

GLOBAL SEAFOOD ASSURANCES (GSA) WHITE PAPER ON

Worker Voice on Fishing Vessels

A report commissioned by
**GLOBAL SEAFOOD
ASSURANCES**



Delivered by
KEY TRACEABILITY LTD.



NOVEMBER 2020

Global Seafood Assurances would like to thank the David & Lucile Packard Foundation for their support of this work, as well as the Advisory Group, interviewees, in-country representatives and survey respondents whose contributions were invaluable. We also thank Key Traceability for their tenacity, professionalism and dedication to the project.

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Introduction

The objective of this work is to describe the state of play in terms of Worker Voice and Grievance Processes in marine capture fisheries (and specifically on fishing vessels) which will feed into the wider aim of reaching consensus on definitions and best-practice approaches within the industry.

General definitions for these terms are given below, but it is the purpose of this white paper to explore these concepts and terms in relation to fishers and the fishing industry. It will describe the relevant initiatives, organisations and projects that are in operation or that have been piloted around the world. The result is a factual and informative overview to inform discussions and outline next steps.

Worker Voice is a term frequently used to describe the way in which workers have access to third party advice, to voice concerns, have influence over matters which affect them in the workplace and to improve the effectiveness of remediation. Voice is considered by the International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) as a fundamental right of workers to be represented, organise and collective bargaining.

A **Grievance Process** is a procedure / mechanism that provides a framework for addressing grievances of workers that relate to all stages of their employment, including during recruitment, at the workplace, and through to termination. This typically takes the form of the employer's internal procedure for complaints, followed by consideration and management response and resolution. It takes different forms and can be informal or consist of a written procedure managed by human resources and include worker representatives such as a Trade Union.

BACKGROUND

The concept of 'Worker Voice' has been around for over two centuries around the start of the Industrial Revolution (RISE, 2020); however, within the fishing industry 'Worker Voice' is the new buzzword (ILRF, 2018). The Issara Institute (2017) states that it is generally agreed that Worker Voice includes: "1) Capturing the voices, experiences, and needs of workers, and 2) Channelling that voice into a clear mechanism for remediation for those workers." The concept of Worker Voice historically represents a whole scale change in industrial relations, leading to the development of international labour law and the formation of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1919, one of the main

international bodies involved in reforming labour conditions. Implementing labour laws, regulations and standards is a means of promoting the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and putting the concept of Decent Work into practice (ILO). As a result, Worker Voice is a well-accepted concept in the labour rights field, and this can enable the seafood sector to catch up.

Workers' fundamental right to organise and voice issues is essential in understanding and resolving social issues, however there are practical challenges when applying this to crew on board fishing vessels due the unique characteristics of work in the fishing industry. Whilst Worker Voice initiatives and Grievance Mechanisms have been developing in many industries, the development of these for use in fishing has fallen short of land-based mechanisms due to the complexities of this working environment. These challenges include, but are not limited to:

- the often-remote locations of fishing vessels;
- low understanding of who the employer is for fishers;
- limited time in port and corresponding limited access to land-based authorities or mechanisms;
- low literacy, especially among migrant workers who do not speak the local or native language;
- a lack of telephone, internet access or other reliable means of communication; and
- the cost associated with effective Grievance Mechanisms.

There are around 4.6 million fishing vessels in the world with an estimated 27 million people who work in capture fishing (ILO). The mobility of workers and the hidden conditions at sea contribute to the fishing industry's social complexity, and Global Seafood Assurances (GSA) recognise it is critical to have robust systems whereby fishers can have safe and confidential access to advice or to raise grievances. The emergence of standards based on global conventions that address social issues on fishing vessels and crew welfare has accelerated in recent years. It is considered important that these standards have a requirement of a Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism being in place, but there is little guidance on best practice or what is expected.

The importance of this work has been well illustrated by a growing amount of media attention and investigative journalism regarding labour conditions in fisheries around the world; as a result the seafood sector is under increasing pressure to ensure that crews working on board fishing vessels are treated fairly, under safe conditions, and with adequate care.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Global Seafood Assurances (GSA) recognises the need for Worker Voice and effective Grievance Mechanisms on fishing vessels to both help protect and support those working on board. However, there is little guidance on best practice or how to achieve effective Worker Voice on fishing vessels in practice. GSA therefore initiated this work, with the support of the David & Lucile Packard Foundation with the aim of researching and documenting current Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms used or piloted on board fishing vessels around the world.

This paper has completed research on the understanding of the terms Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism, other terms used of similar intent and meaning, together with examples of existing or trialled mechanisms on fishing vessels.

The intent is to use the information presented in this white paper to build consensus on current best practice (and aspirational practice) to inform the next stage in the work. It will also highlight key issues and questions that will need to be answered as the project develops.

PROJECT TEAM

The white paper was prepared by Key Traceability Ltd (KT), a fisheries and aquaculture consultancy company registered in England, which has extensive experience of auditing fishing vessels and a broad range of expertise in the seafood industry. The research team is made up of KT Director Iain Pollard, KT Consultants Lia Hayman and Noon Masrungson, who have worked alongside GSA's European Director Melanie Siggs, and Standards Development Director Mike Platt. An expert Advisory Group was appointed, comprising representatives from several countries around the world (outreach team), details of whom are provided later in this paper.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This white paper brings together the opinions, experience and knowledge of many organisations and individuals from around the world to ensure a global reach. The research team would like to acknowledge that the outcomes would not have been possible without their time and generosity and would like to formally thank everyone who participated.

1 | White Paper Scope and Objectives

This GSA Fishing Crew Worker Voice white paper aims to identify definitions and terms relating to fisher Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism to note the most used and well-known terms, recognising the differences around the world. Secondly, the project seeks to record mechanisms and initiatives relating to fishing vessel crew Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism, whether in operation or not. The scope of this white paper is the capture fisheries sector so other sectors have not been included, however whenever relevant initiatives were discovered they have been noted.

2 | Research Methodology

The methodology used to produce this white paper has been to research publicly available information including reports, websites and other literature as well as engaging with stakeholders. It was intended to hold in-person workshops in key locations, however the restrictions placed on travel due to the Covid-19 pandemic meant this was not possible. Instead a robust multilingual survey was developed, and several one-to-one interviews were undertaken. Once all available information was collated, the research team analysed the data from interviews, surveys, and the literature.

The figure right details the process of the research and the outcomes of this white paper (first stage) being the next steps for the subsequent project (second stage).

The key findings from the research for this white paper can be found in Section 3 of this report. The steps in the research included:

1. Development and consultation of an Advisory Group
2. In-country Outreach Support
3. Stakeholder mapping
4. Data collection:
 - a. Desk-based literature review on best-practice approaches to facilitating Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms on fishing vessels;
 - b. Semi-structured interviews
 - c. Multilingual structured survey
 - d. Analysis and reporting
5. Analysis and reporting

FIGURE 1 PROJECT PROCESS



TABLE 1 PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP

ORGANISATION	TYPE	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN/OUTREACH
THAI UNION GROUP PLC	SEAFOOD PROCESSOR	UNITED KINGDOM/GLOBAL
MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL	ENVIRONMENTAL NGO	UNITED KINGDOM/GLOBAL
FISHWISE	ENVIRONMENTAL NGO	USA
TESCO	RETAILER	UNITED KINGDOM
ETHICAL TRADING INITIATIVE	SOCIAL NGO	UNITED KINGDOM/GLOBAL
ALDI SOUTH GROUP	RETAILER	GERMANY/UK/US/AUSTRALIA
BAP CERTIFICATION	SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL NGO	USA/GLOBAL
MS. JULIE KUCHEPATOV	INDEPENDENT EXPERT	USA/GLOBAL
MS. BIRGITTE POULSEN	INDEPENDENT EXPERT	DENMARK/GLOBAL
OPAGAC	SEAFOOD INDUSTRY	SPAIN
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOUNDATION	SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL NGO	UNITED KINGDOM/GLOBAL
EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION	TRADE UNION	BELGIUM/EUROPE
SEABOS	SEAFOOD INDUSTRY	AUSTRALIA/GLOBAL
WORLD WISE FOODS	IMPORTER	UK/GLOBAL

2.1 | DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION OF AN ADVISORY GROUP

At initiation of the project an Advisory Group (AG) of 13 members was created, made up of NGO, trade union, retail, processing, and catching sector representatives, see Table 1 above. The members were invited based on their broad touch points on global fisheries, their expertise in seafood supply chains, together with their outreach and experience in social issues, including Worker Voice initiatives. The AG was set up to share experiences, views, and opinions on Worker Voice; to provide expert input or critical reviews, such as on this White Paper. Furthermore, the AG will be asked to help create Terms of Reference for the next stage.

2.2 | IN-COUNTRY OUTREACH SUPPORT

The intention of this white paper was to be as inclusive as possible and reach valuable stakeholders who may otherwise miss being consulted. Therefore, special effort was made to make the survey accessible and interview directly those that were willing to participate in the research. Once the AG was established, the research team reached out to some in-country contacts aiming to cover as many regions as possible. The in-country support was tasked with aiding and facilitating translations, providing knowledge on the regions and language, and reaching out to relevant contacts for the survey and stakeholder interviews. Overall, outreach was provided in UK, Spain, Latin America, France, French speaking African nations, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesian, Vietnam, Taiwan, China, Australia, and India.

2.3 | STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

With the support of the Advisory Group, desk research and the in-country support (outreach team) a comprehensive list of stakeholders was mapped to ensure global outreach (Figure 2). The intent of this mapping was aiming to ensure the project sought and invited input from a diverse, global, and relevant network. These included NGOs, fishing companies, Government, Trade Unions, fishermen, retailers, suppliers and associations in Europe, US, South America, Africa, and Asia.

In addition, identified key stakeholders, who were known to work or have worked in areas directly associated to research and projects on Worker Voice or Grievance Mechanism, were contacted as a key part of this research. Key stakeholders were contacted based on their involvement in various initiatives or research which was of direct relevance to this project.

FIGURE 2 STAKEHOLDER LOCATIONS IDENTIFIED DURING STAKEHOLDER MAPPING



2.4 | DATA COLLECTION

2.4.1 | SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH ADVISORY GROUP AND A WIDER-STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Once the Advisory Group and stakeholders had been listed, the research team conducted 22 one-to-one interviews with key stakeholders and the Advisory Group Members. The interviews provided valuable input into the overall stakeholder list to whom the outreach survey was to be sent to and the content of the survey itself. All interviews were informative, but it was striking that there was no consensus of any one mechanism that has been fully successful for Worker Voice or Grievance Mechanism in fisheries.

The interviews followed a semi-structured process, whereby some questions were developed by the research team, however the interviewer would guide the conversation based on the specific insights offered by the interviewee. These questions would later provide the basis for a global outreach survey.

The Advisory Group interviews provided a first-stage insight into the different mechanisms available on fishing vessels, the barriers, and challenges and additional contacts in the field as well as insights from different sectors in the industry.

Following interviews with the AG, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders including NGOs, Trade Unions, fishing associations and vessel owners where it was suggested these contacts had specific experience to share. The interviews followed similar questions posed in the survey (see Appendix B) but concentrated on the interviewee's own experiences and opinions on Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism. A list of interviewee organizations can be found in Section 4.2.

2.4.2 | DESK-BASED LITERATURE REVIEW

The desk-based research was conducted by Key Traceability to gather all relevant literature relating to facilitating Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism including relevant regulations. These models included not only those relating to the fishing industry but sought to identify successful models in other industry that could be transferable to a fishing vessel. It should be noted that the identification of existing models that may be appropriate to replicate for fishing vessel crews is not exhaustive. The review was expanded upon when further literature was provided during interviews or email exchanges.

2.4.3 | SURVEY WITH FISHER-WORKER REPRESENTATIVES DEVELOPMENT OF AN OUTREACH SURVEY

During development of the white paper, it was planned that in-country research would be conducted, but due to the COVID-19

pandemic it was not possible to travel. It was decided that an outreach survey, provided in numerous languages and engaging the support of in-country representatives, would provide an alternative opportunity for transparency and inclusion.

A survey was designed with the aim to capture the current understanding and existing mechanisms related to Worker Voice and grievance on fishing vessels around the world. The survey was intended to capture a more rounded view of the Worker Voice in relation to fishing vessels by reaching a very wide audience from local NGOs to fishers and regional experts.

In-country support was built in several countries to help with for regional outreach, insight and contacts who could provide valuable input to the survey. The local support advised the research team on the accessibility and language of the surveys to ensure the survey was understood and terms were translated correctly. The survey was originally available in eight languages English, Chinese Simplified and Traditional, Spanish, Vietnamese, French, Indonesian and Thai. After some request, the survey was also translated into Filipino, making the survey available in nine languages. The research team also reached out to contacts in India and Latin America, who advised the English and European Spanish surveys would be widely understood in these areas.

Survey questions were formulated between the research team with the intent to tease out any available information on Worker Voice mechanisms as well as general understanding of Worker Voice terminology that may not be readily available from desk based research, as well as to attempt to enable as wide an audience as possible to contribute to the project. The Advisory Group provided comment and input on the proposed questions. Survey Monkey was the chosen survey software as it provided a simple layout with the ability to change the languages in the task bars. Survey Monkey also calculates insights and data trends in the responses received and summaries of the answers.

The survey was made up of 13 questions (see appendix B, the survey was altered slightly when uploading to the online version) and a two-week deadline was given, this was extended by another 5 days and special arrangements were made where requested.

The survey opened early August 2020 closed at the end of the month after being extended to cater for some late responses. The responses were collected, translated, and analysed against the other languages. The findings from the survey, the literature review and the interviews with the AG and key stakeholders are detailed in Section 3. The results were analysed separately for each language the survey was translated and uploaded to Survey Monkey per

language and the results were downloaded and translated back into English separately.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SURVEY VIA SOCIAL MEDIA AND OUTREACH TEAMS

The survey was made publicly available on social media platforms Twitter and Linked In via Global Seafood Assurance, Key Traceability and Melanie Siggs as the first tier with significant sharing by Followers. Email invites were sent out to the individuals listed on the further stakeholder list. Figure 3 shows the image that was released on the GSA twitter feed. The stakeholder list had been developed by KT and GSA resulting in 91 contacts. Regional/local outreach took a similar approach which created, for example, a further 37 contacts were collated in Indonesia. The survey was also kindly promoted by organizations such as European Transport Federation, Seafood Source, Conservation Alliance, FishWise, [Ethical Trading Initiative](#) on their websites and social media which have a collective 12,798 followers.

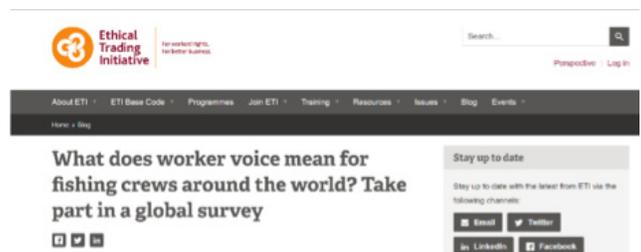
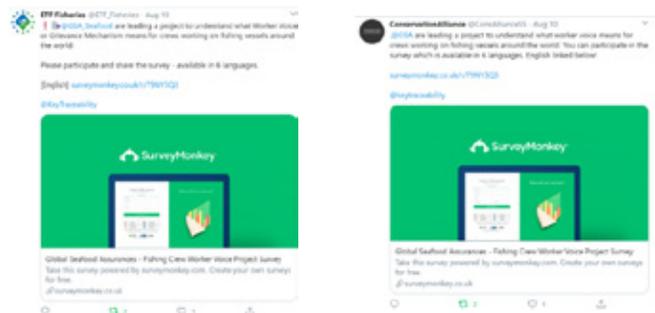
Originally the survey was scheduled to close on the 17th August 2020, 19:00 BST, this was extended to 21st August. It should be noted that some respondents requested a phone conversation in replacement of the survey. After the survey had closed, some respondents contacted Key Traceability to be able to participate using the Word document version instead of the Survey Monkey template. A copy of the Word version is attached in the Appendix B. The analysis below includes the online survey responses only and any further responses are included in the wider analysis.

