

The Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report is the U.S. Government's principal diplomatic tool to engage foreign governments on human trafficking. It is also the world's most comprehensive resource of governmental anti-human trafficking efforts. The U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons report (TIP) 2018 was published on 28 June 2018. <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/>

The report ranks states on their perceived efforts to acknowledge and eliminate human trafficking within their jurisdictions. In doing so, the TiP offers important insights for companies assessing their supply chains for risks of human trafficking and slavery. This year's report focuses on effective ways local communities can address human trafficking proactively and on how national governments can support and empower them.

Seafish Insight: A quick analysis of the 2018 TIP report shows:

- Fish or fishing is mentioned in association with forced labour in 49 countries (same as 2017, 51 in 2016).
- Countries that have been singled out specifically with regards to fishing include Cambodia, Fiji (moved down from Tier 2 Watch List to Tier 2), Ghana (up from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 2), Indonesia, South Korea, Laos (down from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 3), Papua New Guinea (down from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 3), Solomon Islands, Taiwan and Thailand (up from Tier 2 Watch to Tier 2).
- Countries where fishing has been mentioned as a risk this year (but not in 2017) are Costa Rica, Israel, Malaysia, Mauritius, Senegal and the USA.
- Thailand has moved up to Tier 2 after moving up to the Tier 2 'Watch List' for Tier 3 in 2017. 'The Government of Thailand does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period; therefore Thailand was upgraded to Tier 2.'

Media reporting

Just 15 years ago, human trafficking was an under-reported and often misrepresented issue and some reporting sensationalized the problem or even misinformed the public. In the last few years, a significant shift has occurred in the media's reporting of human trafficking, from dramatic exposés to in-depth original research and agenda-setting public-interest reporting. These media reports have helped change the way the public looks at human trafficking—from a crime that happens to 'others' to one that has an impact. The reports on fishing include:

- **2014.** The Guardian. A six-month investigative series, "Modern-day Slavery in Focus," revealed direct links between the men forced to labor on fishing boats and in the production of seafood sold by major retailers throughout the world.
- **2015.** New York Times. A seven-part series, "The Outlaw Ocean," which took two years to investigate, provided a comprehensive look at the overall lawlessness at sea and chronicled a diversity of crimes, including forced labor on fishing boats.
- **2016.** Associate Press. The 18-month investigative story, "Seafood from Slaves," led to the release of more than 2,000 trafficking victims, traced the seafood they caught to supermarkets and pet food providers across the United States, and led to the jailing of perpetrators, congressional hearings, and the introduction of new laws.

Fishing references by country in 2018 TIP report (alphabetical)**Bangladesh – Tier 2 Watch List (same as 2017, downgraded from Tier 2 in 2016)**

Rohingya girls and boys are recruited from refugee camps to work as shop hands, **fishermen**, rickshaw pullers, and domestic workers in Bangladesh. Some Rohingya men are subjected to debt bondage by Bangladeshi **fishermen** if they place their shelter on the **fishermen's** land. Some Rohingya men who fled to Bangladesh from Burma decades ago have been trapped in debt bondage to Bangladeshi **fishermen** for 20 years.

In some instances, children are sold into a form of bondage by their parents, while others are induced into labour through fraud and physical coercion, including in **fisheries**, domestic work, aluminum factories, and garment and dry-**fish** production, or exploited in sex trafficking.

Belize – Tier 3 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Some migrants are subjected to forced labour in restaurants, shops, agriculture, and **fishing** or to sex trafficking. Alleged trafficking-related complicity by government officials remains a problem.

Burma – Tier 3 (downgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2017, Tier 3 in 2016)

In 2017, the government reported investigating 185 trafficking cases (95 in 2016). Of these, 22 were cases of forced labour (46 in 2016), including one case of domestic servitude and 21 cases related to **fishing**, manufacturing, palm oil farming, and jade and precious stone mining.

