



October 2017

This is our fourth project update for the ILO's EU-funded Ship to Shore Rights Project

Industry Agrees to New GLP Principles

Impact Muang Thong Thani—The ILO's EU-funded Ship to Shore Rights Project 'Good Labour Practices' (GLP) event in May was headlined by the Minister of Labour General Sirichai Distakul (in photo) and European Union Charge D'Affaires Luisa Ragher. Leaders of seafood and fishing associations, government, unions, and civil society organizations pledged publicly to act out nine core elements of credible industry labour programmes.

These include clear workplace standards, CEO-level commitment and dedicated labour staff, industry internal due diligence and remediation, engagement with workers and civil society, accountability mechanisms for high- and low-performers, and independent due diligence with public reporting on labour practices. Finally, the revised GLP will look for sourcing choices by downstream buyers--including overseas retailers--that reward good labour practices.

The GLP Revision report and video of the event can be downloaded at the [project website](#). After the event, Thai Tuna and Thai Frozen Foods associations committed to build GLP programmes following the new principles. Their first programme cycle will be followed in 2018 by a public report card on progress by all industry associations—both fishing and seafood—toward these goals.



What does stronger enforcement look like?

Phuket—A round of intensive training for 140 Ministry of Labour inspectors plus newly-hired interpreters wrapped up in Phuket in September. Training and live exercises in seafood processing and port-in/port-out inspections (photo) focused intensively on worker interview techniques, forced labour indicators, and moving from finding violations to enforcement—a May 2017 government order calls for Ministry inspectors to detain vessels that violate Thai labour law. Sessions also compared Ministry enforcement rates against the new independent working conditions data produced by the project.

The second round of training is slated to begin in Nov/Dec 2017 and an ILO training curriculum for new inspectors—due to be hired in 2018—including seafood and fishing inspection is in the works. Also starting a second round are provincial meetings of government, employers, and worker organizations that the ILO project has organized to drive local solutions in Phuket, Songkla, Phang-nga, and Chonburi (photo).



New centres, new worker activities

Phang-nga—Worker training on labour rights, Thai labour law, and more are expanding in port areas from Chonburi and Rayong to Songkla, Pattani, and Phang-nga. Three new Stella Maris Seafarer's Centres along the Gulf coast opened in the first quarter of 2017 and SERC worker outreach and training efforts in both seafood and fishing (in partnership with the International Transport Workers Federation) have ramped up along the Gulf coast (photo). The project is also making investments in legal services across the country via HRDF, and migrant worker advocacy with Raks Thai and the Foundation for Education and Development.



Forced Labour in Thai law

Bangkok—Forced Labour is not yet defined in Thai law but the Government's commitment to ratify the ILO Forced Labour Protocol (P. 29) has produced a draft Forced Labour Act. The ILO has offered comments on the draft and the tripartite drafting committee will take up a second version before the end of the year. Changes to Thai law to comply with the ILO's Work in Fishing Convention (C. 188) are also planned for 2017. Although not an objective of the project, Ship to Shore Rights is following proposed changes to the Labour Relations Act, part of an effort by the government to ratify Convention 98—Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining. The Project's gap analyses for P. 29 and C. 188 are available [here](#).

October 2017 working conditions report

Bangkok—Working conditions in the Thai fishing and seafood industry—data on wages, hours, recruitment, safety, and more—are detailed in the forthcoming baseline study from Ship to Shore Rights. Highlights from the survey of 434 fishing and seafood workers in 11 provinces include little evidence of child labour (1%) and an increase from 6% to 42% since 2013 in fishers who recall getting written contracts. The survey also reveals a tangle of wage payment issues in fishing: 24% report receiving less than the legal minimum wage, 24% report withholding of wages, 52% have pay deducted, and 52% report receiving advances from employers. The study will be published in October 2017 and followed by reports on electronic payment of fishers plus a survey of fishing vessel owners on recruitment, new migration rules, and labour market dynamics.

Ship to Shore Rights on the road

Seattle and Geneva—The project featured in industry and civil society panels at the [SeaWeb Conference](#) in Seattle, Washington in May 2017, and in a presentation to the first tripartite ILO Migrant Fishers meeting in Geneva in September. (See the report [here](#)). Topping the list of questions were progress on ratification by Thailand of the Forced Labour Protocol and Convention 188, organizing rights for migrant workers, and stronger labour enforcement in the fishing industry. The Thai government sent delegations to both meetings.

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