



## June and July 2018

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

#### Seafood Ethics Common Language Group

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

#### Seafish news

##### **Responsible Fishing Scheme Update**

The Responsible Fishing Scheme is a voluntary vessel-based programme certifying high standards of crew welfare and responsible catching practices on board fishing vessels. The scheme currently operates under Version 1 of the RFS Standard; however, to ensure it continues to reflect best practice and meet the needs of the UK seafood sector, we are now developing Version 2 of the Standard.

A robust, collaborative process will be followed to ensure the next iteration of the Standard will fully align with the requirements of ILO c188, streamline the RFS certification model to enhance accessibility, and scale up participation through group certification. As the RFS is moving to a new home with Global Seafood Assurances (GSA) by May 2020, Seafish and GSA will work in partnership to ensure the development of Version 2 is market led, incorporating valued feedback from the breadth of the UK seafood industry and international experts.

Our first step is to consult with key stakeholders from across the UK seafood sector to gain a better understanding of the needs and preferences of fishers and other organisations within the seafood supply chain. As well as offering one-to-one meetings, we are holding a series of consultation workshops giving stakeholders a great opportunity to provide constructive input to ensure that the RFS continues to provide a valuable service to the seafood industry. Topics for the day will include an overview of the vision of the RFS programme, a review of the current certification model, and the plans and time frames to develop version 2.

Following on from a successful workshop in Peterhead, there are three further events in September; a full agenda and a discussion document will be sent to registered attendees in advance of the workshop.

- Plymouth – 5th September
- Grimsby – 13th September
- Central London – 19th September

To register for any of the workshops, or make arrangements to capture your input separately, please contact [Kara Brydson](#), RFS Programme Manager, for further information. For information on the RFS and our members, please visit the RFS [website](#).

#### **Responsible Fishing Ports Scheme (RFPS) open for applications for large ports. 19 July 2018.**

The Seafish Responsible Fishing Ports Scheme (RFPS) has just been launched and is calling on suitable ports to apply. The RFPS is a voluntary programme developed by industry to certify responsible food safety and operational practices within fishing ports. It will allow fishing ports and organisations that operate within them to demonstrate they are following good practice, and will comprise two standards - one for large and one for small ports. The scheme is now open for applications from fishing ports with an auction or direct sale function (large ports) that wish to be

certified, to demonstrate their responsible operating credentials in the key areas of: Food Safety and Structural Integrity, Port and the Working Environment, Care for the Environment, Care of the Catch and Traceability. For a comprehensive overview of the [see RFPS](#)

### **UK news**

#### **Government commissions independent review of Modern Slavery Act 2015. 30 July 2018.**

An independent review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 has been announced by the Home Office today (Monday 30 July) to ensure our world-first legislation keeps in step with this evolving crime.

#### **Joint statement calling upon the UK government to provide a single state-owned central registry for corporate modern slavery statements. 3 July 2018.**

A Government controlled central registry for companies' modern slavery statements has been called for in a joint statement by a united coalition of prominent, businesses, parliamentarians, trade unions and human rights groups. Recognition that compliance with the Modern Slavery Act is low at around 30%, has prompted this joint statement in the hope it will lead to greater transparency. A registry would also enable the identification of leading businesses, but also uncover those businesses which require further support.

#### **UK implementation of ILO 188. July 2018.**

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) received twenty-five written responses, mostly from organisations and companies to the consultation re UK implementation of ILO 188. The issue which generated the most comments was the application of medical fitness standards to fishermen. Other key concerns were: use of exemptions especially for smaller vessels; the status of share fishermen; hours of rest; fishermen's work agreements; the need for 'safety tonnage' allowances (relating to the increased minimum size for crew accommodation); and issues relating to insurance.

#### **16 possible cases of trafficking in fishing industry; Government urged to halt work permit scheme. May 2018.**

Sixteen potential human trafficking victims have been identified by the International Transport Workers Federation that has threatened the Government with High Court proceedings unless it halts a permit scheme used by the fishing industry. The Government has been told it will face the initiation of proceedings within 21 days if it does not put a pause on the atypical permit scheme for non-EU fishermen.