2.5 | ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The results of the survey, consultations and discussions with the Advisory Group were analysed and an initial grouping of mechanisms was created. Eventually, the mechanisms were characterised by being either data collection, empowerment, or due diligence type mechanisms. The key stakeholders contributed to these distinctions between the mechanisms through their insight and knowledge on how well certain initiatives have worked.

The following section provides an overview of general findings from the literature review and the categorisation of mechanisms before analysing the results of the survey and one-to-one interviews.

FIGURE 3 OUTREACH COMMUNICATIONS



3 | Conclusions and key findings

3.1 | KEY FINDINGS

Familiarity with Worker Voice increasing in fisheries, but gaps remain

Worker Voice is an emerging term in fisheries, and 93% of respondents in the English survey had some familiarity with the term, although only 68% were familiar with the term as it specifically applies to fisheries.

There were a range of definitions given for Worker Voice, but some of the common themes included:

- Having a voice
- Ability of workers to influence welfare and working conditions on vessels
- Expression of worker rights

In general Grievance Mechanisms were considered an important part of Worker Voice, and effective remediation was an essential element. However, despite there being a number of organisations working on research, advocacy and development of pilots, some survey respondents did not know of any Worker Voice initiatives/mechanisms in practice.

The literature has consequently been focusing more on how to empower fishers via Worker Voice. However, there is no clear answer about how to organise workers (into, for example, Trade Unions), due to the challenges such as employment status, long time at sea, migrant workforce, and dispersed workplaces. Much of the literature is progressive with the language and moving toward 'empowerment' however the survey responses suggest that the terms Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism were better known to respondents than worker empowerment. Other programs are beginning to use the term 'worker-driven' such as Issara's worker-driven recruitment, this approach involves the workers at every stage of the development.

Through this research there have been many definitions of Worker Voice in fisheries and many mechanisms which use different approaches. While common themes and principles can be teased out, there is no evidence yet of consensus on terminology and language surrounding Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms for fishers. This has been highlighted by interviewees as essential but when determining terminology different fisheries and different fishing operations should be considered.

Principles for effective Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms in fisheries

Although there is no clear consensus on definitions, a range of potential principles were suggested for successful Worker Voice or Grievance Mechanism initiatives. These are summarised below:

- Structured
- Transparent
- Clearly defined
- Clearly communicated
- Listening to fishers and doing something about their opinions
- Fishers must know their rights
- Involves collection, evaluation, and remediation of grievances
- Confidential/Anonymous
- Involves fair and prompt remediation
- No fear of recourse
- Ability to identify issues at an early state
- Strengthens employer-employee relationship
- Coordination across a range of actors
- Solution-based
- Empowers workers
- Grievances seen as constructive feedback
- Participatory

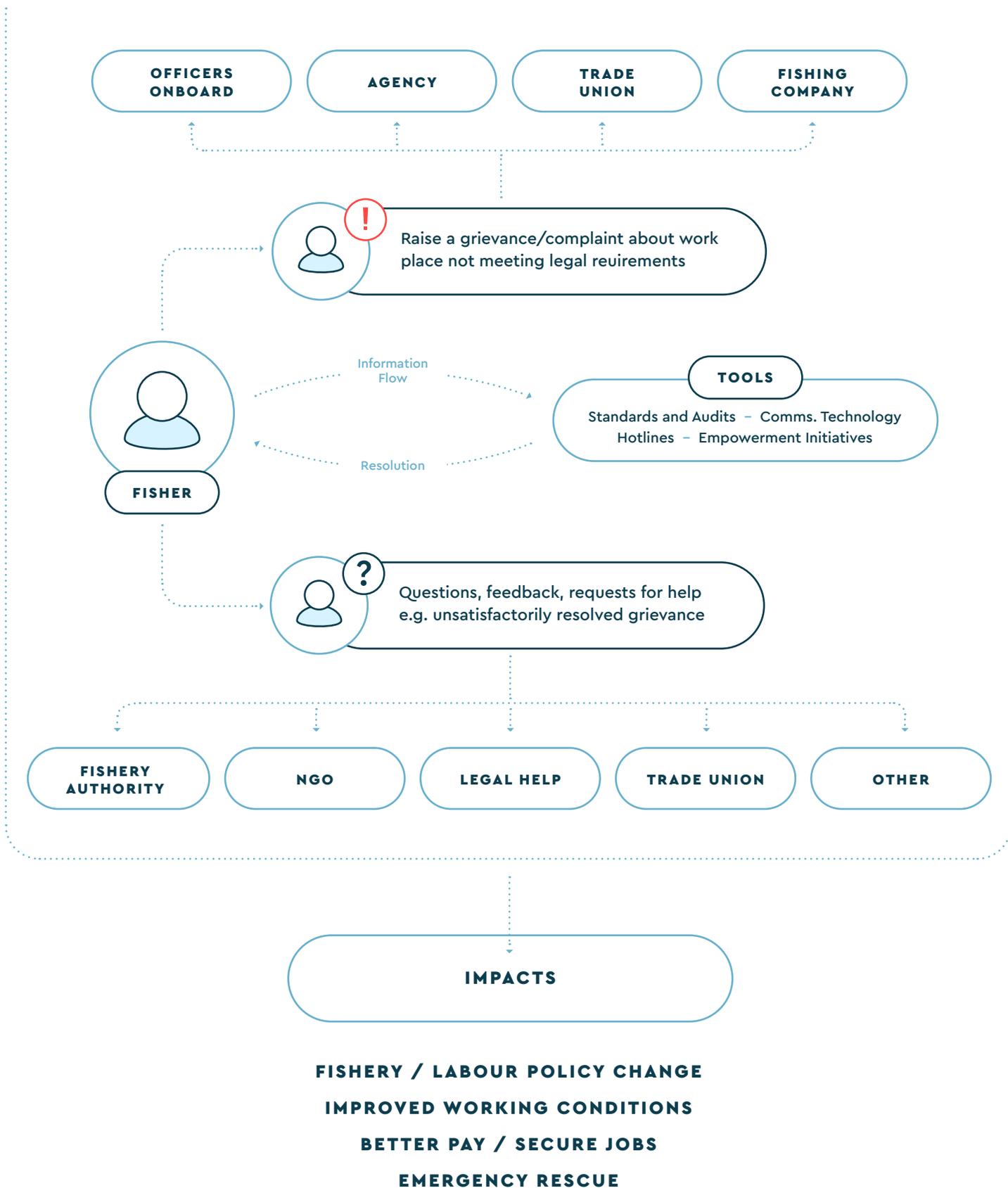
Tools and Channels for achieving Worker Voice in fisheries

There are also a range of channels and tools for achieving Worker Voice in Fisheries. The tools were mapped out (see Figure 18 next page) covering:

- Industry Social Standards and Audits (due diligence)
- Fishing vessel grievance procedures
- Communications and Technology approaches (including hotlines)
- Empowerment Initiatives

The actors active within these categories include the fishers themselves, NGOs, International organisations, social scientists and consultants, Trade Unions, Fishery Authorities, labour agencies, fishing companies and officers on-board the fishing vessel. Their roles vary depending on the situation and they may be actively working on initiatives or mechanisms in one or more of the categories.

FIGURE 18 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR FISHER VOICE AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE



Appropriate tools and channels may depend on the context

The appropriate tools and channels may depend on the context, for examples:

- A lack of connectivity (access to internet) can make hotlines and other communication methods redundant;
- Representation through unions is not feasible in countries that do not allow for trade unions and different representative systems are required.

However, many actors highlighted the level of cooperation required between key actors to achieve successful Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism. For instance, Trade Unions and NGOs cooperating with government agencies and fishing companies

Lack of government effectiveness in resolving fisher grievances

- Most of the projects have been initiated and developed by Civil Society Organisations and private companies, there is currently a lack of fishing industry specific government led initiatives.
- Authorities are not trusted by fishers to resolve grievances effectively, especially for migrant fishers.
- Regulations protecting fishers and enabling fisher voice are not sufficient.

Lack of best-practice guidelines on how principles, tools and channels are achieved in practice

- There is consensus that the standards are asking for effective Grievance Mechanisms for fishers without knowing what that looks like in practice. There is no globally accepted process for how fisher grievances with their employer should be handled by an employer and other actors to achieve a fair outcome for the fisher. The Fair Trade Capture Fisheries Standard however does describe how the fishers take part in decision making and audits verify the respect to organise and collectively bargain and for workers to elect their own representatives, which is generally applicable to small-scale fisheries. They require fisheries to inform Fair Trade of any worker representatives no longer in position and for there to be a 'mechanism for resolution of conflicts between the certificate holder and registered fishes.' The Fair Trade Capture Fisheries Standard is currently undergoing a review.
- More research is therefore needed around what a fair and effective grievance procedure would look like in reality.

One size does not fit all

- Vessels that return to the same port every trip or operate in shore will have different grievance procedure needs than vessels that fish in the high seas so it is likely that there will not be a one ideal procedure that fits all types of fishing.
- Further understanding of the fishing operations is required to define what is needed in worst case scenario (vessels at sea for long periods) and benchmark this to scale down (vessels who return to port regularly) where necessary and appropriate for

specific operations.

- More understanding is needed about what is happening on fishing vessels when crew have grievances, how they are resolved in practice and what does and does not work from the fisher's perspective.

Guidance also needed on measuring the effectiveness of Worker Voice approaches

- Measuring the success of the grievance procedure is complicated as even though process and procedure may be followed, there will be times where the result is not going to be in the favour of the fisher and this is an acceptable outcome of a grievance procedure.
- It is therefore important that the process is fair and transparent, and that communication of what is happening and why is the critical point. Time and care may be needed to ensure that the process is established and is fair so that the fisher understands the outcome and can make informed decisions based on the understanding of how the process is going and what their options are.

Lack of transparency on vessel Grievance Mechanisms

- There was a lack of published literature or initiatives on-going that specifically explained what a grievance mechanism on fishing vessels looked like. Where fishing company procedures were found it was not possible to publish them due to confidentiality.
- Grievance procedures on vessels are therefore not transparent (unless they are reviewed independently or by a Trade Union) and so understanding their 'fairness' or 'protection of the fisher' is challenging.

Education and awareness for fishers to increase knowledge on available tools and channels

- Education on Worker Voice and the available mechanisms for fishers is essential as fish workers are often far out of reach and away from ongoing conversations regarding their rights and working conditions.
- Awareness is important so that workers understand their rights and what channels and tools are available to them.

Pilot projects tend to be within the EEZ leaving a gap on how to address grievances on the high seas

- There is more work on Worker Voice in the EEZ zones (for example, in Thailand) but not much happening for the high seas where problems are exacerbated due to the long periods of time spent at sea, higher likelihood of migrant workers and less contact with land.
- Although many pilot programs and initiatives on Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms on fishing vessels were found, not many of these have been able to be scaled-up, whether it be

a connectivity at sea project which was only piloted on a few boats such as the Thai Union and Mars Inmarsat project, or an organisation which can only offer the languages they are familiar with, such as the LPN hotlines.

Some Grievance Mechanisms may not provide effective protection to the employee

The worker is not effectively protected where:

- They go direct to the employer without an independent arbitrator;
- The system is not confidential;
- There is fear of recourse.

Technological approaches are important if designed with stakeholder-participation and fit within a wider approach

- Some technology-based mechanisms are expensive and restrictive. Connectivity problems include only having one specific spot on the vessel in which connectivity is achievable and as such confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when stood in the 'connected zone'. Although some tools are less expensive such as Electronic Monitoring Systems, and in the future these systems may become more feasible. The expense for most mechanisms is due to the demand for real time information and communication.
- New approaches using VMS may have more applicability offshore.
- Case studies illustrate that grievance systems are more successful where they are participatory and involve both vessel owners and workers in their design.
- Technological approaches play an important role when fitting into a wider grievance or Worker Voice approach.

Mismatch of objectives of Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms

- The communication and technology mechanisms that enable fishers to reach third parties have been criticised for not catching incidences of forced labour and are effectively just collecting data without addressing the power imbalance.
- There can therefore be a mismatch in the beneficiaries in approaches to Worker Voice. For instance, the ultimate beneficiaries are often intended to be the fisher; but due-diligence schemes or supply chain information systems are generally designed to benefit seafood buyers. Without addressing that fundamental issue, the risk of fishery abuse remains even with better technology or standards.
- The objectives of the fisher Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms should be considered when they are being analysed since they are often set up to do different things. Some may be perceived as not being effective because they are presented, but in fact they may be achieving their original objective. For example, when communications technology is part of a Grievance Mechanism such as a hotline, which has

oversight from an appropriate NGO it may well contribute to fairer resolution of grievances for fishers.

Effective resolution of grievances and worker empowerment are important aspects of Worker Voice

- There was some consensus that resolution of grievances and remediation for fishers is an essential element, along with a direct and unimpeded communication channel.
- There was some evidence that empowering fishers with a Worker Voice tool which is connected to a third party can make grievance procedures more effective in ensuring a fair result for the fisher. Since without third party oversight and due to the vulnerability of fishers their employers may have little incentive to fairly resolve fishers' grievances.

More on the water research is needed in other regions of the world

- Many mechanisms were based in Thailand where a lot of the research has been conducted, and more work is needed in other parts of the world.

3.2 | NEXT STEPS

- Developing consensus on definitions and terms associated with Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms in fisheries;
- Understanding the difference and interaction between Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms;
- Agreeing a set of principles for best-practice approaches to Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms;
- Reaching consensus on the objectives and beneficiaries of Worker Voice and grievance initiatives;
- Developing detailed guidelines (or best-practice examples) on applying principles through a range of actors and channels, tailored to a range of vessel types and contexts;
- Listening to fishers and captains from a variety of fisheries is necessary to understand how grievances are dealt with on-board and what would help them in resolving them in a way that improves the situation for all parties. This would be a helpful starting point for determining what would be best practice and for which types of fisheries.
- Designing indicators for measuring the effectiveness of Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms for fishers;
- Determining minimum standards for workers' access to information to enable voice, to be informed of what to say when using such mechanisms.

4 | Findings of the Literature Review & Stakeholder Consultation

4.1 | TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

4.1.1 | WORKER VOICE

Worker Voice is a term that originated during the industrial revolution and captures the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining as enshrined later on within International Labour Organisation (ILO) convention No. 87, which has been ratified by 155 countries worldwide. As part of this, the right to 'fair and effective grievance procedures' has been specified in ILO Recommendation 130 and requires that (among other things) every worker has the right to submit a grievance without suffering any prejudice and that any grievance submitted should be examined via an effective procedure which is open to all workers.

The ISSARA institute is an independent tackling issues labour rights worker voice, partnership, and innovation. They define Worker Voice as:

'The voices of thousands of workers, who have the capacity to uncover risks in complex global supply chains and drive structural changes in the way business is done, from small changes at the individual supplier level to large-scale changes at the national industry level and how responsible sourcing is done globally' (Issara Institute, 2020).

