing industry. This collective platform of frontline NGOs aims to work as industry and government ‘watchdogs,’ as well as provide constructive feedback on ongoing reforms. Currently, the CSO Coalition is made up of ten Thai NGOs, half of which are labour NGOs and the other half are environmental NGOs concerned with the fishing industry. In May 2018, the CSO Coalition formally launched its first collective survey of basic labour rights among migrants working in the Thai fishing sector. The report [Falling through the Net](#) reveals both signs of progress and existing gaps in the recent industry reforms.

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