#### **'We thought slavery had gone away': African men exploited on Irish boats. May 2018.**

#### **Channel 4. Alex Thompson looking into the problem of sourcing non-EEA crew (namely Filipino) in the West of Scotland and NI.**

### **Thailand and Asia**

#### **Call for Thailand to Stand Strong on Human Rights. 18 August 2018.**

A group of 28 NGOs have called on the Thai government to not yield to attempts to derail the ratification of the international Work in Fishing Convention, which protects fishers from human rights abuses.

#### **Thailand Ratifies Convention to Tackle Forced Labor. 4 June 2018.**

Thailand has officially ratified the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention. They are the first in Asia and the 24th globally to ratify the Forced Labour Protocol, a 2014 complement to the ILO Forced Labour Convention of 1930.

**[Greenpeace East Asia report: Misery at Sea. Taiwanese seafood giant linked to human rights violations.](#) 24 May 2018.**

New evidence links human rights abuses to Taiwan's international fishing fleet, including major seafood trader Fong Chun Formosa Fishery Company (FCF). The investigations show that Taiwan's fishery supply chain is still tainted by human rights abuses, despite the law change in early 2017 to protect migrant fishers on Taiwanese vessels.

**[Thai initiative to help crew members contact families while at sea wins support.](#) 11 May 2018.**

A new regulation from the Thai government requires vessel owners to provide a satellite communication system and device on board for workers operating outside of national waters. The initiative will allow captain and crew to contact families or make a complaint and report problems that might occur at sea. Ministerial regulation on labour protection in sea fishing work (No. 2) B.E. 2561) states the system must be able to support the transmission of at least a 1 MB text message per person, per month for at least one quarter of workers on board, and the employer must pay for these devices.

**[Combating Forced Labour with electronic payment.](#) 10 May 2018.**

Ending pay violations including wage withholding in the Thai fishing industry means turning the ILO's 2018 baseline research on wages into new systems for tracking and fixing pay problems. The Thai government's new requirement that all fishers be paid through bank accounts took effect in May 2018.

**[HRW letter to the Thai Government.](#) April 2018.**

We write to you about the problem of forced labour and trafficking in the Thai fishing industry **[Thailand Ministry of Foreign Affairs letter in response to Human Right Watch \(HRW\) letter.](#)**

This highlighted the progress made in Thailand on the issues highlighted by the HRW.

**Events**

**[International Maritime Human Rights Conference.](#) 29 October 2018. Fishmongers' Hall, London.**

The conference will cover the key topic of Maritime Business and Human Rights.

**[Second annual Issara Global Forum: Innovation in Human Rights and Responsible Sourcing.](#) 7-9 November 2018, Bangkok, Thailand.**

The three-day multi-stakeholder forum will be an in-depth immersion and exchange for all participants – including global buyers, Southeast Asian suppliers and recruitment agencies, worker representatives and survivors, trade unions, development donors, NGOs from around the world, and Asian government officials -- on innovation and emerging good practice in ethical sourcing. Building on the initial commitments and lessons learned from last year, the three key areas of focus will again be: new policies and effective partnerships in ethical sourcing; Technology, worker voice, and remediation; and ethical recruitment in global supply chains.

**Consultations**

**[Marine Stewardship Council Consultation.](#) 15 August 2018. Closing date 15 October 2018.**

The MSC is consulting on revisions to the Chain of Custody (CoC) Program documents and onshore Labour Practices project which are scheduled for release in February 2019.

**[Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative Opens Public Consultation.](#) 27 July 2018. Open until 23 September 2018.**

The Consumer Goods Forum's Sustainable Supply Chain Initiative (SSCI) has opened the global public consultation of its first set of benchmarking criteria. The initial call for input covers the benchmark for social compliance schemes that audit processing / manufacturing facilities in the food and non-

food sector. The benchmark consists of two parts, the Social Criteria and the Scheme Management Criteria:

- **Social Criteria:** Criteria that are typically found in codes of conduct (e.g. child labour, forced labour, working hours, discrimination, etc.). The criteria are based on international reference frameworks, notably ILO Conventions and Recommendations and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, as well as the CGF Priority Industry Principles.
- **Scheme Management Criteria:** Criteria that ensure the robust performance of schemes and the effective implementation of the schemes' procedures and policies (e.g. governance, standard-setting mechanism, relationship with audit firms, etc.). The criteria are mainly based on the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) Scheme Management Criteria and the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) Governance and Operational Management criteria.

