Promote Better Working Conditions in Thai Fishing and Seafood Processing Industries

Dr. Waraporn Prompoj
Department of Fisheries, Thailand
12 February, 2014 Bangkok
Thailand’s Seafood Industry

- Thailand is one of the leading countries in the world in terms of seafood production and fish trade.
- Tuna, Shrimp and Tilapia are major fishery products for export.
- Shrimp: 85% export; 15% domestic consumption.
- Tilapia: 15% export; 85% local consumption.
- Tuna raw materials imported in quantity of 800,000 MT per year for processing and export, having Catch Certificates especially when export to the European Market.
Thai Seafood Production and Export in 2012

Production: 1,195,860 MT

Export: 1,908,099 MT valued at 8.8 billion USD per year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production (2012)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>473,230 MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export (2012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>348,390 MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>3.2 B US $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Cephalopods
- Mollusks
- Others
Promoting Better Working Conditions in Shrimp and Seafood Processing, and Fishing Industries in Thailand

• The government has established the National Committee for Anti-trafficking in Persons chaired by the Prime Minister to take actions at national level through:

  - Establishing Thailand’s Anti-Human Trafficking Action Plan 2012-2013

  - Setting up a National Strategy and Measures for the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons in Fisheries Industry
Promoting Better Working Conditions in Shrimp and Seafood Processing, and Fishing Industries in Thailand

Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives by Department of Fisheries conducts various activities under the Action Plan by working closely with the International Labour Organization (ILO), Ministry of Labour and other public and private agencies and NGOs.
Cooperation of various public organizations, private agencies and NGOs

Government Agencies

- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
- Department of Fisheries
- Immigration Bureau
- Royal Thai Navy
- Royal Thai Marine Police
- Marine Department
- etc.

Private Sector

- Thai Frozen Food Association
- Thai Food Processors’ Association
- National Fisheries Association of Thailand
- Oversea Fisheries Association
- Employer Association
- Employee Association

NGOs

- Labour Right Promotion Network Foundation
- Mirror Foundation
Work in cooperation with the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Labour, ILO, Thai Frozen Food Association (TFFA) and the National Fisheries Association of Thailand (NFAT) under two programs:

• Promoting Better Working Condition in Thai Shrimp and Seafood Industry Program starting 2011-2014 supported by ILO-IPEC

• Promoting Better Working Condition in Thai Fishing Sector (including migrant workers) under ILO Triangle Project
The implementation activities include:

1. Promoting Good Labour Practices in shrimp and seafood processing and fishing industry
2. Primary Processing Workplace Survey and Registration in Samut Sakhon, Thailand
3. Setting Up of Labour Coordination Center for the Fishing Industry
4. Protection of Workers in fishery and seafood processing industries
5. Implementing Labour Inspection in shrimp, seafood processing and fishing industries
6. Private sector in fishing sector involvement
1. Promoting Good Labour Practices (GLP)

- Four GLP guidelines were developed: 1) Primary Processing Workplaces, 2) Processing Plants, 3) Shrimp Farm and 4) Fishing vessels
- GLPs have been developed and customized, stemming from Thai Labour Law and Regulations, Thai Labour Standard, and ILO Convention by DOF, MOL and ILO involving stakeholders/associations for consultations and development process
- Voluntarily apply to seafood processing, aquaculture and fishing industries
1. Promoting Good Labour Practices (2)

GLP for primary processing workplace (PP) was:

- developed through series of stakeholders’ consultation involving DOF, MOL, TFFA, TFPA, shrimp association, NGOs with technical support by ILO under joint working group between DOF and DLPW

- GLP test-run to primary processors in the Central and the South; finalized and adopted by the working group after the fifth revision since September 2013
1. Promoting Good Labour Practices (3)

Key Principles of Good Labour Practices (GLP) for the shrimp and seafood processing sector

- Yes to freedom of association
- Yes to open communications
- Yes to safe working environment
- Yes to chemical safety
- Yes to good youth employment
- Yes to hygiene and waste management

- No to child labour,
- No to forced labour
- No to trafficking in persons
- No to discrimination
1. Promoting Good Labour Practice (4)

- **GLP for Processing Plants** – has been developed to be in line with GLP for PP with participation by stakeholders involved. The guidelines will be finalized by Feb 20, 2014 for the implementation.