Men are subjected to forced labour abroad in **fishing**, manufacturing, forestry, agriculture, and construction, while women and girls are primarily subjected to sex trafficking, domestic servitude, or forced labour in garment manufacturing. NGOs continue to report instances of Burmese males transiting Thailand en route to Indonesia and Malaysia, where they are subjected to forced labour, primarily in **fishing** and other labour-intensive industries. Some Burmese men in the Thai **fishing** industry are subjected to debt bondage, passport confiscation, threats of physical or financial harm, or fraudulent recruitment; some are also subjected to physical abuse and forced to remain aboard vessels in international waters for years at a time without coming ashore.

Local traffickers use deceptive tactics to recruit men and boys into forced labour on palm oil and rubber plantations, in jade and precious stone mines, and in riparian **fishing**.

Burundi – Tier 3 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Both coercion and economic necessity pushed children and young adults into labour, including forced labour on plantations or small farms throughout Burundi, in gold mines in Cibitoke, in informal commerce in the streets of larger cities, collecting river stones for construction in Bujumbura, and in the **fishing** industry.

NGOs reported that some boys in the Lake Tanganyika **fisheries** are subjected to forced labour and that some girls and young women are exploited in domestic servitude and sex trafficking by **fishermen**.

Cambodia – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Cambodian adults and children migrate to other countries within the region and increasingly to the Middle East for work; many are subjected to forced labour on **fishing** vessels, in agriculture, in construction, in factories, and in domestic servitude— often through debt bondage—or to sex trafficking.

Significant numbers of Cambodian men and boys continue to be recruited in Thailand to work on fishing boats and are subjected to forced labour on Thai-owned and operated vessels in international waters. Cambodian victims escaping from this form of exploitation have been identified in Malaysia, Indonesia, Mauritius, Fiji, Senegal, South Africa, and Papua New Guinea. Cambodian men report severe abuses by Thai captains, deceptive recruitment, underpaid wages, and being forced to remain aboard vessels for years.

Cameroon – Tier 2 (upgraded from Tier 2 Watch list in 2017 and 2016)

Cameroonian children are exploited in domestic service, restaurants, begging or vending on streets and highways, artisanal gold mining, gravel quarries, **fishing**, animal breeding, and agriculture (on onion, cotton, tea and cocoa plantations), as well as in urban transportation assisting bus drivers and in construction as errand boys, labourers, or night watchmen.

Chad – Tier 2 Watch List (no fishing mentions in 2017)

In some regions, children are involved in catching, smoking, and selling **fish**.

Comoros – Tier 3 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Children on Anjouan, some of whom were abandoned by parents who left to seek economic opportunities in other countries, are subjected to forced labour, mostly in domestic service, roadside and market vending, baking, **fishing**, and agriculture.

Congo – Tier 3 (same as 2017, downgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2016)

Some child trafficking victims are also subjected to forced labour in bakeries, and the **fishing** and agricultural sectors, including in cocoa fields in Sangha department, sugar cane fields in the Bouenza department, and, among indigenous populations, harvesting manioc in the Lekoumou department.

Costa Rica – Tier 2 (same as 2017, upgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2016)

No fishing mention in 2018.

Ecuador – Tier 2 (no fishing mentions in 2017)

Ecuadorian men, women, and children are exploited in sex trafficking and forced labour within the country, including in domestic servitude, forced begging, on banana and palm plantations, in floriculture, shrimp farming, **fishing**, sweatshops, street vending, mining, and in other areas of the informal economy.

Fiji – Tier 2 Watch List (downgraded from Tier 2 in 2017 and 2016)

Family members, taxi drivers, foreign tourists, businessmen, and crew on foreign **fishing** vessels have allegedly exploited Fijian children in sex trafficking.

Workers from South and East Asian countries are subjected to forced labour in small and informal farms and factories, construction, and on fishing vessels that transit through Fiji or board fishing vessels (mainly China and Taiwan-flagged) from Fiji ports and waters.

Under recommendations for Fiji: proactively screen vulnerable groups, such as foreign migrant workers on **fishing** vessels.

Gabon – Tier 3 (downgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2017 and 2016)

Boys are forced to work as street vendors, mechanics, or in microbus transportation and the **fishing** sector.