Rende Taylor, 2019 describes 'Worker Voice' as having two purposes: *'the first to collect more and better data for supply-chain due diligence and detection of labour risks and, the second, to empower workers, so as to better hear their feedback and strengthen remediation accordingly'*.

Equally the British Academy says:

'Worker Voice as a means to strengthen remediation and due diligence, identify labour risks, and go beyond social auditing'
(The British Academy, n.d.).

4.1.2 | WORKER VOICE AS IT APPLIES TO THE CAPTURE FISHERIES SECTOR

Worker Voice has only recently been applied to the fisheries sector but is becoming a more familiar term. ILO 'Work in Fishing' C188 is the specific convention that deals with living and working conditions of fishers' onboard vessels. The convention has been in force since 16 November 2017 but has only been ratified (and therefore only applies within) 18 countries worldwide. As part of this, Article 17 states that "the means of settling disputes in

connection with a fisher's work agreement" must be established by the flag state.

Other organisations have also identified the need for Worker Voice and effective Grievance Mechanisms and different definitions and terms have been used to describe mechanisms:

The Roadmap for Improving Seafood Ethics (RISE) – developed by FishWise and Walmart, identifies: *'Two fundamental aspects of 'Worker Voice': (1) Capturing the voices, experiences, and needs of workers, and (2) Channelling that voice into a clear mechanism for remediation for those workers.'* (Rise, 2020).

The concept of achieving effective resolution is also shared by the Issara institute, *'A credible Grievance Mechanism which results in effective remediation of the fisher.'* (Issara Institute, 2020).

Some organisations see the terms of Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms as interchangeable, while others see Worker Voice as a wider term of which Grievance Mechanisms forms an important part. *'Worker voice and grievance mechanisms are related, but they are not synonymous'* Lori Bishop, FishWise.

A 'grievance' has been defined by the ILO as when the worker believes that some aspect of their rights and/or entitlements that are established in laws, employment contracts, collective agreements and workplace rules, as well as in custom and practice (the way things are normally done – and have been done for a long time – in a particular workplace, industry or occupation) are not being respected (ILO, 2018).

As well as Worker Voice, an important term that is emerging is 'worker-driven approaches'. The term implies that the workers should be included at every stage of the labour management (from hiring to termination) as well as being involved in the process of designing any grievance mechanism drive more responsive remediation and systems change. For example, 'the New England Fisheries Management Council, created to represent people within the fishing industry, needs to become a better designed organization that will give fishermen a powerful and legitimate voice in the regulatory process' (I.M, Kaplan, 2000). Essentially, this explores the possibilities of Worker Voice going beyond safe access to a third party and remediation to having a say in regulation. Another example of the worker-driven mechanisms is Issara's Ethical Recruitment work which is 'driven by empowered worker voices' where feedback mechanisms are available to workers at both source and destination locations, and partnerships with brands and retailers, suppliers, and recruitment agencies.

The characteristics of work on a fishing vessel make it more difficult to apply and enforce these rights than for workers on land. Further there is no recognised, globally appropriate, and available, guidance that lays out how best to apply grievance mechanisms on fishing vessels such that crews have safe access to such a process. More generally there are baseline guidance such as the Ethical Trading Initiative’s Practical Guidance for Companies for Access to Remedy, but there is a lack of guidance for fishing vessels. This can make it more likely for violations to go unreported and less noticeable when they do occur. However, seafood buyers, authorities, regulators, consumers, and fishing companies are coming under increasing pressure to enable these rights through corporate and social responsibility ensuring basic rights are mandated.

In Europe the European sectoral social dialogue committee (ESSDC) was set up in 1998 to assist the Commission in the ‘formulation and implementation of the Community social policy aimed at improving and harmonizing the living and working conditions in sea fishing’. This social dialogue is a partnership between fisher representatives, employers and the European Commission

4.2 | CATEGORISING APPROACHES TO WORKER VOICE FOR CAPTURE FISHERIES

The main purpose of this white paper is to map the existing fishing vessel crew Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms and, overall, 67 initiatives relating directly to fishing vessels were found. There is an extensive list and brief description of them found during the research, interviews and outreach survey in Section 3 and Appendix A.

Figure 4 illustrates how these mechanisms can be categorised. Initially fishers may need to raise grievances or gain support to seek resolution to a grievance. The results of literature and the stakeholder consultations revealed there are a number of different actors or channels involved or that can potentially be involved (from the vessel officer through to the fishing company and on to independent organisations); and also a range of tools to facilitate the process (such as hotlines, technological communications and empowerment initiatives).

CHANNELS/ACTORS

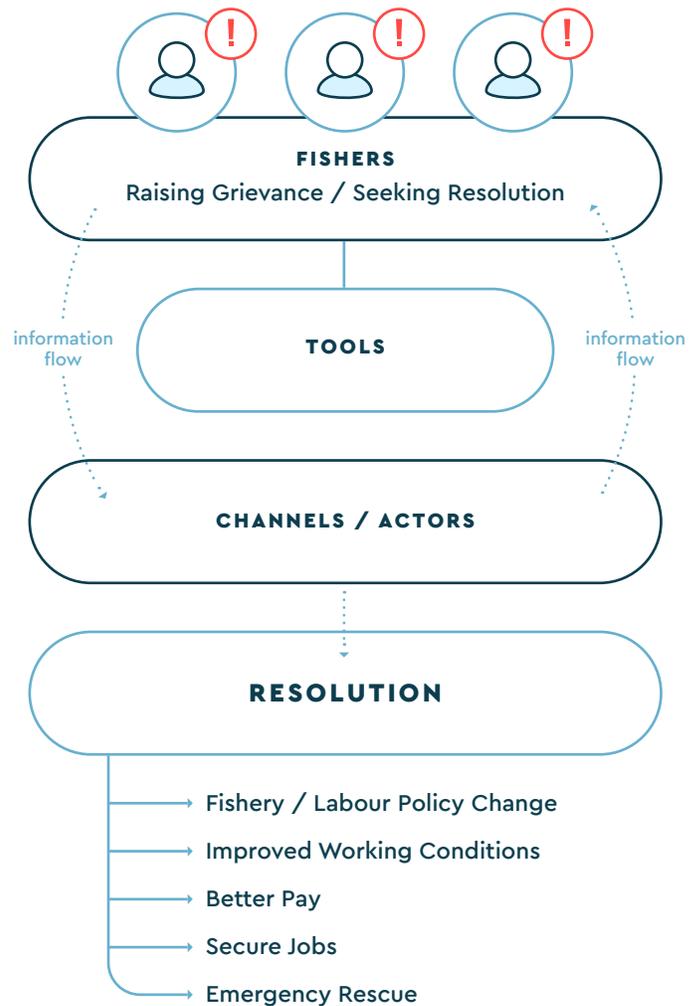
- NGOs and International Organisations
- Trade Unions and Legal Representatives
- Authorities and Government e.g. (legal system, fishery management, labour department)

- Fishing Companies / Fisher Employer Grievance, Agency, and Officers
- Seafood Buyers

TOOLS FOR PROMOTING WORKER VOICE

- Industry Social Standards and Audits (due diligence)
- Fishing vessel grievance procedures
- Communications and Technology
- Empowerment and other initiatives
- Hotlines

FIGURE 4 MECHANISMS FOR ACHIEVING WORKER VOICE

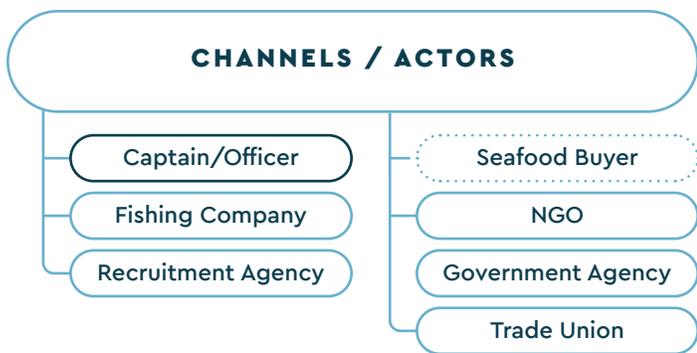


Through use of the tools and channels the literature and stakeholders suggest that Worker Voice has the potential, as well as resolving grievances, to result in structural change in fishery or labour policy (ETF - Socially sustainable CFP, 2020). Fishers are central to the dialogue to improve working conditions; lead to better pay and job security as well as providing a safety net for fishers or crew members that need emergency rescue in the worst-case scenarios.

4.3 | CHANNELS FOR WORKER VOICE

In the event of experiencing a grievance the fisher may raise the issue with a party responsible for their employment. In many cases this will be with the officers onboard the fishing vessel, led by the Captain. Since the fisher may be employed through or by a recruitment agency for the fishing company, it is possible that the fisher goes directly to the agency, or is referred to them by the Captain, to raise a grievance. If the fisher is a member of a Trade Union, then they may raise the grievance with them. There are also potential opportunities to raise grievances with the government authorities responsible for labour issues, or to seek support or advice from NGOs. In an interview with a Burmese fisher Winrock, 2020 found that “It’s simply too difficult for migrant workers to make a complaint to the government without the help of an NGO”. Seafood buyers are less likely to have direct contact with fishers but are important actors in setting principles

FIGURE 5 CHANNELS FOR WORKER VOICE ON VESSELS



4.3.1 | FISHING COMPANIES, FISHER EMPLOYER, AGENCY, AND OFFICERS

The usual, and most often first, means for a fisher to raise a grievance about their employment is with the officers on-board their fishing vessel. The grievance procedures on-board are commonly informal and unwritten whereby the fisher will speak to the Captain about an issue and it will be up to the Captain’s experience and personality or attitude to resolve it for

the fisher. If the fisher is not satisfied with the outcome there may be a procedure in place for them to escalate it to the fishing company, their agent/employer or another third party. For fishing companies owning and operating more than one fishing vessel the fleet manager may also be involved in resolving fisher grievances. Records of the grievance, however, may or may not be maintained and the outcome can be unknown to anyone other than those on-board the vessel.

4.3.2 | TRADE UNIONS AND LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES

The literature highlights that Trade Unions can represent fishers on legal matters and when bargaining with fishers and in many countries (but not all) it is a fundamental right of workers to have access to a Trade Union. For instance, in some countries there is a strong union culture within the fisheries sector (e.g. Sweden, Denmark, Norway). Unions can play an important role in both grievance and Worker Voice, empowering fishers through collective association and as noted by ILRF, 2018 are necessary in fisheries to address the power balance, something which the technology does not do on its own.

Trade Unions that represent fishers are often part of larger unions representing transport workers, seamen or general workers; and can struggle to recruit fisher members and organise effectively especially in cases where fishers are self-employed (ETF, 2018). Social dialogue is a route for fisher representatives to have a voice in policy decision making. Regional or international trade union associations like the European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF) and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) support and coordinate between Fisher Trade Unions although do not have direct worker membership themselves. Nevertheless, the ETF are active in using fisher voice to improve working conditions, secure jobs, and change fishery/labour policies by representing workers and gathering Trade Union representatives and setting out their demands, such as for the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Furthermore, the ITF is active in resolving urgent issues for fishers such as abandonment (LA Times, Sept 2020) acting as a hotline for fishers in need globally.

Trade Unions were often mentioned during surveys and interviews as evidence for grievance procedures such as the Collective Bargaining Agreements between fishing companies and ITF. However, it was also noted during the interviews that in some countries unionising is illegal and there is a necessity to provide a next-best option. An example given in the survey related to migrant fishers in Thailand where it is illegal for them to unionise, but migrants make up most of the fishing industry and therefore this effectively leaves an entire industry un-represented.

In some instances, fishers may require legal representation or advice in situations of mistreatment and abuse. Often legal representatives are available through Trade Unions or NGOs such as Human Rights at Sea who are leading a project alongside international law firm Shearman & Sterling LLP to develop a mechanism to resolve disputes concerning human rights abuses at sea using international arbitration.

The Trade Union and Legal Representative initiatives and mechanisms are further discussed in Section 3.4 when discussing empowerment initiatives for fishers to enhance Worker Voice.

4.3.3 | GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES

Interviews with key stakeholders informed that involvement of the authority along with other critical factors is crucial to obtaining best practice Worker Voice. There are legislation and regulations in place, but interviews informed that bad practices often fall under the radar, therefore participation and even encouragement from governmental players, such as inspectors, need to play a part in social welfare. Government initiatives can range from port inspections, hotlines, implementation of regulations (C188), funding for initiatives such as the Taiwanese government funding for a pilot Wi-Fi on board, and the implementation of on board monitoring systems for human rights monitoring, etc.

Governments can often be under pressure to reform from other governments, such as the EU red card system and the US Customs Withhold Release Orders whereby if products are suspected to have been produced using forced labour, shipments are detained; and the US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report that rates countries according to risks of human trafficking which then affects trade preferences. Other drivers have been negative press releases, studies and news reports.

Overall, 13 government-led initiatives were found, further detail and examples can be found in Section 5.2 and Appendix A.

4.3.4 | NGOS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

NGOs also carry out important research by releasing papers identifying the issues and social conditions on board fishing vessels. Some of this work involves speaking directly with crew members, such as the work of the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), who are actively seeking previous crew members of Taiwanese and South Korean fishing vessels to hear their experiences. NGOs like EJF often work closely with governments, for example EJF have written up recommendations for governments in Thailand based on their findings from interviewing crew and joining port inspections.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) brings together governments, employers, and workers to set industry labour standards, develop policies and devise programs for decent work (ILO). The ILO promotes rights at work, encourages decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection, and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues. As well as providing ILO 188, the organisation also plays an active role in strengthening Worker Voice in the fisheries sector, such as through the Ship to Shore Rights Project which works with the Thai Government, employers' organizations, workers' organizations and buyers towards the prevention and reduction of unacceptable forms of work in Thailand's fishing and seafood industries.

NGOs and international organisations can also provide support for workers and are often set up in response to pressing issues such as forced labour which is a high-risk for migrant fishers. Fishers can contact these organisations if they require support.

[The Fishermen's Mission](#) is a UK based charity that provides emergency support alongside financial and spiritual care to fishers and their families. The Mission runs a freephone hotline and has outreach at 23 Mission Centres located in fish landing sites around the UK. One of the strengths of the Mission is that being located at the landing sites builds trust with fishers and enables communication, being a fishing-only organisation makes this possible while it is a challenge for Trade Unions who cover a diverse portfolio of workers to replicate. Other such organisations exist internationally such as the [Apostleship of the Sea](#). While they play an important role and often act as a lifeline for fishers, they are not a direct replacement for legal representation since they do not represent fishers officially, provide empowerment or enable collective bargaining. Depending on the context, fishers may not always be aware of support NGOs or the process of reporting issues.

Overall, 20 mechanisms initiated by NGOs and international organisations were found, further detail and examples are listed in Section 3.4 and Appendix A.

4.3.5 | SEAFOOD BUYERS

Seafood buyers are another important actor in the drive for change, and they have been under pressure to develop and implement sustainability policies, such as Thai Union's Seachange Sustainability Strategy and Nestle's Thailand Action Plan Responsible Sourcing. Seachange has three overarching aims, one of which being 'to ensure that our workers are safe, legally employed and empowered' and 'to ensure vessels we buy from are legal and operate responsibly.' This aim extends to vessels within

their supply chain, and as mentioned in Table 2 (next page), they have developed their Vessel Code of Conduct. Seafood buyers are also aligning themselves to retailers where sourcing policies are applied and must be complied with to supply.