[Public consultation](#)

### **[Review of the Modern Slavery Act and the progress that has been made in 3 years. 18 July 2018.](#)**

#### **Call for written evidence into modern slavery by Friday 7 September 2018.**

The Home Affairs Select Committee has announced that it will undertake an inquiry looking at the progress that has been made in the three years since the Modern Slavery Act came into force, and what remains to be done.

### **Reports**

#### **[Study develops new method for identifying risk of forced labor in seafood supply chains. 26 July 2018.](#)**

Katrina Nakamura, Sustainability Incubator, is the lead author of a [five-point plan](#) to identify areas with high risks of forced labour throughout the seafood supply chain. The plan's approach involves stepping up product-screening to determine where the seafood originates, producing a template for mapping the supply chain, creating an algorithm "for estimating risk in fishing operations", creating surveys for "collective proof of protective conditions in the workplace" and establishing a common set of principles for those protective conditions. The framework utilizes existing data on supply chains as well as some of the same traceability technologies used in food safety to track worker conditions.

#### **[2018 Global Slavery Index. July 2018.](#)**

The 2018 Global Slavery Index measures the extent of modern slavery country by country, and the steps governments are taking to respond to this issue to objectively measure progress toward ending modern slavery. The Index draws together findings from across estimates of prevalence, measurement of vulnerability, and assessment of government responses, alongside an analysis of trade flows and data on specific products. The data provides a picture of the ways modern slavery is impacting countries around the world.

[Focus on fishing.](#) Has ratings on 20 countries and their fishing industry. Does include some supplying countries to UK.

*Commentary.* [What's wrong with the Global Slavery Index.](#)

#### **[Human trafficking hidden by at-sea trading, prompting calls for regulation. 23 July 2018](#)**

The widespread practice of trading at sea, known as transshipment, lacks adequate regulation and transparency, making it all too easy to hide human trafficking, drug smuggling and illegal fishing activities. This is the finding of the first ever analysis of fishing vessel interactions on a global scale, which is published in the journal *Frontiers in Marine Science* today. It was undertaken by researchers from Google, SkyTruth and Global Fishing Watch. [Report](#)

**[Rise of robots fuels slavery threat for Southeast Asian factory workers, analysts say.](#) 13 July 2018.**

The rise of robots in manufacturing in Southeast Asia is likely to fuel modern slavery, as workers who end up unemployed due to automation face abuses competing for a shrinking pool of low-paid jobs in a “race to the bottom”. Drastic job losses because of the growth of automation in the region – a hub for many manufacturing enterprises, from garments to vehicles – could produce a spike in labour abuses and slavery in global supply chains, according to risk consultancy [Verisk Maplecroft in its annual report](#).

**[Trafficking in Persons Report 2018.](#) June 2018.**

This year’s report focuses on effective ways local communities can address human trafficking proactively and on how national governments can support and empower them.

**[ITUC Global Rights Index 2018: Democratic space shrinks and unchecked corporate greed on the rise.](#) 7 June 2018**

The ITUC Global Rights Index 2018 ranks 142 countries against 97 internationally recognised indicators to assess where workers’ rights are best protected in law and in practice. The report ranks the ten worst countries for workers’ rights in 2018 as Algeria, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Colombia, Egypt, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Haiti, Kenya, Macedonia, Mauritania and Spain have all seen their rankings worsen in 2018 with a rise in attacks on workers’ rights in law and practice.

**[International Labor Rights Forum urge action on seafood industry worker abuse.](#) 30 May 2018.**

Taking stock labor exploitation, illegal fishing and brand responsibility in the seafood industry The International Labor Rights Forum has released a 63-page study documenting a pilot project which trialed a new technology platform designed to collect and report on working conditions at sea. The project, dubbed Independent Monitoring at Sea (IM@Sea), is a technology package with the combined capabilities of vessel monitoring, electronic catch reporting, and electronic video monitoring.