Ghana – Tier 2 (upgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2017 and 2016)

As reported over the past five years, Ghana is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Ghanaian boys and girls are subjected to forced labour within the country in fishing, domestic service, street hawking, begging, portering, artisanal gold mining, quarrying, herding, and agriculture, including cocoa. Donor funded research focused on the fishing industry on Lake Volta indicated that more than half of the children working on and around the lake were born in other communities and many of these children are subjected to forced labour; not allowed to attend school; given inadequate housing and clothing; and are controlled by fishermen through intimidation, violence, and limiting access to food. Boys as young as five years old are forced to work in hazardous conditions, including deep diving, and many suffer waterborne infections; girls perform work on shore such as cooking, cleaning fish, and preparing fish for market, and are vulnerable to sexual abuse. A study of the prevalence of child trafficking in selected communities in the Volta and Central Regions indicated that children from nearly one-third of the 1,621 households surveyed had been subjected to trafficking, primarily in fishing and domestic servitude. Child trafficking in the fishing industry is often facilitated by parents who receive a payment and organized traffickers who target vulnerable communities; girls exploited in domestic servitude are often sent via relatives or middlemen to work in harsh conditions.

Guinea – Tier 2 Watch List (upgraded from Tier 3 in 2017 and not listed as mentioning fishing in 2016)

Traffickers exploit boys in begging, street vending and shoe shining, forced labour in gold and diamond mines, and in herding, **fishing**, and agriculture, including farming and on coffee, cashew, and cocoa plantations

Haiti – Tier 2 Watch List (same as 2017, upgraded from Tier 3 in 2016)

Haitian children working in construction, agriculture, **fisheries**, domestic work, and street vending in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Honduras – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Children from indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, particularly Miskito boys, are vulnerable to forced labor, including on **fishing** vessels.

Iceland – Tier 2 (same as 2017, downgraded from Tier 1 in 2016) – but fishing is no longer mentioned.

India – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Within India, some are subjected to forced labour in sectors such as construction, steel, garment, and textile industries, wire manufacturing for underground cables, biscuit factories, pickling, floriculture, **fish** farms, and ship breaking.

Indonesia – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

The government demonstrated increasing efforts by investigating, prosecuting, and convicting more traffickers, and identifying more victims compared to the previous year. It also repatriated and provided services to more Indonesian victims from overseas; implemented new regulations to prevent trafficking in the **fishing** industry; negotiated initiatives with the private sector to reduce vulnerability of Indonesian overseas workers; and conducted training for officials.

There were no reports that the government punished victims for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to trafficking, but inadequate efforts to screen vulnerable groups for trafficking indicators, including during raids to arrest persons in prostitution or combat illegal **fishing**, may have resulted in the punishment or deportation of unidentified trafficking victims.

A significant number of Indonesians are exploited in forced labor and debt bondage in Asia and the Middle East, primarily in domestic service, factories, construction, and manufacturing, on Malaysian palm oil plantations, and on **fishing** vessels throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

To better protect Indonesian fishermen, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) began enforcing several new regulations to combat trafficking. The regulations obligated Indonesian **fishery** businesses to comply with international human rights protection standards, such as on work health and safety, recruitment, and security, and compliance became a prerequisite for obtaining permits for **fish** capture. The MMAF also started requiring state-owned **fishing** companies to include the regulations in their company by-laws and internal policies. An additional MMAF regulation allowed the government to apply a standardized work contract for Indonesian **fishermen** who work on domestic and foreign **fishing** vessels in both Indonesian and international waters

The MFA partnered with South Africa to create a pilot program to assist Indonesians working on foreign fishing vessels. The program collected data through a dedicated center with **fishermen** and was intended to help the MFA monitor Indonesian **fishermen** overseas to prevent trafficking. Officials plan to expand the program to Mauritius and other locations with high numbers of visiting Indonesian **fishermen**.

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In Indonesia, women, men, and children are exploited in forced labour in **fishing**, **fish** processing, and construction; on plantations, including palm oil; and in mining and manufacturing.