4.4 | TOOLS FOR PROMOTING FISHING VESSEL CREW WORKER VOICE

Within the literature and stakeholder interviews, it became apparent there are a range of tools used for promoting Worker Voice on fishing vessels, as illustrated in Figure 6.

4.4.1 | SOCIAL STANDARDS & AUDITS

Social standards have been developed by industry and also by independent organisations. These standards offer guidance on what is expected at minimum in a grievance procedure including: routes of communication, an option to report a grievance to someone other than their direct superior, confidentiality, no retaliation, swift and unbiased action to remediate a situation, and an appeals process. There were 10 standards identified as requiring Worker Voice or Grievance Mechanism as shown in Table 2, along with brief descriptions of each below. The standards were identified due to Worker Voice and grievance components, not the nature of the instrument, standard or initiative.

Codes of conduct, such as the Seafood Task Force, and voluntary industry standards, such as The Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard, are helping to assure Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms, and other fishing crew vessel welfare issues, are in place. The UN Guiding Principles on Businesses and Human Rights (UNGP), Articles 25-31 (UN, 2011), set out the expectations for states and companies, particularly around business-related human rights abuse. The developers of these industry standards have built the indicators and requirements using the UNGP principles, together with other international conventions, such as ILO c188.

Audits can be a means to listen to fishers via confidential worker interviews. The Thai Union Vessel Code of Conduct social audits include a significant number of crew interviews and their testimony is critical for understanding conditions on-board the fishing vessel. Trained social auditors and careful procedures can assure the safety of fishers and elicit critical information about their treatment by employers and the effectiveness of grievance mechanisms on board the fishing vessel.

The standards etc. set out the requirements but there is little information on what is expected in practice. These standards

would be audited against conditions on board the vessels, however it is difficult for auditors to see face value whether the grievance mechanisms or Worker Voice is effective when on board a vessel for a short period of time.

FIGURE 6 TOOLS FOR PROMOTING FISHING VESSEL CREW WORKER VOICE / GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

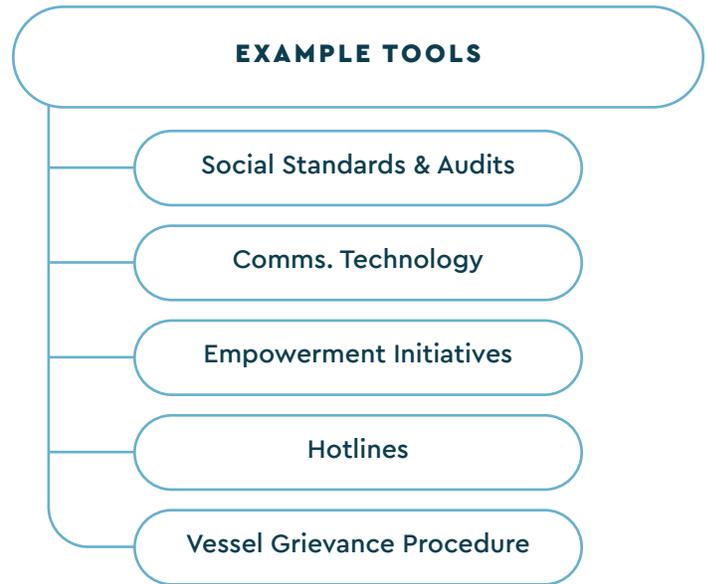


TABLE 2 FISHER-RELATED STANDARDS, CODES, ASSESSMENTS, CONVENTIONS AND WORKER VOICE OR GRIEVANCE MECHANISM REQUIREMENTS

FISHER-RELATED STANDARD	SCOPE	WORKER VOICE RELATED REQUIREMENT
INDUSTRY-LED		
Thai Union Vessel Code of Conduct v1.1	Tuna fishing vessels	Principle 8 on freedom of association and collective bargaining. Principle 10 on effective Grievance Mechanism.
Seafood Task Force Vessel Auditable Standards v2	All fishing vessels	An industry-led initiative - The Seafood Task Force have work streams around Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms, in addition to which a number of their members have been exploring and piloting work (link).
NON-INDUSTRY-LED		
Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard	All fishing vessels	Requires an active and confidential crew Grievance Mechanism procedure to be adopted.
Fair Trade USA Capture Fisheries Standard v1.1.0	All fisheries (focus on artisanal)	Enforces worker representation and freedom of association but does not require Grievance Mechanism (however the revised draft version 2.0.0 does propose to expand the standard's requirements around grievance).
International Labour Organisation Work in Fishing Convention (ILO C188)	All fishers and all fishing vessels engaged in commercial fishing operations	Enforces freedom of association, no explicit Grievance Mechanism requirements.
AENOR Responsible Tuna Fishing (RTF) Chain of Custody Standard UNE 195006	Tuna purse seine vessels	Enforces right to collective bargaining, no Grievance Mechanism requirements (intentionally aligned with ILO C188).
Monterey Framework (SRAT)	All fisheries	Requires effective Grievance procedures at an individual and fishery level, equitability, freedom of association and collective bargaining.
FisheryProgress Draft Permanent Social Policy	All fisheries	Developing requirements for human and labour rights to be integrated within Fishery Improvement Projects.
Verité Worker-centric Audit Approach	Non-fishery specific	Effective Grievance Mechanisms and protection for whistle-blowers form part of Verité's Fair Hiring Toolkit.
PAS 1550	All fisheries	Code of Practice linked to treatment of crew.

INDUSTRY-LED

Industry social standards, which usually have a requirement for Grievance Mechanism and freedom of association, and supply chains are under pressure to apply these standards. Retailers also have codes of conducts and sourcing policies which form part of contractual supply agreements and are required to be complied with. These requirements filter down the supply chain.

Outcomes and steps of an effective grievance procedure are mentioned in some standards, for example, The Seafood Taskforce, 2019 describes the minimum requirements for the procedure, how it should be communicated and requires records to be maintained. In addition, The Thai Union Vessel Code of Conduct in Principle 10 and the associated guidance document adds that the procedure must be 'confidential, protect the fisher from negative repercussions and result in 'fair' resolution'. While these clauses will help an auditor determine if a grievance procedure meets the standard's requirements it does not necessarily mean that the process is being followed effectively. These standards are described further in Box 1 (right).

NON-INDUSTRY-LED

Similar labour or social standards that includes aspects on Worker Voice or Grievance Mechanisms include those developed by a range of organisations, ranging from the Responsible Fishing Vessel Standards (RFVS) developed by GSA; through to the 'work in fishing convention' ILO c188 and PAS 1550; Fair Trade capture fisheries standard, and indicators used within the Fishery Progress tool for tracking Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs). There are also some specific guides such as Verite's Fair Hiring Toolkit and AENOR's RTF certification specifically for purse-seine caught tuna. These are described further in Box 2 (next page).

BOX 1 TOOLS FOR PROMOTING FISHING VESSEL CREW WORKER VOICE / GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

The Thai Union Vessel Code of Conduct was first launched in 2017 alongside Thai Union's Fishing Vessel Improvement Program and forms part of their wider SeaChange strategy. The Vessel Code of Conduct is built on 12 principles focusing on human rights and working conditions specific to the application of crew. The Code of Conduct is applied to all tuna fishing vessels Thai Union sources from globally, and is audited by independent, third-party companies. An updated version of the Vessel Code of Conduct was released in 2020 and is supported by a comprehensive guidance document. The scheme incorporates confidential fisher interviews as a critical means of establishing how crew are treated onboard. Listening to crew is important to understand what it is like working on board that vessel.

The Seafood Task Force (STF) is an international, multi-stakeholder collaboration of retailers, processors, buyers, government representatives and NGOs within the seafood industry seeking to address social issues within the industry. Originally the Shrimp Sustainable Supply Chain Task Force, as interest and the scope of the organisation broadened, they changed their name. The STF developed the Vessel Auditable Standards to improve labour conditions across the seafood industry through its 15 principles for social and health and safety standards on board vessels. Audits to the Standard are conducted for STF members and by STF qualified auditors. Recent focus of the STF has been on the Thai fishing industry, due to the volume of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and publication of investigations into labour abuses within the industry.

The Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard (RFVS), previously the Responsible Fishing Scheme, is the latest iteration of the certification scheme developed by Seafish and Global Seafood Assurances (GSA). Released in 2020, the RFVS is a third-party vessel certification scheme that focuses on crew welfare as well as vessel safety and best operational management practices. Development of the standard took an industry-led approach, with engagement with retailers, seafood buyers, NGOs, Catching sector, and worker unions over the two-year development period.

Fair Trade's Capture Fisheries Standard v1.1.0 was released by Fair Trade USA in 2017. The non-profit organisation has the mission of empowering farmers, fishermen and workers to fight poverty. Through supply chain certification to their Standard, they seek to ensure fair prices and working conditions for fishers alongside environmental protection. The Capture Fishers Standard's principles focus on community development, fundamental human rights, working conditions, resource management and traceability. The Standard applies to groups of fishermen engaged in marine wild capture fisheries. Whilst the Fair-Trade USA Capture Fisheries Standard does not have specific reference to grievance procedure or Worker Voice the whole program is based around fisher participation in the scheme to drive improvements in social performance.

The International Labor Organisation (ILO) developed the 'Work in Fishing Convention, 2007' (No. 188) (C188) which was adopted in 2007. The Convention seeks to protect the living and working conditions of fishers on board vessels through the binding requirements countries which ratify the Convention must abide by and enforce. 18 countries have now ratified the C188, which went into force internationally on 16 November 2017. The articles of C188 focus on minimum requirements for work on board fishing vessels, conditions of service, accommodation and food, medical care, occupational health and safety, and enforcement measures for Member States. Further guidance can be found in the 'Work in Fishing Recommendation 2007' (No. 199). C188 applies to all fishing vessels of any size, with further requirements for vessels over 24m or on longer voyages. Inspections can be carried out to regulations brought in to meet the convention and for at least one country, France, the authority is issuing certificates of vessel compliance with the ILO c188.

AENOR's RTF certification is applied to freezer tuna purse seiners and seeks to identify vessels which engage in responsible practices. The requirements of the RTF standard include working conditions, fishing activities, health control, maritime control, and best fishing practices. Vessels must also participate in Fishery Improvement Projects (FIP). The social requirements are aligned with the ILO C188, covering areas such as minimum age, medical examinations, wages, repatriation and occupational health and safety.

The Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector is intended as a diagnostic tool to identify areas of risk for social issues. It is a voluntary protocol with the purpose of assisting and informing efforts of FIPs who intend to move towards certification. The Tool was developed by industry stakeholders within the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions and beyond and was built on the UN FAO's 'Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries', with supplementary social science research. The principles of the Tool cover human rights, equality, and food and livelihood security. The tool is used by FisheryProgress for their human rights risk assessments.

Initially launched in 2016, FisheryProgress is a FIP information tool and platform managed by FishChoice. In 2019, FisheryProgress sought to extend their FIP requirements to integrate social policies, resulting in the Draft Permanent Social Policy. The Policy completed a round of feedback in the summer of 2020, with responses from industry stakeholders and interested parties. FisheryProgress plans to review the feedback, undertake possible revisions, and conduct a second round of feedback in October 2020, with the aim of launching the Policy in March 2021. At present, the draft policy includes requirements on signing a human rights code of conduct, ensuring fishers are aware of their rights and grievance mechanisms, conducting annual human rights risk assessments, creating a workplan to address high-risk issues, and publicly reporting on assessment results and action progress.

Verité is an independent, non-profit organisation that partners with organisations, government bodies and NGOs to identify and address human rights issues within supply chains. Verité takes a worker-centric approach in undertaking this, conducting desk and field-based risk assessments, audits,

verifying corrective actions, supply chain risk screening and focused investigations. Establishing effective grievance mechanisms forms part of Verité's Fair Hiring Toolkit for suppliers.

PAS 1550:2017 Exercising due diligence in establishing the legal origin of seafood products & marine ingredients. PAS 1550:2017 is a Code of Practice guidance and recommendations incorporating labour issues and links illegal treatment of crew with illegal fishing. The PAS aims to enable decent working conditions on vessels and throughout the supply chain. The PAS was developed by the Pew Charitable Trusts (PEW), Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), Oceana, and WWF, but owned by the British Standards Institution and is designed to combat IUU with specific connection with social challenges on board fishing vessels.

4.4.2 | FISHING VESSEL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Fishing companies are often required by industry social standards to include grievance procedure for the crew, and this may also be a requirement within worker contracts (which may also provide detail to the grievance process). More recently this is being featured in some environmental platforms such as FisheryProgress.org. However, whilst a list of requirements are often given (e.g. routes of communication, no retaliation, confidentiality, fair and unbiased resolution, etc.), there is less guidance available on how this works in practice.

Fishing companies that do have Grievance Mechanisms on board their vessels, are usually informal and controlled by the Captain. However, some larger vessels may have implemented more formalized systems that include communication to the fishing company itself or multiple ways in which a fisher can voice their complaints and systems to investigate these allegations. In addition, the recruitment agency which employs the fisher may have their own procedures to manage complaints from the fishers they recruit.

As part of this study the Organisation of Producers of Frozen Tuna, OPAGAC, was interviewed and, when discussing Grievance Mechanism, informed that on smaller vessels often the grievance procedure is less formal and involves reporting directly to the captain who will then report to the fishing company. OPAGAC

informed it depends on the fishing company, some of them have more formal grievance processes as required by EU legislation. OPAGAC are in the process of modifying respective standards to include Grievance Mechanisms. When interviewing key stakeholders many responses mentioned the hotline initiatives as workers can report their grievances directly, however as discussed throughout this report, connectivity was an issue. There were further examples of formalised grievance procedures in place for fishing vessels or companies, but these private initiatives are not publicly available.

There was a lack of published literature or initiatives on-going that specifically explained what a grievance mechanism on fishing vessels looked like. Where fishing company procedures were found it was not possible to publish them due to confidentiality.

4.4.3 | COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

Technology-based mechanisms are common in the development of pilot Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms (see full list below). The research on Worker Voice and the requirements to provide workers with routes of communication often points toward tech solutions and connectivity, 'technology can make the impossible possible' (Ulula, 2019).

Most fishers have smartphones on board with them, and technology-based mechanisms can include apps and links to hotlines which fishers can access using their smartphones. These mechanisms have benefits, 'Worker Voice technology gathers anonymous data directly from workers' mobile devices – honest and unbiased' (Ulula, 2019).

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION-BASED MECHANISMS AND APPROACHES

Overall, 13 communications and technology-based mechanisms were found, however there was little evidence of any mechanisms in use for the high-seas. Most of the technology mechanisms found during interviews, survey and desk research, were piloted in Thailand. The exception being of some Facebook groups and hotlines which covered more languages and areas.

Below are some selected projects that have focused on Worker Voice and demonstrating technology-based mechanisms, both completed projects and pilot projects. A more extensive list of examples of communication mechanisms can be found in Appendix A. It should be noted that there are further mechanisms / initiatives which are currently being developed but are not yet public.