- **GLP for Shrimp Farm** – has been developed to be in line with FAO Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification concerning social aspect and labour issues. Guidelines will be finalized by the first quarter of 2014.
1. Promoting Good Labour Practice (5)

- **GLP for Fishing Vessels** has been developed and finalized by the working group including various public and private sectors e.g. MOL/DLPW, DOF, National Fisheries Association, Employer Association, Employee Association, NGOs, etc supported by ILO Triangle Project

- **Guidelines will be tested in early 2014 with fishing vessels**
1. Promoting Good Labour Practices (6)

Areas concerned of GLPs for Fishing Sector

1. Recruitment of Migrant Workers
2. Fisher’s Work Agreements
3. Payment of Fishers
4. Working Hours, Rest Periods and Holidays
5. Labour Relations, Dispute Resolution and Termination
6. Record Keeping
7. Young Workers
8. Safety on Board
9. Accommodation and Welfare
10. Work Place Cooperation and freedom of association
The Launch of Good Labour Practices  
September 16, 2013

- Launch Program for all four GLPs: PPs, Factories, Shrimp Farms, Fishing Vessels presided by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Deputy Permanent Secretary of M of Labour

- Signing Commitment to implement GLP by 178 shrimp and seafood processing enterprises:
  - 81 Primary processing workplaces
  - 97 seafood processing plants: 65 Frozen and 32 canning operators
Promoting Good Labour Practice (1)
Training of the Trainers (TOT)

- 16 Trainers were trained by ILO consultants since mid-2013
- New trainers are representatives from DOF, DLPW, TFFA, TFPA to train primary processing workplace operators and processing plants operators.
- Planned to train more trainers in 2014
Promoting Good Labour Practice (2)
Training of Seafood Processing Enterprises

- To date 60 Primary Processing enterprises have been trained by ILO consultants and trainers from TOT program

- More than 80 processing plants will be trained by the 2nd quarter of 2014
2. Primary Processing (PP) Workplaces’ Survey and Registration

- PP survey conducted in 2012 in Samut Sakhon, major seafood processing prov in Thailand, being found 582 PPs and only 203 were registered.

- The survey result will be used to support the development of labour monitoring database and establishment of the system for quality control.

- DOF has put high priority having PPs registration in all major seafood processing provinces e.g. registered PPs in Samut Sakhon has increased from 203 (in 2012) to be 382 (in 2013); three more provs being PPs’ registered
3. Setting up of the “Labour Coordination Center for the Fishing Industry (1)

- The proposal in establishing of Labour Coordination Center (LCC), Min of Social Development and Human Security, has been approved by the Cabinet since Oct 9, 2012

- Ministry of Labour is responsible for establishing the LCCs located in 7 coastal provinces covering operation of the 22 provinces

- National Fisheries Association of Thailand (NFAT) helps operate under supervision by various government agencies, including DOF for management and inspection
3. Setting up of the Labour Coordination Center for the Fishing Industry (2)

- The operation of the Center would support recruitment, employment, welfare, occupational safety, working condition and to be in compliance with concerned laws and regulations. GLP for fishing sector will also be applied.

- Operated by NFAT and being jointly inspected on the operation by concerned authorities e.g. MOL, DOF, Immigration Bureau, Royal Thai Navy, Royal Thai Police, DSI, etc.
Model of the Labour Coordination Center

Countries of Origin

Labour in Countries of Origin

MOU

Import of migrant labour

- Cambodia
- Lao PDR
- Vietnam
- Bangladesh
- Myanmar

Labour Coordination Center for fishing industry

7 Sub-center
- Trat
- Chumphon
- Rayong
- Ranong
- Samut Sakhon
- Songkhla
- Satun

Survey on readiness of fishing vessels

Fishing Vessels
- Vessel A
- Vessel B
- Vessel C
- Vessel D
- Vessel....

Concerned government agencies for inspection
- Immigration Bureau
- Department of Employment
- Department of Labor Protection and Welfare
- Marine Department
- Royal Thai Navy
- Royal Thai Marine Police
- Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
- Department of Special Investigation

Auditing/Inspection Mechanism (online information)
1. Internal control system by Labour Coordination Center and fishing vessels
2. National control system by concerned government agencies

Fishing operators conduct or comply with concerned laws and regulations e.g. Thai Labour Law, Thai Labour Standard, Good Labour Practice (GLP), which cover recruitment, employment, welfare, Safety, and working condition.

- Transparency in practices
- Online Information system (for efficient auditing program)
3. Setting up of the Labour Coordination Center for the Fishing Industry (3)

- **To date**, LCCs offices were set up at 7 coastal provinces by the Department of Employment.

- Cabinet resolution on August 6, 2013 allows illegal migrant fishing workers to be registered twice a year: Oct – Dec 2013 and Mar – May 2014 holding working permit as “fishing worker only” for one year.

- **During Nov-Dec 2013**, DOF assisted in persuading fishing operators to bring illegal migrant fishing workers under their operation to be registered at the LCCs and/or Coastal Provincial Employment Offices via DOF coastal radio broadcasting, fishery patrolling, leaflets distribution, communicating directly by provincial/district officers at the ports, fishing communities. As a result, 9,998 illegal migrant workers are now in the pipeline for fishing workers registration.
4. Protection of Workers in fishery and seafood processing industries (1)

Fishing sector

- Regulation to be issued having fishing vessels flying Thai flag operated in foreign waters to install Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) so that fishing workers attendance could be monitored—DOF and Marine Department

- Guidelines development on port-in and port-out for fishing vessels operated in foreign waters to monitor fishing crew attendance to protect human trafficking and forced labour—Marine Department, Immigration Bureau, DOF
4. Protection of Workers in fishery and seafood processing industries (2)

Fishing sector

- Development of a system for registration and documentation of fishing vessels and fishing crews for efficient inspection—Marine Department with other agencies and NGOs. DOF has already developed a model crew list database e.g.

