

MAY 2025

Seafood consortium release report into responsible recruitment in the global tuna processing sector

Labour issues and human rights violations have become the subject of rising concern in seafood supply chains. Where migrant labour is utilised, these risks are often heightened.

A consortium* of seafood groups across the tuna processing supply chain funded a study that seeks to provide insights on how to enhance responsible recruitment practices, and operationalise the Employer Pays Principle, by using examples from the global tuna processing sector.

The study focuses on five key countries in the global tuna processing sector. [Impactt](#), commissioned by the consortium to conduct this study, used interviews, surveys, and a regulatory review of those regions, to better understand the challenges, and identify opportunities for action. The activities focused on migrant labour used in tuna processing plants and included inputs from external stakeholders as well as industry members. These inputs were used to tailor recommendations for future actions from a buyer, supplier, and industry association perspective.

The consortium represents multiple layers within the supply chains and will use the report to develop or refine their individual approaches and action plans to further promote responsible recruitment in their processing operations.

At the same time, the group recognises the value of making these findings accessible to others working to ensure the responsible recruitment of migrant labour. A public webinar outlining the findings will be hosted by Impactt at 9 am BST on Tuesday 13th May – register to join the webinar [here](#).

Key findings from the report included:

- Lack of sufficient commercial or regulatory pressure or incentives for actors to commit sufficient resources for full implementation
- Challenges for industry associations to establish enforceable standards or commitments around responsible recruitment
- Complexities in seafood supply chains increase the risks, as well as hindering buyers from achieving sufficient oversight and leverage to encourage suppliers to adopt responsible recruitment practices.

* The consortium included the British Retail Consortium, Food Network for Ethical Trade, Global Tuna Alliance, Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship, Seafood Ethics Action Alliance and members.

- Challenges in understanding the “true” cost of recruitment, which is critical to ensuring that responsible recruitment is embedded as a cost of doing business.
- Opportunities for:
 - industry associations to act as convenors to facilitate dialogue, foster collaboration, and collective engagement to address responsible recruitment
 - buyers can provide incentives for suppliers to implement employer pays principles, support capacity building and embed responsible recruitment principles into their procurement practices
 - suppliers can collaborate with buyers to estimate fair recruitment costs, streamline supply chains, partner with zero-fee recruitment agencies, enforce contractual safeguards, and actively monitor recruitment practices
 - All groups to increase information sharing to increase transparency into supplier recruitment practices.

The full report can be accessed here: [A study into the implementation of responsible recruitment practices and the Employer Pays Principle in the global tuna onshore processing sector.](#)

More information on the organisations in the consortium and their response can be found as follows:

British Retail Consortium

<https://brc.org.uk/>
media@brc.org.uk

Food Network for Ethical Trade

<https://foodnetworkforethicaltrade.com/>
technicallead@foodnetworkforethicaltrade.com

Global Tuna Alliance

<https://www.globaltunaalliance.com/>
daniel@globaltunaalliance.com

Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship

<https://seabos.org/>
martin.exel@seabos.org

Seafood Ethics Action Alliance

<https://seaa.org/>
seaa@seafish.co.uk

Stockholm Resilience Centre
Sustainability Science for Biosphere Stewardship



GLOBAL ECONOMIC DYNAMICS
AND THE BIOSPHERE
THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



Stanford Center for
Ocean Solutions