1. Thai Union and Mars Pet Food – Inmarsat 'Fleet One' Pilot Project
2. Laborlink Mobile Platform
3. The Labor Rights Promotion Network
4. TIG Facebook Group for Fishers
5. MAST Thailand
6. Labor Protection Network (Active Founding Member of MAST)
7. Seafarer Welfare Hotline – ISWAN
8. Winrock International
9. Issara Golden Dreams Smartphone App and Hotline
10. International Labor Rights Forum IM@Sea
11. Issara Inclusive Labor Monitoring
12. Austral Fisheries Makeen Mobile Forms App
13. OpenSC

A project carried out by Thai Union and Mars Pet Foods explored, documented, and piloted a Worker Voice mechanism on vessels in Thailand that they source from. The project explored the potential of Inmarsat's "Fleet One" terminals being activated on Thai fishing vessels. The project introduced audiences to the crew members, captains and fleet owners trained on chat applications which enabled them to connect with families and peers while at sea. This was an industry first for Thai fisheries. The project had some successes; however, the mechanisms were aimed at providing connectivity to the fishers and not establishing a grievance procedure for them to report issues relating to working conditions and to provide remediation.

Winrock International is working with fishers in Thailand to improve worker complaints mechanisms in Thailand. They found that it is difficult for migrant fishermen to make a complaint to the government without the help of an NGO (Winrock 2020).

The project took the learnings of the Thai Union and Mars pilot project and held consultations about different technology types with vessel owners. Working with the companies to ensure vulnerable fishers have a way to reach out and get help Winrock aimed to find connectivity that would allow for this communication. The Thai Union and Mars Inmarsat project had used satellite phones which proved to be expensive. Winrock also worked with Mars Petcare which enabled them to take learnings from the pilot project and continue research into different options for technology and eventually whittled it down to one possible technology using VMS.

There are currently 18 volunteer Thai vessels (comprising of 8 or 9 vessel owners), which will pilot the new technology. This project will use VMS systems to provide connectivity for short texts for a small amount of money. The main reason for choosing VMS was to use it as leverage for the vessel owners as this technology is already required for the vessels. The project will begin in September 2020 and then consensus will include a close relationship with the vessel owners to ensure they are also on side. Winrock International explained that many vessel owners have received the new technology well, as they believe it will also be useful for them for sales. Winrock have addressed the importance of good relations with the vessel owners to ensure they allow the workers to use the mechanism. Currently there are only a few accounts, but the end goal is to scale up and eventually have top-up cards which can be used by the fishers. When asked about the remediation aspect of a Worker Voice mechanism, Winrock expressed that they have recruited a local NGO to set up a base in the port in Thailand where fishers can go when they get back to port. The NGO also has the application technology account and the fishers can also contact them via the application.

A significant challenge has been convincing vessel owners on labour issues. Most vessel owners believe international industry standards are not appropriate for the fishing industry, therefore negative terms were avoided when discussing with the vessel owners and an approach from the point of view of their customers was used. This approach works well as there is an incentive to help and keep in communication. The consultation with vessel owners detailed that other technology is too expensive, however the function may work better than those already in place. Vessel owners were reluctant to pay for new technology and therefore it was agreed that existing technology can instead be updated. Other technologies offered better connectivity, however would only work in one spot on the vessel and as such this defeats the confidentiality aspect of Worker Voice mechanisms.

The International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) launched an Independent Monitoring at Sea (IM@Sea) project in the Thai fishing fleet to address issues of migrant workers using connectivity at sea and developing a worker-driven Grievance Mechanism. As part of this project Andy Shen (Greenpeace USA, formally ILRF) was interviewed. When asked what is meant by ‘worker-driven’ he explained, *‘workers who use the mechanism, and/or their representative worker organizations, are central to the design and implementation of the mechanism, and are able to access effective remedy for rights violations through it.’* The project included MWRN, a membership based migrant worker led organization in Thailand, to design and implement the project. The project found that mechanisms should be developed in consultation with worker representatives and ‘while at-sea data collection is important, onshore assessments build connections between workers and their representative organizations and provide more accurate information on certain conditions’ (ILRF, 2018).

CHALLENGES WITH TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Worker Voice mechanisms piloted, or in operation in fisheries generally, rely on technology to overcome the barrier of being out at sea, but research suggested that few have been successful in providing Worker Voice or remediation. Mechanisms are often data-centric, meaning the data is the main asset, and as such the mechanisms do not go far enough to really install change within the systems. A 2019 study (Rende Taylor, 2019) found *‘due-diligence-oriented technology tools were found to help control risk in supply-chain hot spots, but rarely identified modern slavery due to gaining little trust from workers, and business clients not being ready to expose or address modern slavery. Empowerment-oriented worker feedback tools were found to regularly identify modern slavery, forced labour, and human trafficking and to assist exploited workers, but most had no connection to business’s due diligence.’*

A 2020 report (Berg, L. et al., 2020) also assessed technology to address the risk of exploitation in the supply chains. The report presents three sets of concerns: the quality of data gathered may be inadequate to reliably inform decision making; and global brands may gather large quantities of worker data to identify legal, reputational and financial risks without addressing structural causes of exploitation or delivering outcomes; and large scale collection of data from workers creates new risks for workers’ safety.

SUMMARY ON TECHNOLOGY-BASED SYSTEMS

In summary technology-based systems may work well in EEZ fishing zones where connectivity is better (for example Issara’s Golden Dreams app and the Inmarsat pilot by Thai Union

and Mars), however for the fishers working on the high seas connectivity becomes problematic. It may therefore be necessary to look at other communication channels such as VMS used within the Winrock example. At-sea connectivity is unreliable, and there is little evidence of any technology-based mechanisms being rolled out to the high seas.

4.4.4 | HOTLINES

Hotlines are a popular choice for Trade Unions and governmental organisations and are often available in multiple languages. For example, the Thai and Taiwanese governments have multiple hotlines which are available in different languages and the Taiwanese number is a 24-hour service. In addition, there are hotlines available which apply to all workers including fishers. This approach can be somewhat detached from fishers working on the high seas and education is required to ensure fishers are aware of these contact numbers.

The Labour Rights Promotion Network were one of the first to set up a hotline for Burmese fishers to call if they were in difficult positions. This work was conducted despite an oppressive environment in Thailand. The LPN is a Thai NGO founded in 2004 to increase workers’ access to fundamental rights. The LPN website now states to report a case, request assistance or information, or get in touch directly in Thai, Khmer, Lao and Burmese. LPN has an intelligence network in which they receive information and then bring them to the attention of the government and police.

4.4.5 | EMPOWERMENT AND OTHER INITIATIVES

Rende Taylor (2019) sets out the two purposes of Worker Voice: data collection for due diligence, and empowerment of workers. As increased Worker Voice research is conducted the terminology has been evolving and ‘worker empowerment’ is a recurring phrase within the literature.

The term of empowerment is often associated with the Trade Unions who represent fishers. Trade Unions are available in most countries, are widely accessible and provide a direct route to remediation. However, one issue facing Trade Unions is the period fishing vessels spend out at the high seas and are therefore out of communication.

Other examples of empowerment initiatives include member-based initiatives and groups where fishers can gain advice on their rights. Some organisations have offices set up in and around the ports so fishers can access the services when they return to port, these are often run by NGOs. Empowerment initiatives go beyond

data collection and due diligence and often provide legal advice, support, and assistance.

Overall, 21 mechanisms linked to empowerment were found during the research for this white paper, further detail and examples are listed below and in Appendix A.

TRADE UNIONS

Through the research for this white paper, there were many Trade Unions identified and the list below is not extensive (should this read exhaustive?) of all Trade Unions which would in fact be accessible to fishers. However, the 21 listed are initiatives which were specifically related to fishers or mentioned during the interviews, research, and survey. Further detail can be found in Appendix A.

The following initiatives have been selected to demonstrate empowerment initiatives.

1. ETF – looking at how to define Worker Voice and related mechanisms
2. International bodies: EU, FAO and ITF
3. Albacora CBA with ITF
4. Associations such as OPAGAC
5. Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union
6. 6Taiwan International Worker's Association
7. The Migrant Workers Rights Network (MWRN)
8. Fisherman's Mission UK
9. Sentro Union Federation Philippines
10. National Fishworkers Forum India
11. Argentinian Fishermans Union 'SOMU'
12. IUF Affiliates Meetings
13. Contrapech Chile
14. Stella Maris Seafarers Centre
15. Tambuyog Development Centre Philippines
16. SFFAII Fisheries Association Philippines
17. European Commission Works Council (Ondernemingsraad, Dutch Works Council)
18. Thai Union Human Rights Due Diligence Framework
19. National Indonesian Fisherman Organization (HNSI)
20. ITF Catcher to Counter Initiative
21. Thailand Global Union

Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union is a local migrant Union for fishers based in Yilan, Taiwan. As part of this study, Allison Lee was interviewed and explained that this union is for all fishers, their Director is Indonesian himself. The Union also has a Facebook page which is used to spread awareness but is also open for communication should any fishers need to reach out. Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union advocates for fishers rights by lobbying the local governments, however Allison explains there are

downfalls to this as there are many locals who are involved in both fisheries and government and therefore it is difficult to lobby on certain issues which could affect how the industry is run. Allison explained how change often occurs after a tragedy: she gives an example of lobbying for life jackets which was unsuccessful until a vessel crashed, and the workers sadly died due to the lack of life jackets. Allison explained that even though the union was based in Taiwan any fisher, regardless of nationality, could call or visit them. The Chinese Traditional survey received 5 responses and, of those, 3 respondents mentioned the Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union.

The Migrant Workers Rights Network (MWRN) is a membership-based organisation for migrant workers from Myanmar residing and working in Thailand. MWRN aims to promote and strengthen Myanmar migrant workers' rights by raising awareness, promoting access to justice and negotiation processes with employers and officials, and promoting wider policy change. MWRN informs and trains worker welfare committees on issues surrounding migrant labour. Migrant workers will be informed of their local union to increase their access to collective bargaining on better working conditions. Legal assistance relating to employment and migration matters is also provided to migrant workers (The Freedom Fund, 2019).

NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The research for this white paper identified 20 NGO and International organisation initiatives which relate to fishers. Some of the NGOs were local to Philippines and Taiwan and others have a more global reach such as the Human Right at Sea Arbitration project.

1. ETF – looking at how to define Worker Voice and related mechanisms
2. International bodies: EU, FAO and ITF
3. Albacora CBA with ITF
4. Associations such as OPAGAC
5. Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union
6. Taiwan International Worker's Association
7. The Migrant Workers Rights Network (MWRN)
8. Fisherman's Mission UK
9. Sentro Union Federation Philippines
10. National Fishworkers Forum India
11. Argentinian Fishermans Union 'SOMU'
12. IUF Affiliates Meetings
13. Contrapech Chile
14. Stella Maris Seafarers Centre
15. Tambuyog Development Centre Philippines
16. SFFAII Fisheries Association Philippines

17. European Commission Works Council (Ondernemingsraad, Dutch Works Council)
18. Thai Union Human Rights Due Diligence Framework
19. National Indonesian Fisherman Organization (HNSI)
20. ITF Catcher to Counter Initiative
21. Thailand Global Union

Many NGOs and associations work to advocate on human rights at sea and this, in turn, is promoting Worker Voice by highlighting the importance of worker representation. A current example is the **Greenpeace Beyond Seafood Campaign** which found only 4 out of 20 companies included in the Cannery Ranking report have whistle-blower and anonymous hotlines or email where affected migrant fishers can file complaints. As a result of these findings, Greenpeace applies pressure to all companies, traders to processors to end-buyers, to take responsibility for the labour conditions on the fishing vessels (Greenpeace, 2020). This report focuses on the Distant Water Fleet, which is often out of range of other mechanisms which have been piloted so far.

Below are a couple of Worker Voice initiatives and research projects to demonstrate the work of NGOs and International organisations relating to fishing vessels.

RISE is a Roadmap for Improving Seafood Ethics which provides resources to help companies uphold legal and ethical labour conditions and safeguard worker well-being (RISE, 2020). FishWise consulted with multiple sustainable seafood NGOs and human rights organizations to develop the Roadmap which aims to promote social responsibility in the seafood industry. The platform is free and encourages engagement from the industry. Users of the platform include retailers or food service that would like more insight into the practices used in the supply chain due to concerns; a supplier who has been requested to make improvements, or a buyer with some social responsibility practices in place (RISE, 2020).

As guidance, RISE provides recommendations to strengthen social responsibility in the supply chain, tools, and templates for due diligence and a worker-centred lens to key topics.

Issara Institute is an independent NGO based in Southeast Asia and the US using Worker Voice, partnership, and innovation to mitigate issues of human trafficking and forced labour. Issara have played an active role in the development of Worker Voice research and initiatives, including in the fisheries industry. Issara also consulted on the RISE platform and assisted in the curation of relevant resources.

In 2017, **Issara started using Inclusive Labour Monitoring** (ILM) approach for an independent channel for workers in all stages of supply chains to share feedback about working conditions and anything of concern. Workers can also contact Issara through their smartphone app Golden Dreams, their Facebook pages, messaging apps and multi-lingual free 24-hour hotline. The Golden Dreams app 2.0 is released in October 2020 in Burmese and Khmer for workers in Southeast Asia to learn, exchange information, leave reviews, ratings and advice about employers, recruiters, and service providers.

Issara have also included a labour element into Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) to include Worker Voice at sea using 'cutting edge vessel tracking and catch traceability reporting technology' (Issara Institute, 2020). In addition, Issara work together with a number of retailers as strategic partners (including Tesco, Waitrose, M&S, Sainsbury's) and encourage workers in their supply chains to engage with their Worker Voice programmes.

Issara is also leading a field of research in a more 'worker-driven' approach with their **Worker Voice-Driven Ethical Recruitment Program**. Nestlé is one of the first companies to see impact results from the recruitment program, including increased transparency around the terms, conditions, and fees related to labour recruitment; reductions in fees paid by workers; and elimination of informal brokering and first-mile debt, verified by workers (Nestlé, 2018).

In Issara's 2020 update report, Issara stated that they were unable to advance Worker Voice at sea technologies past a development phase due to a lack of commitment by vessel owners, internal delays, and issues with importing necessary equipment, but continues to address more pressing matters of exploitative conditions and learnings from the FLIP project.

Issara Institute were interviewed as part of this study and a main point made was that Worker Voice needs to ensure safeguards for workers raising issues, and clear connection to remediation of issues raised. A clear focus for Worker Voice approaches must include 'access to credible and reliable grievance with a mechanism for remediation'. Potential issues and considerations for tech enabled Worker Voice tools were studied in [Issara's research with Brown University in 2019](#), and specific lessons for building Grievance Mechanisms for fishers was profiled in a case study in [Issara's 5 year impact report](#).

Jarrett Basedow, Regional Director of Issara Institute, provided information on Worker Voice mechanisms available on land to fishers and workers at ports and piers (including Issara’s multi-lingual hotlines, social media, and Golden Dreams application, and other hotlines available connecting workers to a variety of services and support) which are broadly available and known to workers. These mechanisms function at sea in Thai waters where signals are available when boats are closer to shore or on shorter trips, but while several Worker Voice at sea pilots have been conducted, there is generally not access to Grievance Mechanisms for fishers while at sea.

Migrante International is an NGO for Taiwanese and Filipino overseas workers which was set up in 1996 as a response to the death of an overseas Filipino worker. Since then, ‘Migrante International has become an active defender of the rights and welfare of overseas Filipino workers’ (Migrante International). Migrante International handles many welfare and rights cases and now has over 200 member organisations in 23 countries.

