



## ข่าวสารนิเทศ • Press Release

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### Thailand's Progress in Combating IUU Fishing

The Thai government attaches high priority in combatting IUU fishing and has integrated cooperation from all sectors including the public, private and civil society, to tackle the problem of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU). Several concrete results can be summarized in four areas as follows:

#### 1. System & Management

- On 3 November 2015, the Cabinet has approved the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) to combat IUU fishing. Significant measures include reducing the fishing capacity by removing IUU fishing vessels from the fishery industry and prevent them from returning to business.

- On Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS), from May to December 2015, 28 Port-In Port Out Control Centers (PiPo) have been established. The PiPo Centers have completed their inspections on 25,476 vessels and 474,334 fishing seamen. An E-license system for fishing licensing registration has been developed and will be completed in March 2016. Moreover, vessel monitoring systems (VMS) have also been installed in 2,076 out of 2,216 fishing vessels (93.7 percent).

- The "Fishing Info 2" database which provides information on fishing vessels and their workers has been linked to the fishing vessels registration database. In addition, observers on board have completed the training course and are now ready for deployment in February 2016.

- On development of traceability system, on 13 November 2015 the Fisheries Department and the Customs Department signed a Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA) concerning the Control and Examination of Imported, Exported and Transited Aquatic Animals to Tackle Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. The MOA aims to develop cooperation in the inspection of import, export and transshipment of fishery products. The MOA has now been implemented.

#### 2. Assistance

- From October to 3 February 2016, the Royal Thai Embassy in Jakarta has assisted the return of 1,799 Thai fishing seamen from Indonesia. Requests have been submitted from 873 fishing vessels; of which more than 70 percent have already been assisted.

### 3. International Cooperation

- Thailand realizes that the combat against illegal fishing requires close collaboration with international partners, both governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. MoUs on fisheries and labour have been signed or in process of negotiation with many countries.

- On fishery, as of now the government has already signed an MOU on Fisheries with Fiji. Negotiations are still ongoing with Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea and Pacific islands countries (Kiribati, Solomon Island, Marshall Islands and Micronesia), Taiwan, Spain and China.

- On labour, Thailand has cooperated with neighbouring countries to seek sustainable solutions and encourage legally imported migrant workers, expedite the nationality identification process as well as the issuance of proper travel documents for illegal migrant workers in the country. Thailand has also signed bilateral MoUs on Labour Importation with Cambodia and Vietnam, and is in the coordinating process with Myanmar and Laos.

### 4. Legal Framework and Law Enforcement

- Legal Framework: the enactment of the Royal Ordinance on Fisheries B.E. 2558 (2015) is a significant step to tackle IUU problem and lays down various mechanisms necessary for Thailand to ratify relevant international agreements. The law was promulgated on the Royal Gazette on 13 November 2015 and entered into force on 14 November 2015. On 17 December 2015, the National Legislative Assembly endorsed the Royal Ordinance on Fisheries making it equivalent to an Act. In addition, 90 Subordinate laws have been passed, 52 of which are of top priority to tackle IUU problem and will be finalized by February 2016.

- To tackle the problem of labour/human trafficking in the fishery sector, the Ministry of Labour has amended the Ministerial Regulation to Protect the Rights of Labours in the Fishery Industry B.E. 2557 (2014) prohibiting the use of labours aged below 18. This amendment has been broadened to cover those in the seafood processing industry.

- Law Enforcement: Thailand has been working effectively to enforce the laws on fishing vessels operated illegally outside Thai waters and tackle the problem of human trafficking in the fishery sector according to the government's Zero Tolerance policy.

- During the past week, important cases of illegal fishing are as follows:

(1) From 21 to 24 January 2016, the Thai authorities had arrested two fishing vessels, named Gor. Nawamongkolchai 1 and Gor. Nawamongkolchai 8, on the charge of human trafficking. Eleven and four human trafficking victims were found on the two fishing vessels respectively.

Current status: The captains of the two fishing vessels have been held in police custody whereas the authority is investigating on the case. The victims who are Cambodian fishing seamen have been taken care of by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in Ranong Province.

(2) On 25 January 2016, the Police have arrested three suspects who are owners of six Thai-flagged fishing vessels engaging in illegal fishing in foreign waters and the high seas. The vessels were fishing without permission from the Command Center for Combating Illegal Fishing (CCCIF). Later, on 29 January 2016, the Ministry of Agriculture and

Cooperatives issued a Ministerial Regulation declaring them IUU fishing vessels and imposed two-year sanctions under the Royal Ordinance on Fisheries B.E. 2558 (2015).

Current status: (30 January 2016) HTMS Klang had inspected and arrested two out of six fishing vessels. The offenders were found violating the Royal Ordinance on Fisheries and the Act on Navigation in Thai Waters. The Thai authority has arrested four persons who are captains and controllers of the vessels; all of them will be tried according to the judicial process. The Department of Fisheries has also requested the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) to include these vessels in the IOTC IUU vessels list to follow up, monitor and inspect all six vessels.

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2 February 2016