Indonesian fishermen working on foreign-flagged vessels reported pervasive abuse, forced labour, unpaid salaries, and, in some cases, allegations of murder. They worked on Taiwan, Thai, Malaysian, and Philippines-flagged fishing vessels operating in Indonesia and in the waters of Thailand, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and India. Dozens of recruitment agencies in Burma, Indonesia, and Thailand hire fishermen, assign them fake identity and labour permit documents, and force them to fish long hours in waters for low or unpaid salaries while incurring severe physical abuse. The fishermen were prohibited from leaving their vessels and reporting these abuses by threats of exposing their fake identities to the authorities or by detaining them on land in makeshift prisons. More than 7,000 Indonesian fishermen per year sign in and out of foreign vessels at the port in Cape Town, South Africa, reportedly facing dire working conditions, particularly on vessels owned by Taiwan, Korea, and Japan.

Ireland – Tier 2 (downgraded from Tier 1 in 2017 and 2016)

An NGO criticized the government's immigration scheme for making crewmembers of Irish **fishing** fleets vulnerable to forced labour by linking sponsorship to a single employer and by limiting registration of existing workers to those who came forward within three months of the commencement date of the scheme. A parliamentary committee published a report recommending changes, including a moratorium on issuing permits to out-of-country non-EEA foreign nationals until the permit could be decoupled from a single employer and until the position of all in-country non-EEA nationals could be regularized. The committee also recommended a single department be given overall responsibility for the **fishing** industry.

Victims of forced labour have been identified in domestic work, the restaurant industry, waste management, **fishing**, seasonal agriculture, and car washing services.

Israel – Tier 1 (same as 2017 and 2016) but fishing is no longer mentioned.

Jamaica – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Foreign nationals are subjected to forced labor in Jamaica and aboard foreign-flagged **fishing** vessels operating in Jamaican waters.

Japan – Tier 1 (no fishing mentions in 2017)

Cases of forced labour occur within the TITP, a government-run program originally designed to foster basic technical skills among foreign workers that has effectively become a guest-worker program. TITP participants from Burma, China, Cambodia, and Vietnam pay sending organizations in their home countries up to \$10,000 in excessive fees, deposits, or vague "commissions"—despite new

international agreements aimed at curbing the practice—to secure jobs in **fishing**, construction, and manufacturing.

Kenya – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Kenya is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Within the country, children are subjected to forced labor in domestic service, agriculture, **fishing**, cattle herding, street vending, and begging.

Korea (Republic of) or South Korea – Tier 1 (same as 2017 and 2016)

The government did not report efforts to identify potential victims of trafficking aboard South Korean flagged fishing vessels.

The Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries continued to operate a hotline for foreign crew members on South Korean fishing vessels.

Men and women from China, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, and other countries in Asia, the Middle East, and South America are subjected to forced labour in South Korea and on fishing vessels registered and operated by South Koreans; some women from these regions are subjected to forced prostitution. Migrant workers, especially those from Vietnam, China, and Indonesia, can incur thousands of dollars in debt, contributing to their vulnerability to debt bondage. Approximately 400,000 low-skilled migrant workers, many employed under the government’s employment permit system, work in fishing, agriculture, livestock, restaurants, and manufacturing; some of these workers face conditions indicative of forced labour. The ROK is a transit point for Southeast Asian fishermen subjected to forced labour on fishing ships bound for Fiji and other ports in the Pacific. Foreign fishermen aboard small fishing vessels operating beyond the purview of the government or owners’ cooperatives are vulnerable to exploitation, including forced labour.

Laos – Tier 3 (downgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2017 and 2016)

Lao men and boys are victims of forced labour in Thailand’s fishing, construction, and agricultural industries. Lao victims of forced labour in the Thai fishing industry have been identified in Indonesian waters.

Madagascar Tier 2 Watch List (same as 2017, downgraded from Tier 2 in 2016)

Malagasy children, mostly from rural and coastal regions, and from impoverished families in urban areas, are exploited in prostitution, domestic servitude, and forced labor in mining, **fishing**, and agriculture across the country.

Malawi – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Children are also subjected to forced labor in begging, small businesses, and potentially in the **fishing** industry.