Human Rights at Sea, an NGO based in England, UK is leading a project alongside international law firm Shearman & Sterling LLP to develop a mechanism to resolve disputes concerning human rights abuses at sea using international arbitration. The term Worker Voice gains it weight when accurately described as requiring remediation and this pilot project potentially offers a viable solution for justice for victims of abuse at sea. In an article for Law 360 (Simson, 2020) Emmanuel Gaillard, Shearman & Sterling LLP’s global head of disputes and the international arbitration practice group, described the sea as ‘no man’s land and a race to the bottom.’ The project is often described as taking a ‘victim-centered’ approach, however a noted challenge is the length of time that this system could take to get up and running.

Plan International’s SAFE Seas project initiated the Fishers Center in Tegal and Bitung, Indonesia to help provide protection for workers in the fisheries sector. This initiative has the potential to be replicated in other areas and they have a commitment from the government to do so. The fishers and respective workers can use the centre to report any concerns or issues and the cases will be linked with the Ministry for immediate follow up (A, Mulyono, 2020). The centre is a good example of multiple actors working simultaneously to improve the lives of fishers.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) Southeast Asian Forum to End Trafficking in Persons and Forced Labour of Fishers (“The SEA Forum for Fishers”) is the multi-stakeholder Regional Coordination Body to be established in

Southeast Asia to improve coordination in combatting trafficking in persons, forced labour, and modern slavery at sea (Sea Fisheries Project, n.d.). The project has undertaken considerable work of relevance to Worker Voice and has a work stream dedicated to the promotion of meaningful access to justice for fishers, including free or affordable complaint mechanisms in cases of alleged abuse of their rights, effective and appropriate remedies where abuse has occurred, and to strengthen mutual legal assistance among governments to that end. One of the outcomes of this project was to set up a platform for knowledge sharing and enhancing communications, which would directly support fishers’ Worker Voice.

The ILO also runs the European Union-funded **Ship to Shore Rights Project** which works with the Thai Government, employers’ organizations, workers’ organizations and buyers towards the prevention and reduction of unacceptable forms of work in Thailand’s fishing and seafood industries. The project was launched on March 10, 2020 and is a follow up to the ILO’s baseline research on fishers and seafood workers in Thailand, conducted in 2017 (Ship to Shore Rights, 2020).

AUTHORITIES AND GOVERNMENTAL

Much of the research on national initiatives or funded projects came through the interview process in which 13 programs have been listed as being linked to authorities and government. An example of the work being carried out by the Thai government is provided below.

1. Taiwanese Fishing Authority Strategies for Migrant Fishers
2. Workforce Development Ministry of Labor Taiwan
3. Department for Employment Thailand
4. Labor Protection Division Thailand
5. Foreign Workers Administration Office
6. PeduliWNI Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia
7. Regulations issued by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (Regulation 35/2015 and 2/2017) Indonesia
8. Taiwanese government funding for Wi-Fi trial on board a pilot longline fishing vessel
9. The Danish Institute for Human Rights Project on HR in Seafood
10. Thai Tuna Association (TTIA) Ethical Labor Practice Code of Conduct on Workers
11. Thai Port Inspection EIJF
12. French Authority’s ILO C188 vessel inspections
13. LCS Legal Advocate Thailand

The **Thai government** has recently been more active in solving and improving the working conditions for fishing workers, both Thai and migrant fishers. Led by the Ministry of Labor who

issued the Labor Protection Act in Fisheries, the department of employment has set up the hotline (1694) for foreign workers to call for help, with interpretation in English, Burmese, and Cambodian. Workers can also submit complaints through the website which has a complaint form available in 6 languages: Thai, English, Burmese, Laos, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. The Labor Protection Division also has another hotline (1506#3) for labour issues. Moreover, there are also Provincial Coordination Centers for Sea Fishery Workers in several provinces throughout the country.

The Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) has monitored and observed the Thai government's port inspection scheme since 2015 to better understand interview and Worker Voice mechanisms during vessel inspections. EJF evaluates these efforts alongside its own worker feedback to provide recommendations on how improvements can be made to the Thai government. EJF was interviewed as part of this study and informed that multi-disciplinary approach along with robust training and application of a victim-centred approach were required for successful Worker Voice. EJF explained that Worker Voice has a better chance of success in Thailand as the vessels are restricted to just one month at sea and therefore one can more easily measure and track progress. However, enforcement of regulations and access to workers will be critical to its long-term success. This will be more challenging with distant water fleets.

4.5 | CHALLENGES FOR WORKER VOICE IN FISHERIES

The characteristics of fishing make effective Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanisms challenging by nature, the following were commonly cited in the literature:

Cultural, language and regulatory:

Many fishers employed to work on vessels (particularly on the high seas) are migrants and may be more reluctant to bring forth issues regarding the working conditions on board. This may be due to a variety of factors; language, culture, being unaware of their rights, lack of contracts, fear for their safety, fear of loss of employment. *The cultural barriers for the migrant fishers leave them 'unwilling to come forward and openly discuss problems of safety and fisheries management because they believe they will not have a voice in what the alternative regulations will be.'* (I.M Kaplan, 2000).

In addition to culture and language, the industry also faces regulatory barriers. Jurisdiction of labour issues can be very complex. For example, in Taiwan vessels within the EEZ fall under labour regulations but those on the high seas are under the remit of Fishing Authorities which relies on industry interest

groups called Fishermen's Associations to help regulate the hiring practices and oversee working condition, which creates a natural conflict of interest (Aspinwall, N., 2018). A representative from the Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union was interviewed as part of this project, who explained that most the grievance channels in Taiwan are ineffective as they are managed by employers who are well connected politically.

In some countries, it is not permitted to unionise or bargain collectively. In some cases, alternatives such as 'worker committees' may be in place. However, often these can be controlled by management and as such are not considered by some commenters to provide a viable form of protected collective representation' (Kyritsis, P., 2019). It was noted that much of the research on Worker Voice led back to discussion on unionising and bargaining collectively and therefore raising additional challenges where this is not possible.

Power imbalance:

A common barrier for effective Worker Voice is the power imbalance between workers and management, on a fishing vessel this can relate to the crew and their captain. Many mechanisms on fishing vessels rely on crew being able to complain or discuss issues with their captain, however this can leave little alternative if the crew do not feel able to take this route. In some cases this approach may work and problems can be solved at vessel level, but oftentimes this is not the case and this approach provide little remediation. As one observer noted: 'Ultimately, the only way to root out labour abuses in global supply chains is by disrupting traditional power relations between workers and businesses' (Kyritsis, P., 2019).

Connectivity:

As noted, fishing vessels are often at sea for prolonged periods and connectivity at sea can be difficult. For example, the Ministry of Labor in Taiwan has a hotline for migrant workers, but it is out of reach for the distant water fleets (Aspinwall, 2018), meaning many fishers have no way of communicating back to land.

Communications technologies, such as [Laborlink](#) and [Ulula](#), are available which can allow fishers to send and receive messages via their smartphones. This can allow organisations to see and respond to fishers' views as well as keeping a record that can be analysed by social auditors, business owners or others. However, the technology relies on access to internet and whilst many fishers may have mobile phones they are not usually connected whilst at sea.

Costs:

One of the more common challenges and barriers mentioned, during desk-based research and interviews, were the costs relating to Worker Voice on fishing vessels, in particular the costs of technology-based mechanisms. Unfortunately, fishing vessels are not as straight forward as land-based industries where mechanisms can be applied easily, they do not have the connectivity and stay at sea for long periods of time. Fishing crew are subsequently in a situation where they do not have communication with anyone other than those who are on the vessel. Aspinwall (2018) quoted Greenpeace after acknowledging the upfront costs may not allow for vessel owners to implement Worker Voice systems, *‘the challenges are not going to be with large business, it’ll be with the small/ medium enterprises, if we want to scale the system across a whole fleet industry wide, that requires international brands to step up and take responsibility for enabling their suppliers to adopt these systems.’*

5 | Results of the survey and semi-structured interviews

This section focuses on the results from the survey and interview responses, specifically focusing on the language used and familiarity with terms noted in the survey (see Appendix B).

5.1 | OUTREACH SURVEY

As described in Section 2, the outreach survey was released, distributed, and promoted in August 2020, and was designed to provide as much outreach as possible.

5.1.1 | SURVEY REACH

Figure 7 provides a summary of the survey responses. As of the 4th September 2020 there were 33 English responses, 1 Indonesian, 3 Thai, 5 Taiwanese, 1 French and 1 Vietnamese, covering a range of species and stakeholders.

The English language survey received the most responses (33 respondents compared with 11 respondents completing the survey in other languages). The responses were from various roles in the fisheries sector such as processors, NGOs, etc. as shown in Figure 8 on the following page.

FIGURE 7 SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

44

LANGUAGES

English	33
Chinese Traditional	5
Thai	3
Vietnamese	1
Indonesian	1
French	1

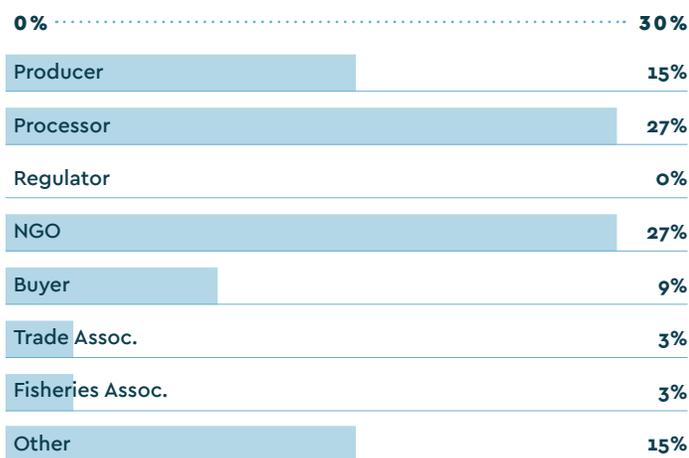
FISHERIES SECTOR RESPONDENTS

- NGOs
- Processors
- Producers
- Buyers
- Trade Associations
- Fisheries Associations

TOP 5 SPECIES SELECTED

- Cod / Haddock / Coley / Whiting
- Farmed Shrimp
- Skipjack Tuna
- Yellowfin / Bigeye Tuna
- Farmed Atlantic Salmon

FIGURE 8 PERCENTAGE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY SECTOR



The locations of the English language survey respondents include Netherlands, USA, Philippines, Austria, UK, Taiwan, Scotland, Mexico, Australia, India, Iceland, New Zealand, and the South Pacific. The respondents covered a range of countries in which they work predominately including:

TABLE 3 LIST OF COUNTRIES WHERE RESPONDENTS REPLYING IN ENGLISH WORK PREDOMINATELY

COUNTRIES	
United Kingdom	Netherlands
Iceland	Palau
Norway	Solomon Islands
USA	Sri Lanka
Indonesia	Tuvalu
Vietnam	Australia
Philippines	Brazil
Russia	Cambodia
Thailand	France
China	Greece
Kiribati	Honduras
Marshall Islands	Italy
Taiwan	Lithuania
Bangladesh	Mauritius
Canada	Mexico
Fiji	Pakistan
Germany	Poland
Ghana	Seychelles
India	South Korea
Japan	Spain
Micronesia	Turkey
Myanmar	Papua New Guinea
Nauru	New Zealand
Mauritania	

The completion rate on the English language version was 88%. The typical time spent on the survey was 32 minutes and the most skipped question was number 12: 'Please share any other comments, thoughts, contacts, web links or relevant sources that you think may be important to this project findings and the white paper (including any literature, research or studies relating to this subject).'

5.1.2 | SURVEY RESPONSES

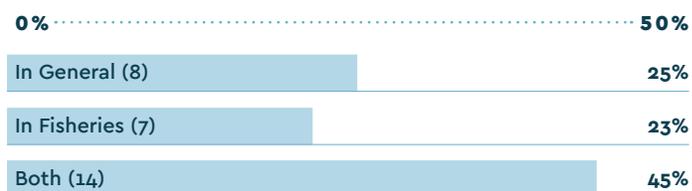
FAMILIARITY WITH THE TERM: WORKER VOICE

Figure 9 shows the responses for whether the respondent was familiar with the term Worker Voice. Out of 31 respondents for the English language questionnaire (2 skipped question) 28 were familiar with the term, and 21 were familiar with the term in fisheries or both generally and in fisheries. 8 respondents were familiar with Worker Voice in general but not necessarily familiar with the term in relation to fisheries. A handful of responses did not know of any existing Worker Voice mechanisms.

FIGURE 9 RESPONSES TO SURVEY QUESTION: 'ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE TERM WORKER VOICE?' FROM THE ENGLISH SURVEY

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

31



Below is a summary of the findings from the Indonesian, Thai, Taiwanese, Vietnamese, and French survey responses.

The Indonesian survey only received one response, however, once the in-country outreach support had discussed the survey with the targeted respondents it became clear that they were either reluctant to fill the survey out as they were not familiar with the terms, or worried about any implications. Some respondents explained that is not easy to improve some aspects of grievance and the expected results were therefore unclear.

The Thai survey received three responses covering tuna and shrimp. There was not a clear finding around how crew could resolve grievances with the vessel owner or whether they have a

worker representative to help them. Potential grievance routes were identified as IOM Thailand, WWF, Thai Frozen Food Association (TFFA), Seafood Task Force (STF), Issara Institute, ILO, LPN, MWRN, HRDF, and TTIA.

The Taiwanese survey responses were mostly from non-profit organisations and they all reported that there is a channel for migrant fishers to report any concerns, however one respondent informed this does not always improve the situation. When asked about any available mechanisms 3 out of 5 respondents mentioned the Yilan Migrant Fishers Union.

The Vietnamese survey respondent was from the processing sector and was aware of the terms in general but not in relation to fishing vessels.

The French survey response was from a fishing organisation and was aware of most of the terms in general and was aware of collective bargaining, freedom of association, union of fishing workers, complaints box, workers representative, and social dialogue specific to fisheries.

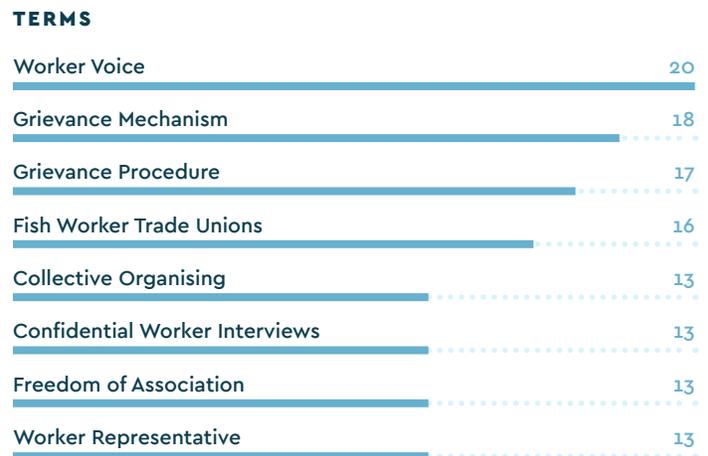
MOST FAMILIAR TERMS

The survey respondents were asked: ‘Are you familiar with any of the following terms? Tick which ones you are familiar with in general and for fisheries and fisheries workers (not including processing plants); and explain your understanding of what it means.’ The terms listed on the survey are the terms which are listed in Table 4 and summarised in Figure 10.

