The environmental drivers of human trafficking in fisheries
Transnational fisheries crimes
Global overcapacity & IUU depletes fish stocks

• Around 90% of global fish stocks are already fully or overexploited

• Production is set to increase further

• Lack of transnational cooperation & regulation

• Crew of IUU vessels at significant risks of human trafficking and slavery
- Labour costs can be up to 60% of vessel operating costs
- Strong incentive for operators to cut costs and exploit vulnerabilities of workers
Thailand: Marine destruction and human rights abuses in fisheries

Catch per unit effort (CPUE) from 1961-2016

- Average Thai CPUE has dropped from 185 kg/hr in 1966 to just 46 kg/hr in 2016 – A decline of 81%

- 94% had no contract
- 80% reported never feeling free
- 68% reported sexual/physical violence
- 59% witnessed executions at sea
- 52% witnessed their boss/trafficker harming someone
- 47% reported at least one injury
- 44% reported lack of food
- 42% experienced wage reductions
- 23% were locked in a room during trafficking situation
- 17% worked against their will
- 17% were threatened with violence
- 11% attempted escape
- 10% were severely beaten
- 5.8% reported being forced to use drugs

Sources:
- UNIAP (2009) (n = 49)
- ILO (2013) (n = 596)
- Zimmerman et al (2014) (n = 275)
Migrants in Thailand legally barred from collective bargaining or freedom of association – increases their vulnerability
Human trafficking and slavery in Kantang

- EJF uncovered the trafficking of migrants to supply local fishing industry
- IUU catch from Kantang vessels linked to shrimp feed for international supply chains
- Perpetrators convicted in 2017
Lack of transparency and traceability profits IUU and trafficking perpetrators around the globe.
IUU Case study

Bolivian longliner arrested in Thailand
Global Fisheries Transparency Project (GFTP)

EJF project to create a global architecture for transparency, traceability and accountability

• To facilitate better fisheries management
• To eliminate human rights abuses and other crimes
• To ultimately deliver sustainable, legal and ethical fisheries
Recommendations

1. Address overcapacity through effective decommissioning
2. Ban transshipment at sea
3. Mandatory IMO numbers as Unique Vessel Identifiers (UVI) - linked to Global Record of Fishing Vessels
4. Comprehensive use of AIS and two-way VMS
5. Digital data - on a common platform and accessible across agencies - for catch, landing, licence, ships log and crew manifest
6. Publication of vessel license list – a no-cost solution
7. Ratification & full implementation of PSMA, ILO C188
8. Sign, ratify and implement ILO C87 and C98
Thank you for your attention