Malaysia – Tier 2 Watch List (downgraded from Tier 2 in 2017, Tier 2 Watch List in 2016) - but fishing is no longer mentioned.

Marshall Islands Tier 2 (upgraded from Tier 3 in 2017)

The Marshall Islands is a source, transit, and destination country for children, women, and men. It is a destination for East Asian and Marshallese girls and women subjected to sex trafficking and a transit point for foreign **fishermen** subjected to labour trafficking.

Law enforcement and social services personnel did not employ systematic procedures to identify trafficking victims among women in prostitution and child sex trafficking, but did so in the fishing sector; during the reporting period, law enforcement implemented a standard operating procedure to screen over 100 crewmembers aboard three abandoned fishing vessels but did not identify any cases of trafficking.

Some of these foreign fishermen are subjected to conditions indicative of forced labour on ships in Marshallese waters.

Mauritania – Tier 3 (same as 2017)

Children of Haratine and Afro-Mauritanian descent working in the **fisheries** sector are vulnerable to forced labour.

Mauritius – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016) – but fishing is no longer mentioned.

Micronesia – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Women and girls are allegedly exploited in sex trafficking by the crewmembers of docked Asian **fishing** vessels, on vessels in FSM territorial waters, or with foreign construction workers. Foreign migrants from Southeast Asian countries report working in conditions indicative of human trafficking on Asian **fishing** vessels in FSM or its territorial waters.

Mongolia – Tier 2 Watch List (downgraded from Tier 2 in 2017 and 2016)

North Korean and Chinese workers employed in Mongolia are vulnerable to trafficking as contract labourers in construction, production, agriculture, forestry, **fishing**, hunting, wholesale and retail trade, automobile maintenance, and mining.

Namibia – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Children from less affluent neighbouring countries may be subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour, including in street vending in Windhoek and other cities as well as in the **fishing** sector.

New Zealand – Tier 1 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Foreign workers aboard foreign-flagged **fishing** vessels in New Zealand waters are vulnerable to forced labour.

Pakistan – Tier 2 (upgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2017 and 2016)

Bonded labour is concentrated in Sindh and Punjab provinces, but also occurs in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, in agriculture and brick-making and, to a lesser extent, in **fisheries**, mining, and handicraft- and carpet-making.

Palua Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Foreign workers on **fishing** boats in Palauan waters also experience conditions indicative of human trafficking. Official complicity plays a role in facilitating trafficking.

Papua New Guinea Tier3 (downgraded from 2 Watch List in 2017, Tier 3 in 2016)

Although officials seized three foreign vessels for illegal **fishing** and trafficking in 2016, they did not apprehend any vessels in 2017.

Malaysian and Chinese logging companies arrange for some foreign women to enter the country voluntarily with fraudulently issued tourist or business visas. After their arrival, many of these women—from countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, China, and the Philippines—are turned over to traffickers who transport them to logging and mining camps, **fisheries**, and entertainment sites, and exploit them in forced prostitution and domestic servitude.

Chinese, Malaysian, and local men are subjected to forced labour at commercial mines and logging camps, as well as on fishing vessels operating in Papua New Guinea’s exclusive economic zone, where some receive little pay and are compelled to continue working for the company indefinitely through debt bondage. Vietnamese, Burmese, Cambodian, and local men and boys are subjected to forced labour on fishing vessels; they face little to no pay, harsh working conditions, and debt bondage, and many are compelled to fish illegally, making them vulnerable to arrest. Government officials reportedly facilitate trafficking by accepting bribes to allow undocumented migrants to enter the country or ignore trafficking situations, and some may exploit sex trafficking victims or procure victims for other individuals in return for political favours or votes.

Philippines – Tier 1 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Men are subjected to forced labour and debt bondage in the agricultural, **fishing**, and maritime industries.

An estimated 10 million Filipinos reside or work abroad and the government processes approximately 2.3 million new or renewed contracts for Filipinos to work overseas each year. A significant number of these migrant workers are subjected to sex and labour trafficking—predominantly via debt bondage—in the **fishing**, shipping, construction, education, home health care, and agricultural industries, as well as in domestic work, janitorial service, and other hospitality-related jobs, particularly in the Middle East and Asia, but also in all other regions.