TABLE 4 REFERENCE TERMINOLOGY RELATING TO WORKER VOICE FOR FISHERS

COUNTRIES	
Worker Voice	Social Welfare Organisations
Worker Representation	Complaints Mechanism
Hotline	Worker Driven Grievance Mechanism
Collective Bargaining / Organising	Unionising
Worker Empowerment / Worker Empowerment Tools	Social Dialogue
Mailbox / Complaints Box	Fishers Networks
Whistle Blowing	Remediation
Worker Voice Driven Ethical Recruitment	Participative Management
Apps	Complaints Box
Polls	Worker Feedback Technology
Worker Driven Social Responsibility	Collective Organising
Worker Reporting	Workers Committee
Fisher Voice	

FIGURE 10 GRAPH SHOWING THE MOST FAMILIAR SELECTED TERMS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SURVEY



From the English language survey, the term with the highest number of respondents familiar in fisheries was ‘Worker Voice’ with 20 respondents. This was closely followed by the term Grievance Mechanism (18 respondents), grievance procedure (17 respondents) and fish worker Trade Unions (16 respondents). Collective organising, confidential worker interviews, freedom of association and worker representative all received 13 responses for familiarity in fisheries.

In the **Taiwanese responses** 3 out of 5 knew what the terms were in relation to fishing vessels and the remaining 2 respondents had a general idea of the terms but not in relation to fishing vessels. A further respondent notes that in Taiwan there is no clear system that handles fishermen’s grievances so most of them will stay quiet until the end of their term and those who do have courage to complain through an NGO are often put in a difficult situation.

One respondent informed that in **Indonesian** ‘Worker Voice’ and ‘Grievance Mechanism’ may not be recognized among fishers but it’s known in land-based industry where they have better access to information and most of them are affiliated to workers’ associations.

The **Thai survey responses** varied on recognizing Worker Voice, while some skipped the question whether they recognize the term Grievance Mechanism, Worker Voice and worker empowerment as it might relate to those working on fishing vessels and what do these terms mean to them, other responses stated that;

FIGURE 11 THAI SURVEY RESPONSES FOR RECOGNIZING GRIEVANCE MECHANISM, WORKER VOICE, AND WORKER EMPOWERMENT

“A grievance mechanism is a process that is created in order for the complainant to be used as a step towards resolving their problem. Worker voice is a reflection of the opinions of workers on various matters, such as complaint or presenting information. Worker empowerment include various kinds of development that allows workers to work with more capacity.”

“Yes. Communication from workers to management executives to know problems and help resolve, so that all divisions in the organization can work together with happiness.”

Some Thai responses said they are familiar with: Worker Voice, Grievance Mechanism, Grievance Procedure, Hotline, Worker Feedback Technology, Confidential Worker Interviews, Complaints Box, and Social Dialogue. There was, however, less understanding with the terms: Works Committee, Collective Organizing, Worker Feedback Technology, Fish Worker Trade Unions, Due Diligence Tools, Participative Management, and Worker Committee. A comment from the survey stated all these terms “would only be familiar to those who has worked or experienced in labor issue in fishing industry”.

DEFINING WORKER VOICE

The survey also asked how respondents defined Worker Voice, Grievance Mechanisms, and worker empowerment as it is applied to those working on fishing vessels. The question asked:

‘Do you recognise the term Grievance Mechanism, Worker Voice and worker empowerment as it might relate to those working on fishing vessels? If yes, how would you define it and what do these terms mean to you?’

23 out of 27 English responses (6 skipped) recognised the terms and gave descriptions of what they believe to be the definition.

The following box illustrates some of the quotes from respondents on relevant definitions.

FIGURE 12 BOX DEFINING WORKER VOICE, GRIEVANCE MECHANISM AND WORKER EMPOWERMENT

The quotes below are taken from the question on how respondents defined Worker Voice, Grievance Mechanisms and worker empowerment as they apply the capture fisheries sector.

“Collect, evaluate and remediate Worker Voice complaints.”

“A tool where workers can share their thoughts, questions, needs, problems and complaints and ask for information regarding labour related issues on a voluntary basis.”

“An ability for fishermen to speak out and be heard via an independent mechanism to allow them to report and remove themselves from any dangers or dangerous practices.”

“The terms relate to workers on vessels having a voice in their welfare, working and social conditions on vessels.”

“Suitable systems in place for grievances or whistleblowing to take place without fear or recourse.”

“Grievance mechanism is a channel to make claims anonymously. Worker Voice is the expression of workers on their rights and conditions. Worker empowerment is how workers can come together to express their voice and resolve their grievances.”

“Educating workers on their rights.”

“Raise concerns whilst protecting their confidentiality.”

“Direct and unimpeded line of communication with a trusted and bonded third party responsible for ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of crew working at sea on fishing vessels.”

Some of the key themes that emerged from these definitions include:

- Having a Voice
- Worker influencing welfare and working conditions on vessels
- Direct and unimpeded line of communication
- Raising concerns while protecting anonymity
- An outcome that removes dangers for crew

Regarding the term “Worker Voice” the **Thai respondents** understanding of its meaning was:

FIGURE 13 WORKER VOICE DEFINITIONS FROM THE THAI SURVEY RESPONDENTS

“Listen to employees of their problem, help needed or suggestions from them in order to demonstrate recognition and to give opportunity for workers to be involved in driving labor management system”

“There is an organization named LPN working on a project with the same name. It is a form of receiving complaints from workers involved in fishing.”

“The workers want to voice out their problems”

The key themes from the Thai survey include:

- Voicing out problems and help needed
- Listening to problems
- Opportunities for workers to be involved in labour management

DEFINING GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

The following quotes are taken from the English language survey and specify what Grievance Mechanism means to the respondents.

FIGURE 14 ENGLISH LANGUAGE SURVEY DEFINITIONS OF GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

‘A Grievance Mechanism (often combined with “Worker Voice”) is a mechanism for workers to voice complaints or provide feedback on working conditions; prompt and fair remediation is expected but it not the norm.’

‘Usually they go direct to their employer, which doesn’t offer them much protection or power in negotiation.’

‘Grievance procedure is an approach on how to handle properly the grievance and complaints of employee. In practice, the company has a grievance committee and admin hearing procedure for the purpose discussing and evaluating the complaint or concerns formally filed by the worker. Through the said procedure, the issues and concerns were discussed and resolved.’

‘Grievance Mechanisms are structured way on how to collect, evaluate and remediate Worker Voice complaints. Grievance Mechanisms provide suitable means of identifying adverse effects at an early stage.’

‘Grievance procedure is a structured, transparent way that employees are aware of /informed by employer. It is important that grievance also include a structures way on how to remediate on findings. Especially at vessel level it is important that a grievance procedure is defined and communicated to workers.’

‘In Taiwan, if there is a problem, the crew will report to the government or to the local NGO and then the government will work with the crew and vessel owner to resolve the disputes’

‘It’s about having suitable systems in place for grievances or whistleblowing to take place without fear or recourse. It should add strength to the employer employee relationship.’

‘Usually the Grievance Mechanism used in Taiwan is through the broker, the employer follow what the broker says, while the fishers only hope is the broker to be on their side as they pay them monthly for their rendered services to the workers.’

‘Grievance Mechanism refers to the system / process that is in place (that is communicated to crew) to deal with issues of the crew / employees and how it is dealt with.’

Some of the key principles associated with best-practice grievance mechanisms included:

- Structured;
- Transparent;
- Clearly defined;
- Clearly communicated;
- Involved collection, evaluation and remediation of grievances;
- Confidential/Anonymous;
- Fair and prompt remediation;
- No fear of recourse;
- Ability to identify issues at an early stage; and
- Strengthen employer-employee relationship

ADDITIONAL TERMS FOR WORKER VOICE AND GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

When asked if respondents knew of any terms which have similar meaning or intent as Worker Voice (in addition to the terms already listed) 19 out of 23 respondents stated 'no' or 'N/A'. The additional terms from 2 respondents included: labour rights, human rights, social responsibility, collective bargaining, processions for public support, protests, and strikes. One respondent gave an example of the Argentinian Fisherman's Union 'SOMU' as a good example of an existing Fishers Union, while another 2 respondents, stated that a common concept of Trade Unions is outdated and long gone now.

GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS IN PRACTICE

A few survey responses also identified cultural issues with effective grievance, with examples in Taiwan and Philippines where grievance does not work on vessels due to the culture of not complaining and accepting the situation. Another response from the English language survey mentioned the 'at sea culture where the skippers' word is final.' Other responses raised concerns with the on-board grievance procedures because the vessels are at sea for too long.

Survey responses mentioned centres and Trade Unions which are stationed in ports or around ports where fishers can go into and voice any concerns, however fishers must be aware of these centres to utilise them.

5.2 | INDIVIDUAL STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW COVERAGE

As well as the survey, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Advisory Group and other key stakeholders who have experience in Worker Voice issues and the seafood supply chain into the European and US markets. Figure 15

summarises the institutions that took part in the semi-structured interviews.

The interviewees provided insight to initiatives and pilot projects which are either being run by themselves or by other organisations. The Advisory Group also provided guidance on the project, such as the survey questions and suggested languages / outreach.

FIGURE 15 BOX OF STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- Greenpeace USA
- WWF USA
- Yilan Migrant Fishers Union
- Conservation Alliance
- Costco
- Issara Institute
- Conservation International
- Plan International
- Winrock International

The interviews focused on the types of initiatives, what has been successful and what challenges and issues exist as listed in Figure 16 and Figure 17. These aspects will be explored further in the next stage of the Fishing Vessel Crew Worker Voice project.

DEFINING WORKER VOICE AND GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

The Advisory Group and key stakeholders were asked similar questions during the interviews to the outreach survey, and when asked 'what defines Worker Voice?' the following definitions were given:

FIGURE 16 DEFINITIONS OF WORKER VOICE FROM THE ADVISORY GROUP AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS

"The ability for workers to articulate concerns to people who can address these concerns."

"Worker Voice is any mechanism which is able to recap workers troubles effectively to the company, how the worker is able to send messages they have in relation to the working conditions, grievance is complementary to this."

“Being empowered, to have agency and involvement in conditions.”

“Grievance Mechanism is a fundamental Worker Voice element.”

“The mechanism on vessels is normally the skipper who is the channel to the boat owner, bigger companies have systems in place and one company has a bargaining agreement with ITF.”

“Normally Worker Voice comes through a union, however there is little validation and needs to be drilled into the process as representation.”

“Worker Voice is more than just talking about grievances, needs to be a good understanding of what this includes.”

“For workers to be empowered, you can’t always hear the negatives, you need to hear constructive feedback as well.”

“Good Worker Voice will find solutions.”

“Participation mechanisms where workers can have a say on the conditions.”

Concerns and challenges were also discussed during the AG interviews as listed in the box below:

FIGURE 17 CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES MENTIONED DURING INTERVIEWS WITH THE ADVISORY GROUP

“Big spectrum of effectiveness when it comes to Worker Voice and grievance, workers often don’t have trust and one size fits all does not work.”

“The data collection where they have option (such as hotlines) are not adequate as they do not go far enough. The tech solutions available are for data collection and do not make change with the structure.”

“Changing attitudes of companies so that receiving complaints is good, we want to find problems and behavioral change.” ‘

“Power imbalance is massive on fishing vessels; you need a safe form of reference on the vessel as well as a support network and trusted authority on land.”

“A combination of factors need to be in place for effective Worker Voice. 1) Need strong government fishery inspectors with social welfare. 2) Reduce time at sea. 3) Improve communications – Wi-Fi at sea. 4) Finding a way to organize fishers better (support unions). 5) Ratify ILO C188.”

There was consensus among stakeholders that more research on Worker Voice is necessary and the current technology-based mechanisms may fall short due to costs and connectivity for the distant water fleets. The interviews also highlight the level of cooperation required between key actors to achieve successful Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism.

The importance of remediation was repeatedly stressed during the interviews with industry experts, and at a conceptual level grievance processes are incomplete without meaningful remediation. However, the long periods at sea was raised as a potential barrier for effective Grievance Mechanism when discussing what happens after a grievance is received and how it is dealt with.

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Appendix A | Discovered fisher Worker Voice and Grievance Mechanism initiatives globally

A.1. COMMUNICATIONS BASED (INCLUDING COMPANY GRIEVANCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND HOTLINES)

NO.	NAME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
1	Thai Union and Mars Pet Food – Immarsat’s Fleet One	Thailand	Inmarsat’s “Fleet One” terminals on fishing vessels in Thailand, and introduces audiences to the crew members, captains and fleet owners trained on chat applications which enable them to connect with families and peers around the world while at sea - an industry first for Thai fisheries.
2	Laborlink Mobile Platform		‘Laborlink is a mobile platform that establishes a two-way communication channel for workers to share their viewpoints in real-time, and for organizations to have a clear visibility of worker well-being in their supply chains’ (Elevate, 2017).
3	The labour rights promotion network	Thailand	One of the first to set up a hotline for Burmese fishers to call if they were in trouble. Even though ISSARA has to some extent absorbed them recently they pioneered the work and their leader Sumpong did so in spite of an oppressive environment in Thailand.
4	TIG (挺移工)	Taiwan	Migrant worker support Facebook page.
5	MAST Thailand	Thailand	The Multi-stakeholders Initiative for Accountable Supply Chain of Thai Fisheries (MAST). A non-profit Combating Human Trafficking at Seas.
6	Labour Protection Network (Active Founding Member of MAST)	Thailand / Cambodia / Myanmar / Laos	Have phone numbers for help in Thai, Cambodian, Burmese, and Laos. Also available via Facebook Messenger.
7	Seafarer welfare provides a seafarer help hotline - ISWAN	Global	Available in multiple languages, open 365 days a year 7 days a week (not sure if it relates to fishers).
8	Winrock International Thailand Pilot	Thailand	Winrock are piloting technology-based systems on 18 vessels in the Thai fishing fleet to improve connectivity and Worker Voice at sea.
9	Golden Dreams Smartphone app	Thailand / Cambodia / Myanmar	Issara Institute launched Golden Dreams, a Burmese language app to revolutionize safe migration, jobseeker empowerment, ethical sourcing, due diligence, and anti-human trafficking. The app version 2.0 is released in October 2020.
10	International Labor rights Forum IM@Sea	Thailand	ILRF launched the Independent Monitoring at Sea (IM@Sea) Project to address vulnerabilities of migrant workers in the Thai fishing fleet by enabling worker connectivity while at sea.
11	Issara Inclusive Labor Monitoring	Thailand	Whereas audits provide a momentary snapshot of workplace conditions and often fail to identify serious labour rights issues, Issara’s Inclusive Labour Monitoring (ILM) approach allows for the continuous monitoring of workplaces across partners’ extended supply chains through direct engagement with workers who report issues and seek assistance through the Issara hotline and other smartphone-enabled worker voice channels.
12	Austral Fisheries Mobile Forms App	Australia	Austral Fisheries aim was to create a solution which improves its safety culture using a mobile forms app which ensures transparency of safety. The form was designed for quick data collection to enable decision makers to help the crew address high-risk behaviours and events.
13	OpenSC	Global Supply Chain: Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas	The systems used for Austral Fisheries Mobile Forms with a mission to help humanity and the planet. OpenSC aims to drive increased responsible production and consumption through supply chain traceability and transparency technology.

