



# Canned Tuna Brands - Questions on Human Rights in Pacific Tuna Fishing Operations and Supply Chains (2020/21)

\* The term 'modern slavery' used in this survey is taken to include forced labour, slavery, human trafficking, servitude, bonded and child labour.

**Company:** Thai Union Group PCL

**Canned Tuna Brands:** Sealect, Chicken of the Sea, Genova, John West, Petit Navire, Mareblu, King Oscar, Rugenfische

## Human Rights Policy

1.

- a. Since January 2019, has your company introduced any **new** human rights policies to address the risk of **modern slavery**\* in its operations or supply chains? Yes / No  
If yes, please provide full details and a link.

Thai Union's [Human Rights Policy, Business Ethics and Labor Code of Conduct \(CoC\)](#), and [Vessel Code of Conduct \(VCoC\)](#) are three key policies related to human rights that we introduced prior to 2019. Please refer to our response to BHRRC's 2019 survey, Question 6, for further explanations.

Since January 2019, Thai Union introduced two new policies to address the risk of modern slavery: the Global Whistleblower and Investigation Policy and the Non-reprisal Policy.

In 2019, Thai Union issued a [Global Whistleblower and Investigation Policy](#) to provide specific guidance on the whistleblowing system operation and for investigating fairly any violation and/or potential violation of Thai Union Employees Code of Conduct, Group or local Policies or any applicable Laws or Regulations. The

Policy was announced concurrently with the launch of a [new whistleblowing platform](#) for all staff and workers to ensure strict compliance with ethical and legal standards in the workplace, including those related to labor rights.

Subsequently in September 2020, we issued a Global Non-reprisal Policy to further encourage employees and workers to openly share their concerns and make suggestions about workplaces without fear of retaliation. The Policy will be published soon on Thai Union website. The development of this Policy was recommended as part of our participation in *Tell Us* Project aimed to strengthen our internal worker voice mechanisms. Further details about *Tell Us* Project are described in our response to Question 8 below.

- b. [Since January 2019, has your company revised or updated any of its existing human rights policies to address the risk of modern slavery in its operations or supply chains?](#)

In 2020, Thai Union updated the [Vessel Code of Conduct \(VCoC\)](#) and corresponding [Guidance Document](#). To facilitate communication to our suppliers globally, the updated VCoC is available in 7 languages, namely, Thai, English, Indonesian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Traditional Chinese, and Simplified Chinese; these languages include those identified as important in Pacific Tuna operations. The rationale for the 2020 revision of the VCoC and corresponding Guidance was to, amongst other things, include comments from the auditors and other stakeholders such as our legal counsel, update it with improved understanding based on the results of the first year of audits and include further information from a variety of sources e.g. reports.

Previously, Thai Union introduced the VCoC in 2017 to provide clear guidance to the fishing vessels that we source from, and it aims to continue to improve labor and ethical performance in the fishing sector. The VCoC is an extension of the Thai Union's Ethics and Labor CoC that was introduced in 2015 but the VCoC reflects the unique set of working conditions on fishing vessels. The VCoC is applicable to vessels from which Thai Union sources around the world. The VCoC must be signed by suppliers before we enter into a business relationship and by all of our existing suppliers. Those suppliers who fail to adhere to the Code and engage in unfair and

illegal labor practices will be asked to provide a time-bound remedial plan through the Vessel Improvement Program (VIP) or may have their contracts terminated.

Further information about how we previously implemented and enforced the VCoC, please refer to our response to the BHRCC's 2019 survey, Question 6.

2. [Since January 2019, if your company has made a \*\*new\*\* commitment address \*\*modern slavery\*\* does it apply throughout your supply chains?](#)

Thai Union's commitment to uphold human and labor rights in our operations and supply chain are already embedded in our [Human Rights Policy, Business Ethics and Labor Code of Conduct \(CoC\)](#), and [Vessel Code of Conduct \(VCoC\)](#), all of which were issued prior to January 2019. Please refer to our response to the BHRCC's 2019 survey, Question 1 for more information on our pre-existing commitment to address modern slavery. It should be noted that Thai Union is aligned with the overall commitment to Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS), particularly with respect to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and modern slavery.

