

RISE Learning Module: [Decent Work at Sea](#)

Print or download this worksheet to take notes as we walk you through some key questions regarding human and labor rights abuses, including work performed at sea. This exercise will help you understand your company's needs, actions your team can take, and what conversations you can begin now.

A reminder of some key human rights issues in the seafood industry

Forced labor	Excessive fees paid by workers
Child labor	Debt bondage
Limited access to unions and worker organizations	Discrimination against migrant workers
Human trafficking	Hazardous remote work at sea
Lack of traceability	

Guiding questions: Evaluating risk

Understanding your risks

What are the highest volume or most valuable products your company sources?

1

2

3

Understanding sourcing country risks

From what countries are these products sourced?

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10	

High risk countries (circle ✓ or ✗)

Do any of those sourcing countries appear on any of the below lists?

1	US Department of State - Trafficking in Persons Report (Tier 2 Watch List or Tier 3)	✓	✗
2	US Department of Labor - Lists of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor	✓	✗
3	Global Slavery Index - High Risk Fishing Countries	✓	✗

Understanding product risks (circle ✓ or ✗)

✓	✗	Are any products in your company's supply chains harvested far out at sea?
✓	✗	Are any such products associated with undocumented steps of the supply chain? Examples include peeling sheds, subcontracted facilities, work at sea without transparency, etc.
✓	✗	Are any products associated with practices like at-sea transshipment?

What can your company do about it?

- Implement strong human rights policies and commitments
- Conduct regular reviews of program effectiveness
- Use information from workers and local stakeholders to understand risk

Guiding questions: Reducing risks

Understanding product risks

✓	✗	Do you ask companies that your company sources from about their policies and practices, including working conditions at sea?
✓	✗	Do you know what policies and practices exist for your company's suppliers in high-risk countries that are listed above, including working conditions at sea?
✓	✗	Do you know if companies your company sources from have policies that align with international guidance (e.g., United Nations Guiding Principles, International Labour Organization Core Conventions, International Bill of Rights, etc)?

If you responded yes (✓) to any of the previous questions, answer the following:

- What international guidance do your company’s suppliers align to? Are they fully aligned, partially, or not really aligned in practice?

- What could be improved to better align with international standards?

Stakeholder engagement

✓	✗	Do companies in your company’s supply chains use recruitment agencies or labor brokers to hire workers?
✓	✗	Does your company use information from local stakeholders to understand the actual risks and working conditions in your supply chains?
✓	✗	Does your company know if complaint or whistleblower mechanisms are implemented in your supply chains?
✓	✗	Are workers in your company’s supply chains represented by organizations or unions?

What actions should leaders consider?

Develop strategic, public human rights priorities

- Identify notable risks
- Create timelines for improvement

Invest resources to develop programs

- Hire sufficient staff
- Invest budget in key initiatives

Questions to reflect on

Reflect

What are your company's:

Values?	
Goals?	
Customer expectations?	
Current human rights policies?	

Interests

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are human and labor rights something your company knows about or has discussed? If so, what have you shared about it? If not, what are your priorities?
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Audience

Who represents the leadership at your company?	
What motivates leadership?	
Who are the key seafood or social responsibility decision makers that you need to get on board?	
Who can help implement the program?	

Work performed while at sea in your company's supply chains

Red flags for work performed at sea (circle ✓ or ✗)

✓	✗	Are workers on vessels properly trained in safety procedures?
✓	✗	Are workers trained for the job they are hired to do?
✓	✗	Are workers required to perform activities for which they were not hired?
✓	✗	Can workers contact their families while at sea or in port?
✓	✗	Can workers understand and speak the primary language used on their vessel? Migrant workers who speak a language different than the prevalent one are at risk.
✓	✗	Do workers have adequate water, nutrition, and rest?

Your company's business partners

Are companies that your company directly partner with blacklisted or known to have engaged in labor or human rights abuses for their workers at sea? If so, which company and what was the alleged or proven violation?

1		
2		

Brainstorm

Based on this initial investigation:

What ideas come up as key priorities to raise with leadership?	
What would be helpful to share in a meeting with your team?	
Who should you talk to that you aren't already? (e.g. civil society organizations, academics, worker representatives, etc.)	