    Fishing vessel info: vessel name, vessel owner, registration no, registered fishing gear(s), etc

    Fishing crew list: name, ID/boarder pass, address, photo, finger print etc.

- Fishing vessels, fishing gear and fishing crew inspection
4. Protection of Workers in fishery and seafood processing industries (3)

Fishing sector

- Develop occupational safety and health (OSH) training manual for commercial fishing industry –NFAT, ILO, MOL, DOF

- Development of labour reduction technology for fishing vessels as a remedial measure for labour shortage in the fishing sector
4. Protection of Workers in fishery and seafood processing industries (4)

Shrimp and seafood processing sector

- Development of the recommendations for the Hazardous Work List in shrimp and seafood industry to protect young workers 15-17 years old—DOF, MOL and ILO

- Electrical Safety
- Machinery Safety
- Sound Management of Chemicals
- Ergonomics
- Physical Risks
- Manual Handling/Heavy Work
- Cold Working Environment
- Aquaculture Installations

- Working Time Arrangements
- Cold Storage
- Heat
- Noise
- Working In Isolation
- Transportation
- Harvesting
The recommendations for the Hazardous Work List in shrimp and seafood industry e.g.

- **Farm**: No child shall operate portable electric equipment/ dangerous machinery, drive a forklift, etc.

- **Pre-/Processing Plants**: No child shall perform work in freezing condition, work more than 2 hours without break, work during 18.00 – 6.00 hrs i.e. night work, etc.
5. Implementing Labour Inspection in shrimp, seafood processing and fishing industries

Mainly conducted by Ministry of Labor and associated agencies

- Strengthening and implementing labour inspection in shrimp and seafood enterprise, processing plants and fishing vessels since Oct, 12

- Revision of the 1998 Ministerial Regulation No.10 (B.E. 2541) on the Protection of Workers in Sea Fishery to expand its scope of application to fishing vessels

- Enhancing public awareness and disseminating knowledge on labour protection, rights and duties of employers and employees

- Conduct joint fishing vessel inspection at Samut Sakorn by various agencies
Promoting Better Working Conditions in Fishing Industry

Private Sector Involvement—Supported by ILO Triangle Project

National Fisheries Association of Thailand (NFAT)

- Develop a Code of Conduct for employers on the protection of all workers, including migrant workers, in the fishing sector
- Support and help manage “the Labour Coordination Center for the fishing industry” together with the Ministry of Labour
- Develop occupational safety and health (OSH) training modules in the fishing sector
Future Plan to improve working conditions in Fishing and Seafood Processing Industries(1)

• Future plan (2014-15?)

1) **Mobile Unit**: Four agencies: DOE, DOF, M of Health, and M of Interior will join hands to have Mobile Unit in supporting migrant fishing workers registration at the LCCs offices and/or 22 coastal provincial employment offices. Targeted to have all migrant fishing workers registered for Thai fishing vessels having fishing licenses granted by DOF, getting tax exemption for imported fish caught to Thailand.

2) **Database improvement and data entry implementation for LCCs on fishing vessels and fishing crews** for an efficiency of LCCs’ management: joint efforts by DOF, DOE, MD, Immigration

3) **Revision of Port-in and Port-out regulations** to enable the practical implementation: joint effort by MD, Immigration, DOF
Future Plan to improve working conditions in Fishing and Seafood Processing Industries (2)

- Future plan (2014-15?)
  4) Testing GLP for Fishing Vessels with various fishing operators ---Pilot Group
  5) Finalize GLP for Shrimp Farm and test run for pilot group
  6) Conduct GLP training program for another 88 PPs and seafood processing plants
  7) Conduct improvemental program to ensure GLP implementation for 178 PPs and processing plants
  8) Develop demonstrated “less-labour fishing vessels”, possibly pursiener having cooperation with and/or assistance by SEADFE (tbd)
Conclusions

Efforts of Thai Government in working with various private sectors and NGOs with technical support by ILO and other regional and international agencies can ensure that Thailand have strong policies and implementation to seriously tackle labour issues in promoting better working condition in fishing, shrimp and seafood processing industries.
Website


“Thailand Good Fisheries Labour Practices”

• Initiated by Department of Fisheries to disseminate Thailand efforts addressing labour issues and promoting working conditions in fishery and seafood processing industry.
Thank you

For more information: wprompoj@yahoo.com