Senegal – Tier 2 Watch List (same as 2017)

No mention of fishing in 2018

Seychelles – Tier 2 Watch List (downgraded from Tier 2 in 2017, Tier 2 Watch List in 2016)

Migrant workers—including from Bangladesh, India, China, Kenya, Madagascar, and countries in South Asia—make up 20 percent of the working population in Seychelles and are primarily employed in **fishing**, farming, and construction; some workers are subjected to forced labour in the construction sector.

NGOs report migrant workers face exploitative conditions in **fish** processing plants, and **fishermen** aboard foreign-flagged **fishing** vessels in Seychelles' territorial waters and ports are subjected to abuses indicative of forced labour, including non-payment of wages and physical abuse. Migrant workers sign their employment contracts upon arrival in the Seychelles and frequently do not speak the language, which increases their vulnerability to fraudulent recruitment tactics. There were reports of employers routinely retaining migrant workers' passports to prevent them from changing jobs prior to the expiration of their two-year contracts

Sierra Leone – Tier 2 Watch List (downgraded from Tier 2 in 2017, same as 2016)

Traffickers exploit victims in **fishing** and agriculture, and sex trafficking or forced labour through customary practices, such as forced marriages.

Singapore – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Singapore is a destination country for men, women, and girls from other Asian countries subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour, a source country for Singaporean women and children subjected to sex trafficking, and a transit country for Asian men subjected to forced labour on **fishing** vessels that transit through Singapore or its territorial waters.

Some captains used physical abuse to force men to perform labour on long-haul **fishing** vessels that transit or dock at Singaporean ports, and some agencies in Singapore use deceptive tactics to recruit Asian men for this work.

Solomon Islands – Tier 2 (same as 2017, Tier 2 Watch List in 2016)

The government conducted multi-agency monitoring and inspection operations at logging, mining, and **fishing** operation sites. The government reported identifying two victims.

Fishermen from Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Fiji have reported situations indicative of labour trafficking, including non-payment of wages, severe living conditions, violence, and limited food supply on Taiwan-flagged fishing vessels in the Solomon Islands' territorial waters and ports.

South Africa – Tier 2 Watch List (downgraded from Tier 2 in 2017 and 2016)

Although the majority of trafficking victims in South Africa are labour trafficking victims, the government did not comprehensively monitor or investigate forced child labour or the labour trafficking of adults in the agricultural, mining, construction, and **fishing** sectors.

Foreign male forced labour victims have been identified aboard fishing vessels in South Africa's territorial waters; NGOs estimated 10 to 15 victims of labour trafficking disembark each month in Cape Town.

Suriname – Tier 2 Watch List (same as 2017, Tier 3 in 2016)

Migrant workers in agriculture and on **fishing** boats off Suriname's coast are highly vulnerable to forced labour, as are children working in gold mines and informal urban sectors.

Taiwan – Tier 1 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Although Taiwan authorities meet the minimum standards, separation of purview between the Ministry of Labour (MOL) and the Fisheries Agency (FA) continued to impede efforts to address forced labour on Taiwan-flagged and -owned fishing vessels in the highly vulnerable distant water fleet (DWF). Authorities at times did not pursue appropriate legal action against Taiwan individuals reported to have subjected migrant workers to forced labour on fishing vessels. Lack of awareness and dissuasive performance evaluation systems in the judiciary continued to drive lenient sentencing for traffickers, and domestic workers and caregivers remained at elevated risk due to a stalled domestic worker protection bill.

For the second consecutive year, authorities also launched formal trafficking investigations into cases involving fishermen. In one such case, Kaohsiung prosecutors indicted 19 individuals for allegedly subjecting over 80 foreign fishermen to forced labour; the case was ongoing at the end of the reporting period. However, some observers believed authorities were not sufficiently responsive in other cases involving forced labour in the fishing industry. Police cited jurisdictional concerns and lack of evidence in their decision to cease investigation of Taiwan individuals known to have been involved in a high profile Cambodian labour trafficking case in 2014. Additionally, observers reported that insufficient inspection of fishing vessels in Taiwan's highly vulnerable DWF likely impeded investigation into cases involving forced labour.