**[Tuna caught by forced labour ‘almost certainly’ landed in NZ.](#) 27 May 2018.**

A Stuff Circuit investigation into the global tuna fishing industry highlighted two recent cases of forced labour, and how customs are unable to guarantee where tuna comes from. A private investigator says he found harrowing slavery on an industrial scale when he looked into the actions of international fishing fleets.

**New initiatives**

**[Committee on Fisheries. Towards social sustainability in fishery value chains.](#) July 2018.**

COFI has recommended that FAO should explore the possibility of developing, in close collaboration with interested partner organizations and stakeholders, a guidance document to assist fish value chain actors in the implementation of existing relevant instruments, criteria and measures covering responsible business conduct, human rights and international labour standards.

**[Framework for Social Responsibility in the Seafood Sector.](#) 19 July 2018.**

The participating organizations are the Aquaculture Stewardship Council, Fair Trade USA, Marine Stewardship Council, Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch, and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership. This states that one of the main activities of the Collaboration has been the development of a framework to help the seafood industry define social responsibility in the seafood sector. As a first step in agreeing on a common framework, the Collaboration reviewed the main efforts and tools currently used to improve social performance in seafood supply chains and interviewed NGOs, buyers, and government agencies to better understand the issues and gaps that exist.

**[Focus on Labour Exploitation \(FLEX\). Seeing through transparency: a FLEX blueprint for worker-centred corporate accountability to prevent human trafficking for labour exploitation. July 2018.](#)**

This action plan sets out steps for governments to ensure that the interests of workers are central to efforts to tackle human trafficking and forced labour in global supply chains. The blueprint is the result of in-depth engagement with trade unions, businesses, academics and civil society.

**[Partnership Launched to Tackle Slavery at Sea. July 2018.](#)**

Seafarers' charity Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) has joined forces with the Santa Marta Group to tackle the issue of slavery at sea. The organizations will run a series of workshops aimed at educating and informing AoS chaplains, volunteers, port officials and police about slavery at sea and what can be done to protect and support seafarers and fishermen. The first workshop took place in Tilbury Docks earlier this year, followed by Santos, Brazil in May. More workshops will be rolled-out at ports globally.

**[Stronger Together Progress Reporting Tool. July 2018.](#)**

Stronger Together has developed a pioneering new resource, the Progress Reporting Tool (PRT). Launching within their Consumer Goods sector the PRT is a free online self-assessment tool which enables businesses to monitor and report their progress in tackling modern slavery and benchmark their standing against their peers using the globally accepted UN Guiding Principles framework.

**[Network created in Thailand to stop fishing abuse. 31 May 2018.](#)**

A newly created independent network has been launched in Thailand to combat the abuse and exploitation of fishermen, most of whom are Cambodian and Myanmar migrants. The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), has launched the Fishers' Rights Network (FRN) with the support of 37 unions and federations in the region, the US, the UK and Australia.

**[New Stronger Together and Sedex Partnership. 21 May 2018.](#)**

Stronger Together and Sedex are pleased to announce a new partnership to work together to amplify support for businesses to tackle forced labour and modern slavery. This complementary partnership brings together two organisations with unique positions within the responsible business community with the shared aim to reduce forced labour in global supply chains.

**[New Survivor Alliance launched. 23 April 2018.](#)**

A new survivor led initiative has been launched to unite, empower and increase the voice of those who have experienced modern slavery and human trafficking within the anti-slavery movement.

**['TripAdvisor' for migrant workers to review recruitment agencies](#)**

Recruitment Advisor is a new global online platform aiming to prevent migrant workers falling victim to exploitative and rogue recruitment agencies by providing a forum for peer-to-peer ratings and reviews. Recently launched by the ITUC and the ILO Fair Recruitment Initiative, the website will enable workers to leave feedback about recruitment agencies in their country of origin and destination in English, Indonesian, Nepali and Tagalog.

**[New IMO webpage](#)**

The IMO has released a webpage related to Cape Town Agreement, IUU and fisher safety.

***This is an amalgamation of the news alerts issued in June and July 2018.***