



## Combatting Unacceptable Forms of Work in the Thai Fishing and Seafood Industry

SHIP TO SHORE RIGHTS

PROJECT NEWSLETTER

December 2019

### Case Study: How tech on vessels can help reduce forced labour

**Pattani** — A new [Ship to Shore Rights study published today](#) demonstrates how simple vessel upgrades help purse seiner owners reduce labour demand and make their industry more sustainable. Installing simple hydraulic “power block” systems to help pull in nets (photo) has reduced crew size by 40 percent on board a working Pattani purse seiner reconfigured with support from the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC). An upgrade to the on-board fish refrigeration system preserved fish quality and has increased revenue per trip by 10 percent. With lower labour costs and higher earnings, net profits are expected to climb up to 59% in the second year after reconfiguration. Vessel owners can earn back the THB 1.75 million reconfiguration costs in just one year. These changes make possible for immediate improvements in working conditions and wages and — on a larger scale — help balance Thai fishing’s tilted labour market and reduce the pressures that drive the industry’s forced labour problem. The ILO study recommends government support for a lending programme to support reconfiguration of Thai purse seiners that are independently verified as compliant with Thai labour law and ILO core labour standards as well as fishing regulations.



## New ILO film shows impact of workers activities

**Bangkok** – [A new short film launched today](#) shows how trade union organizing and CSO support for migrant workers have helped bring seafood processing workers and fishers to the centre of the debate over reform of the Thai fishing industry. Ship to Shore Rights partners highlighted in the film include Fishers' Rights Network (ITF/FRN), Raks Thai Foundation, State Enterprise Workers Relations Confederation (SERC) Foundation, Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF), and Stella Maris Seafarers' Centre. This is the fourth short film in the Ship to Shore Rights series that includes Ratification of the Forced Labour Protocol (P. 29), Best practices for enforcement in fishing, and Revised Good Labour Practices programme for the seafood industry. See them all at [shiptoshorerights.org](http://shiptoshorerights.org).



## Seafood GLP Working Committee Adds Members

**Bangkok** — The Seafood Good Labour Practices (GLP) Working Committee met for the second time this year and followed the GLP Guidelines with an expansion of its tripartite membership. The Thai MOL and two leading GLP industry associations — Thai Frozen Foods Association (TFFA) and Thai Tuna Industry Association (TTIA) — nominated and confirmed new members including State Enterprise Relations Confederation (SERC), Raks Thai Foundation, Employers' Confederation of Thailand (ECOT), and U.K.-based Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI). For its first tripartite report, due in early 2020, GLP leaders intend to publish new metrics measuring progress on worker engagement, reducing labour violations, and GLP factory visits.



## New Labour Inspector Trainings and Migrant Fisher Trainings Completed

**Bangkok** – The ILO completed in October the third of three rounds of training for the Ministry of Labour’s expanded inspectorate — 189 new labour inspectors hired in 2018–2019. The intensive five-day training designed by the Ship to Shore Rights Project and Labour Ministry’s Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW) strengthened and tested the skills of inspectors in identifying labour abuses and enhancing enforcement in fishing and other sectors. The ILO and MOL brought together MOL senior executives, ILO experts, Thai labour judges, employers and workers organizations for special sessions. The ILO presented the final curriculum to the MOL Permanent Secretary Mr. Suthi Sukosol during the November Project Steering Committee Meeting.



**Yangon** – The Ship to Shore Rights Project likewise delivered in December its Fisher Pre-departure Training Orientation (PDO) to the Myanmar Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population (MOLIP). After three pilot trainings in Kawthaung, Myanmar, with ITF unions (FRN, IFOMS) and Raks Thai, the Project conducted a train-the-trainer session in Yangon. MOLIP is committed to continuing the trainings, and ITF and Raks Thai will continue to provide trainers to help educate the fishers on their fundamental rights, health and safety precautions on board vessels, and getting help in Thailand.



## Coming in 2020 – ‘Endline’ research on working conditions in Thai fishing, seafood

**Bangkok** – The Ship to Shore Rights Project’s Endline Research will report in Q1 2020 on changes in the fishing and seafood industry since the ILO’s 2017 [Baseline Report](#). The research surveyed 470 workers across 11 port areas in Thailand on key issues including recruitment, contracts, pay, hours, getting help, and forced labour.

***Wishing you a Happy New Year 2020!***

***Ship to Shore Rights Project***

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*The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the ILO Ship to Shore Rights Project and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union or the Thai Ministry of Labour.*

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