Fishing workers hired overseas were not protected by Taiwan's Labor Standards Act and instead fell under the jurisdiction of the FA, rather than that of the MOL.

In 2017, the FA promulgated new legislation that standardized fishing workers' employment contracts, set a minimum wage with direct payment options, provided medical and life insurance, unified working hours and rest time, and established access to new complaint mechanisms. However, NGOs remained concerned that the minimum compensation established in these regulations remained below Taiwan's broader minimum wage, leaving some foreign fishing workers vulnerable to exploitation. Although the new legislation also outlined the FA's plans to hire more staff and increase interagency cooperation, observers reported that the separation of responsibilities between the FA and the MOL continued to impede authorities' efforts to combat trafficking in the fishing industry writ large, and that a lack of FA oversight mechanisms in the DWF was likely permissive of forced labour and other abuses. The FA also launched a pilot program in 2018 to more effectively evaluate brokers who deal with foreign fishermen hired overseas, but it was unclear to what extent this program was implemented. Some NGOs doubted the capacity and

political will of the FA, pointing to its purview over Taiwan fishermen's associations—which typically engaged in labour recruitment—as a possible conflict of interest.

To address exploitation associated with labour recruitment, a direct hiring service centre allowed employers to hire foreign workers directly, instead of utilizing brokers who may charge excessive fees; however, regulations promulgated in 2017 ostensibly aimed at better protecting foreign fishermen appeared to contain provisions allowing brokers to charge unlimited recruitment and service fees, which may have been permissive of bonded labour.

Documented and undocumented Chinese, Indonesian, Filipino, Vietnamese, and to a lesser extent North Korean fishermen working on Taiwan-flagged and –owned fishing vessels experience non- or under-payment of wages, long working hours, physical abuse, lack of food or medical care, and poor living conditions, which are all indicators of trafficking. There have been reports of men and women from Taiwan engaged in illegal business operations overseas that present indicators of human trafficking, including in telecom scams targeting Chinese victims.

Tanzania – Tier 2 (upgraded from Tier 2 Watch List in 2016)

An international organization reported identification of 15 Indonesian trafficking victims aboard a **fishing** vessel in Tanzanian territorial waters, but did not report whether assistance was provided.

Thailand – Tier 2 (upgraded from Tier 2 Watch list in 2017 and 2016)

The government reported investigating significantly fewer cases of labour trafficking in the fishing industry in 2017; it investigated seven cases in 2017 (43 in 2016). In one case, the government sentenced a boat captain to four years imprisonment and ordered him to pay 450,000 baht (\$13,800) in restitution to the victims. The government investigated and detained several vessels operating in international waters, leading to the identification of 50 exploited workers, including 35 trafficking victims and, in one case, the arrest of a broker and crew supervisor. To increase efficiency in prosecuting trafficking and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing cases, in March 2018 the attorney general issued guidelines to prosecutors with descriptions of relevant charges and sentencing recommendations. The government and civil society groups operated a service centre for fishermen to provide information on their rights, skills training, health screenings, and other resources.

Critical gaps in Thailand's labour laws preventing migrant workers from forming labour unions may have contributed to exploitation. In addition, NGOs and international organizations widely reported the government did not adequately enforce the application of minimum wages in sectors with a minimum wage and lacked legislation to require minimum wages in other sectors, especially in those sectors with high employment of migrant workers. Some also reported gaps in Thai policies related to migrant workers that exacerbated exploitation, such as no requirement that employment contracts be written in both Thai and workers' languages, lack of clear guidance to measure work and rest hours for workers aboard **fishing** vessels, and difficulty for workers to change employers.

In October 2017, DLPW required employers in the **fishing** sector to pay workers monthly through bank transfers. Labour trafficking victims are exploited in commercial fishing and related industries, the poultry industry, manufacturing, agriculture, and domestic work, or forced into street begging.