A.4. WORKER EMPOWERMENT (INCLUDING TRADE UNIONS)

NO.	NAME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
1	European Transport Workers' Federation	Europe / Global	ETF have been looking at how to define and enable Worker Voice and related mechanisms. The Italian Trade Unions have taken it furthest with specific research papers on the subject. ETF also represent workers through gathering of Trade Unions and driving policy change.
2	International bodies (ILO, FAO, IJF, EU)	Global	International bodies have all been working with Worker Voice and have initiated conversation and some mechanisms listed in this report.
3	Albacora CBA with ITF	European Vessels	The agreement follows several months of negotiations and provides for decent working conditions for non-EU nationals employed on Albacora's boats, including standards above the minimum stipulated by International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions.
4	OPAGAC and APR	European Vessels	Social and Safety conditions at work to be aligned with ILO C188 to protect crew rights. OPAGAC also has good examples of Worker Voice through their worker videos on YouTube.
5	Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union	Taiwan – Coastal and EEZ Fisheries	Local migrant union for fishermen in Yilan, Taiwan. Also has a Facebook page that fishers can be a part of.
6	Taiwan International Workers' Association	Taiwan	NGO to help workers deal with complaints and work for the rights of migrant workers.
7	The Migrant Workers Rights Network (MWRN)	Thailand	Membership-based organisation for migrant workers from Myanmar residing and working in Thailand. MWRN aims to promote and strengthen workers' rights of Myanmar migrants by raising awareness, promoting access to justice and negotiation processes with employers and officials and promoting wider policy change.
8	Fisherman's Mission	UK	Provides support and helplines in the UK.
9	SENTRO Union Federation - Philippines	Philippines	Philippines reported on the outcomes of the two-year campaign for justice for Citra Mina workers in the city of General Santos. The company is the second largest exporter of tuna from the Philippines. In 2014, it dismissed a large group of workers who had formed a union. Besides these human rights violations, the company was also accused of inadequate OSH protection safeguards and of IUU (illegal, unreported, unregulated) fishing in Indonesian waters. The workers who were dismissed for unionisation have continued to fight, with the support of local communities as well as IUF and ITF members around the world, for more than two years. Their basic demands remain the same — reinstatement, back wages and union recognition. The campaign has changed the political landscape in the city. The Citra Mina Workers' Union, with the help of SENTRO and IUF, has dragged a very powerful company into an investigation by the Philippines Congress. The Government is now set to issue a new Departmental Order to govern the fishing industry in the country. The campaign also provided an opportunity for other tuna and fish workers to expose the massive contractualisation of employment through the 'Cabo' subcontracting system. The Government has now confirmed the legal status of the union, and the workers are committed to winning this struggle. It will be a turning point for the 200,000 workers who are dependent on fishing in General Santos city, Philippines.
10	National Fishworkers Forum	India	The forum engages with government to get benefits for fish workers.
11	Argentinian Fisherman's Union 'SOMU'	Argentina	Brings together workers and seamen including fishing.
12	IUF Affiliates Meeting	International	International Meeting of fishing Industry and Aquaculture Workers' Unions.
13	Contrapech Chile	Chile	Fishers' Union in Chile.
14	Stella Maris Seafarers Centre	UK	Free, confidential, multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families available 24 hours a day 365 days per year. Available all over the world via multiple comms channels such as email, Skype, WhatsApp, Facebook, Viber, and a Call back system.

15	Tambuyog Development Centre Philippines	Philippines	Fisherman's centre in the Philippines.
16	SFFAII Fisheries Association Philippines	Philippines	Fisheries Association in Philippines advocating for workers' rights.
17	European Commission Works Council (Ondernemingsraad, Dutch Works Council)	Europe	European Works Councils are bodies representing the European employees of a company. Through them, workers are informed and consulted by management on the progress of the business and any significant decision at European level that could affect their employment or working conditions.
18	Thai Union Human Rights Due Diligence Framework	Global	Education and open dialog to empower workers and give them voice.
19	National Indonesian Fisherman Organization (HNSI)	Indonesia	Indonesian Fishers Association.
20	ITF Catcher to Counter	Global	Catcher to counter initiative - looks at strengthening union membership – a joint program between ITF and IUF.
21	ITF Thailand Global Union	Thailand	Union launches in Thailand – Independent, democratic fishers' union officially launches in Thailand with global Union, NGO and industry backing.

A.5. NGO AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION INITIATIVES

NO.	NAME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
1	Migrante International	Philippines and Taiwan	NGO for Filipino overseas workers which also has a branch in Taiwan.
2	One-forty	Taiwan	NGO in Taiwan help migrant workers from South East Asia, providing training and support for migrant workers to better fit into life in Taiwan.
3	HRAS for Arbitration	Global	Internal complaints mechanisms with remedies which can be arbitration and also provide justice for fishers. The current mechanisms do not provide remedy or justice. Potential to use arbitration as a means of redress.
4	ILO SEA Fisheries Project		One of the outcomes of this project was to set up a platform for knowledge sharing and enhancing communications.
5	ILO Ship to Shore Project	Thailand	End line research findings on fishers and seafood workers in Thailand - Of the 470 workers interviewed, an almost equal share worked in fishing (47 per cent) and in seafood processing (53 per cent).
6	Seafarers rights international		Provides legal advice for seafarers (including fishers) and an app with useful information and to speak with lawyers.
7	FisheryProgress Draft Permanent Social Policy	Global	Developing requirements for human and labour rights to be included in Fishery Improvement Projects.
8	Pacific Dialogue Suva	Fiji	Contactable NGO working to improve social conditions and working within communities.
9	EJF Port Inspection Scheme	Thailand	EJF are working with port authorities in Thailand and can interview crew as a result and feedback to Thai government with recommendations.
10	EJF Interviews with Returning Indonesian Crew	Indonesia (Taiwanese and South Korean flagged vessels)	EJF are contacting retired fishers through networks in Indonesia to interview them about their time working on Taiwanese and South Korean flagged vessels.
11	Kiara Indonesia	Indonesia	NGO strengthening groups of fishermen to obtain protection and a decent living welfare from the Government of the Republic of Indonesia.
12	Plan International SAFE Seas Project	Indonesia and Philippines	Safeguarding against and addressing fishers' exploitation at sea – as part of the project has opened fishers' centres in ports. Strengthen the impact of hotlines and reporting methods as well as provide centralized portals for information and communication.
13	Myanmar Fishery Sector Program	Myanmar	Supported by the Danish and Norwegian Government.

14	SALT		The Seafood Alliance for Legality and Traceability is a global community of governments, the seafood industry, and non-governmental organizations working together to share ideas and collaborate on solutions for legal and sustainable seafood.
15	Conservation International Social Responsibility Assessment Tools	Global	The Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector is intended as a diagnostic tool to identify areas of risk for social issues.
16	SAFE Seas project-initiated Fisher's centre Bitung and Tegal Indonesia	Indonesia	Designed to strengthen the government's effort to protect fishing vessel crews. The centre will act as a point of service for fishermen to report grievances related to violations of their rights and to access referral services, as well as information and educational materials related to fish workers' protection and rights.
17	RISE	Global	Information on how to build trusted grievance and worker voice mechanisms in supply chains, ensure remedy of worker grievances, and support freedom of association and collective bargaining for workers.
18	Issara Institute	Thailand	Transform the lives of millions of workers in global supply chains through Worker Voice, partnership and innovation.
19	ISSARA - worker driven ethical recruitment	Thailand	Empowered by Worker Voice, ethical recruitment is labour recruitment whereby the costs of recruitment are borne by employers, not jobseekers and workers, and is conducted in a legal, fair, and transparent manner. Worker feedback channels connect with jobseekers and workers at both source and destination locations, and partnerships with brands and retailers, suppliers, and recruitment agencies drive more responsive remediation and systems change.
20	Labor Protection Network Foundation	Global	NGO working to help fishers in difficult situations. There is a Facebook page and a hotline to call to report issues in Thai, Khmer, Lao and Burmese. They also offer information on labour laws and government registration process.

A.7. AUTHORITIES AND GOVERNMENTAL MECHANISMS

NO.	NAME	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
1	Taiwanese Fishing Authority strategies for migrant fisher	Taiwan	Media press from TFA telling residents in Taiwan about migrant fishers' rights; attachments including grievance policy.
2	Workforce Development Agency, Ministry of Labor	Taiwan	For all foreign labours in Taiwan; multi-language, 24hr service.
3	Department of employment	Thailand	Workers can submit complaints - the forms available in 6 languages: Thai, English, Burmese, Laos, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. Also have a hotline number (1694) for foreign workers to call for help, with interpreter in English, Burmese, and Cambodian.
4	Labour Protection Division	Thailand	Hotline 1506#3 for labour issues.
5	Foreign Workers Administration Office	Thailand	Workers can contact the Foreign Workers Administration Office.
6	PeduliWNI	Indonesia	Facebook and/or WhatsApp + 62 812 9007 0027 (Hotline Number) is established by Directorate of Protection of Indonesian Citizens and Legal Entities - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.
7	Regulation 35/2015 and 2/1017	Indonesia	Regulations issued by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries.
8	Taiwanese Government funding for Wi-Fi trial	Taiwan	Wi-Fi trial on board longline fishing vessel for connectivity at sea.
9	The Danish Institute for Human Rights Project on HR in Seafood	Denmark	The project will document human rights impacts of the fisheries sector and contribute to national and global multi-stakeholder dialogues on sustainable development, responsible business and human rights.

10	Thai Tuna Association (TTIA) Ethical Labor Practice Code of Conduct on Workers	Thailand	Ethical Labour Practice – Code of Conduct on Workers TTIA’s members have signed onto the commitment to comply with TTIA Ethical Labour Practice Code of Conduct on Workers consisting of 8 items. Besides, they have carried out as the requirements of the buyers’ ethical standards with annual audits.
11	Thai Port Inspections - EJF	Thailand	EJF are working with port authorities in Thailand and can interview crew as a result and feedback to Thai government with recommendations.
12	French Authority’s ILO C188 vessel inspections	French flagged vessels	France has ratified ILO C188 and all French flagged fishing vessels are being inspected against C188, including confidential worker interviews.
13	TLCS Legal Advocate (Bangkok) (Active Founding Member of MAST)	Thailand	Supply chain transparency in the Thai Fishing Industry – Litigation and legal consultancy associated to MAST with Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation.

Appendix B | The Survey

GSA WORKER VOICE PROJECT - SURVEY

Global Seafood Assurances (GSA) <https://seafoodassurances.org/> believe that those working on fishing vessels should have safe access to a third party mechanism, as maybe needed to seek good advice, raise issues, hear grievances and resolve them. These types of mechanisms are often referred to as Worker Voice or Grievance Mechanism.

The GSA are carrying out a global project to understand what is meant by these and similar terms, as they relate to those working on fishing vessels, and further to collate evidence of mechanisms in place. This precedes a project in 2021 to build collective consensus on global best practice.

The first stage of this project seeks to collate different terms used in fisheries around the world similar to Worker Voice, or with similar meaning according to the user, and examples of mechanisms either in operation, or that have been piloted and which fall under those definitions.

Key Traceability (www.keytraceability.com) is a dedicated team carrying out the research for this project. They will draft a white paper detailing the existing fishing worker voice definitions and meanings, as well as mechanisms identified. They are working with GSA and an expert Advisory Group.

It is important for the success of this project to find all examples of these definitions and mechanisms around the world and we are reaching out for your help.

Please answer the questions below. You will remain anonymous and your answers will not be linked back to you, however, we may reach out to you if we have any follow up questions, if you are willing.

This survey is designed to gather information on initiatives on Worker Voice, and similar mechanisms, that are available to those working on fishing vessels.

Deadline for submissions: 17/08/2020. We thank you for taking the time to participate in this extremely important initiative and will ensure you receive a copy of the white paper on completion later in the year if you provide your email address.

1. About you.

Name, position, organisation, location of organisation/respondent

Your role in the fisheries sector

Producer

Processor Primary Secondary

Regulator

NGO

Buyer Wholesale Food Service Retail Other (specify)

Trade Association

Fisheries Association

Other (specify)

2. Which top 5 seafood species do you trade/work with? Please select top 5 from this list and add any further species or information in the text box below.

- Albacore Tuna
- Skipjack Tuna
- Yellowfin/Bigeye Tuna
- Farmed Atlantic Salmon
- Wild Pacific Salmon
- Farmed Shrimp
- Cod/Haddock/Coley/Whiting
- Pollock
- Flatfish - Plaice, Turbot, Brill etc
- Oily Fish- Herring, Mackerel, Anchovy, Sardine etc
- Pangasius
- Tilapia
- Wild Shrimp/Prawns
- Mussels/Oysters/Clams
- Seaweed
- Seabream/Seabass
- Octopus/Squid
- Small Pelagic
- Crab/Lobster/Nehrops
- Snapper
- Toothfish
- Other - please state

3. Which top 5 countries' fisheries are you working with predominantly? Please select top 5 countries in order and add any further information in the text box below.

4. Are you familiar with any of the following terms? Tick which ones and explain your understanding of what it means:

	IN GENERAL	IN FISHERIES AND FISHERIES WORKERS (NOT INCLUDING PROCESSING PLANTS)
<input type="checkbox"/> Worker Voice		
<input type="checkbox"/> Grievance mechanism		
<input type="checkbox"/> Grievance procedure		
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotline		
<input type="checkbox"/> Worker empowerment tools		
<input type="checkbox"/> Works committee		
<input type="checkbox"/> Collective organising		
<input type="checkbox"/> Worker feedback technology		
<input type="checkbox"/> Worker engagement		
<input type="checkbox"/> Confidential worker interviews		
<input type="checkbox"/> Freedom of association		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish Worker Trade Unions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Complaints box		
<input type="checkbox"/> Due diligence tools		
<input type="checkbox"/> Participative management		
<input type="checkbox"/> Worker representative		
<input type="checkbox"/> Worker Committee		
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Dialogue		

5. With regard to fisheries, are you aware of terms which have similar meaning or intent as ‘worker voice’ or ‘grievance mechanism’? Please state the term, language, and country you associate it with.

6. Do you recognise the term Grievance Mechanism, Worker Voice, and Worker Empowerment as it might relate to those working on fishing vessels? If yes, how would you define it and what do these terms mean to you?

7. Are you aware of any initiatives or examples on worker voice or grievance mechanisms or other terms on fishing vessels / for fishermen? Please could you tell us about them

Name of mechanism, what is it known as locally?

Country (as stated in Question 3):

Vessel Type:

Results (needs a bit of explanation):

Links / Websites / Articles to the mechanisms:

If you have contact details for someone, we can contact to discuss the mechanism further, please provide:

8. Are you aware of legal or cultural challenges to the concept of these definitions for Worker Voice, grievance mechanisms or other terms as noted in a particular country or region? Please share details

9. In the fisheries you work with (relating to the 5 countries listed in question 3), are you aware if crews have a grievance how they resolve this with the boat owner? If you are unaware of a mechanism please state 'unaware'

1. Country
2. Country
3. Country
4. Country
5. Country
6. Other

10. In the fisheries you work with, do fishing vessel crews have a worker representative who? Please state the country in which you refer to from your top 5 countries and tell us about that representation.

11. Please share any other comments, thoughts, contacts, web links or relevant sources that you think may be important to this project findings and the white paper (including any literature, research or studies relating to this subject).

12. While you will not be quoted in the upcoming white paper, we would like to be able to contact you if we have further questions. If you are willing to be contacted please give us your contact details: phone, email, other:

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13. Thank you for your time. Please share this survey with those you think can usefully contribute as we are keen to ensure we are reaching around the world. In addition, we would like to list you or your organisation on our stakeholder list for any future involvement or follow up, please tick the box below if you would like to be included.

If you would like to contact GSA or Key Traceability for any reason, please do so via the emails below

GSA Contact: melanie@seafoodassurances.org

Key Traceability Contact: i.pollard@keytraceability.com