Trafficking in the fishing industry remains a significant concern. Thai, Burmese, Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Indonesian men and boys are subject to forced labour on Thai and foreign-owned fishing boats. Some remain at sea for several years, are paid very little or irregularly, work as much as 18 to 20 hours per day for seven days a week, and are reportedly threatened, physically beaten, drugged to work longer, and even killed for becoming ill, attempting to escape, or disobeying orders. Some trafficking victims in the fishing sector had difficulty returning home due to isolated workplaces, unpaid wages, and the lack of legitimate identity documents or safe means to travel.

Timor Leste – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

In 2017, there was an increase of potential trafficking cases involving foreign **fishing** vessels. During raids on vessels in September, the crews reported they were not paid or fed. In December, Indonesia captured a fishing vessel that was previously in Timor-Leste waters, and the crew made similar complaints about the labour conditions onboard.

Uganda – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Ugandan children as young as seven are exploited in forced labour in agriculture, **fishing**, forestry, cattle herding, mining, stone quarrying, brick making, carpentry, steel manufacturing, street vending, bars, restaurants, and domestic service.

United Kingdom – Tier 1 (same as 2016)

Most identified victims are subjected to labour trafficking, forced to work in agriculture, cannabis cultivation, construction, food processing, factories, domestic service, nail salons, food services, the hospitality industry, car washes, and on **fishing** boats.

United State of America – Tier 1 (same as 2017 and 2016)

Fishing is no longer mentioned.

Uruguay – Tier 2 (same as 2017)

Foreign workers, particularly from Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Argentina, are subjected to forced labour in construction, domestic service, cleaning services, elderly care, wholesale stores, textile industries, agriculture, **fishing**, and lumber processing.

Vietnam – Tier 2 (same as 2017 and 2016)

An international organization reported providing return and reintegration assistance to 11 victims, including 10 Vietnamese **fishermen** formerly subjected to forced labour and one sex trafficking victim. However, due to insufficient recordkeeping, the total number of identified victims benefiting from government or NGO protection services was unclear.

About the TIP rankings

The TIP report is released annually by the U.S. Department of State, and offers a summary of the laws and enforcement efforts of various countries with respect to human trafficking. Specifically, it ranks countries based on a '3P paradigm' of prosecuting traffickers, protecting victims and preventing crime. Scoring on these elements is then collated to give each country a ranking:

- **Tier 1:** The government meets the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards
- **Tier 2:** The government does not meet the TVPA minimum standards, but is making significant effort to do so
- **Tier 2 Watch List:** The government does not meet the TVPA minimum standards, but is making efforts to do so (nonetheless, due to a range of considerations, the country is more likely to be pushed back to Tier 3 than upgraded to Tier 2 or 1)
- **Tier 3:** The government is not meeting the TVPA minimum standards and is making no significant effort to rectify this
- Countries on the Tier 2 Watch List for two consecutive years may be downgraded to Tier 3 automatically if no improvements are demonstrated. This could result in restrictions on non-humanitarian and non-trade-related foreign assistance from the U.S., at the discretion of the President.

Seafish has become actively engaged in this area and has introduced a series of work areas to help the industry achieve the goal of eliminating unethical practices from UK seafood supply chains.

For further information on Seafish work on seafood ethics see:

- Seafish web page <http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/ethics-in-seafood>
- Social responsibility in seafood – Seafish role. Factsheet. http://www.seafish.org/media/publications/SeafishRole_SocialResponsibilityinSeafood_201804.pdf
- Tools for Ethical Seafood Sourcing (TESS). TESS is an online tool signposting users to numerous online resources and initiatives that support socially responsible business practices. See: <http://www.seafish.org/tess/>
- Assessment of ethical issues in the UK supply chain. <http://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/ethics-in-seafood/assessment-of-ethical-issues>

This is an information service provided by Seafish for industry and key stakeholders. To the best of our knowledge this information is factually correct at the date of publication.

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*Our mission: supporting a profitable,
sustainable and socially responsible
future for the seafood industry*