The current focus is rather to continuously improve and deepen our human and labor rights due diligence activities so we can better assess, prevent, detect, remedy, and report on the risk of modern slavery and broader unethical labor practices. These activities are explained in the responses to this survey below.

3. [Since January 2019, has your company adopted or revised a responsible sourcing or \*\*supplier code of conduct\*\* that prohibits modern slavery?](#)

Thai Union updated the [Vessel Code of Conduct \(VCoC\)](#) and corresponding [Guidance Document](#) in 2020. This code is applicable to vessels from which Thai Union sources around the world. The VCoC must be signed by suppliers before we enter into a business relationship and by all of our existing suppliers. Please refer to our response to the Question 1(b) for more information.

Finally, in September 2020 we issued a new [Policy for the Responsible Sourcing of Tuna](#) which restates our commitment to prohibit modern slavery in our operations and supply

chain as well as including our commitment on topics relating to environmental sustainability and traceability of tuna. The new Policy aims to consolidate and to support other agreements, statements and policies we previously made on these topics and can be found: <https://seachangesustainability.org/about-seachange/responsible-sourcing/suppliers/>

## Human Rights Due Diligence Process

### 4. Has your company **mapped** its tuna supply chains, in whole or part? Yes / No

Yes, we mapped our tuna supply chains globally, including those sourced from the Pacific region. Thai Union published sourcing locations for all key seafood species, including Tuna, in Thai Union's [2019 Sustainability Report](#), page 15. In addition, we published a supply chain transparency report of our supply chain for tuna and other species used in our European brands in February 2019 at this [link](#) which was also published on the website of the 'Ocean Disclosure Project (ODP): <https://oceandisclosureproject.org/>

Finally, in 2020 we signed an MOU with the ODP to publish a profile of our supply chains covering our global operations. This should be publicly available by the end of 2020.

### 5. Does the company source tuna from the **Pacific** region? Yes / No

If yes, provide location (by country).

Yes, Thai Union does source tuna from the Pacific region. Thai Union published sourcing locations for all key seafood species, including Tuna, in Thai Union's [2019 Sustainability Report](#), page 15. In addition, we published a supply chain transparency report for tuna and other species used in our European brands in 2019 at this [link](#).

Finally, in 2020 we signed an MOU with the ODP to publish a profile of our supply chains covering our global operations, including those related to tuna sourced from the Pacific region. The profile will include FAO areas as well as port states where the fish are landed. The Profile should be publicly available by the end of 2020.

6. Since January 2019, has your company adopted, or revised, a human rights due diligence policy, process or procedure to identify, assess and manage human rights risks (actual or potential), including modern slavery, in its operations (and those of its subsidiaries) and supply chains? Yes / No

If yes, please provide details and describe the human rights due diligence process. **Key steps include:** (i) identifying and assessing human rights impacts; (ii) integrating and acting on assessment findings; (iii) tracking the effectiveness of the company's response; and (iv) communicating externally about how the company is addressing its human rights impacts.

Thai Union's effort to address human rights risk is guided by our [Human Rights Due Diligence Framework](#), which was adopted in 2018. The Framework has remained the same since and comprises a holistic, six-pillar approach to address the issues of human rights including modern slavery, in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Each Pillar of the framework is explained in detail in our response to BHRRC's 2019 survey, Question 6. The current focus is rather to continuously improve and deepen our human rights due diligence activities. Below, we highlight key changes or updates in activities under each pillar beyond what was reported in the previous BHRRC survey.

**1. Pillar 1 – Basic Statement & Policies on Human Rights** -*setting a specific strategy and measurable targets on human rights as well as policies to achieve them*

As indicated in the response to Question 1(a), Thai Union recently introduced the [Global Whistleblower and Investigation Policy](#) and the Non-reprisal Policy, designed to ensure that workers' complaints and concern about workplace issues including human and labor rights violation are investigated fairly and transparently, without retaliation. We also recently [Vessel Code of Conduct \(VCoC\)](#) and corresponding [Guidance Document](#).

Previously, under the SeaChange® Sustainability Strategy's "Safe and Legal Labor" Pillar, Thai Union set five milestone targets to be achieved by 2020, related to fair and legal employment, workers empowerment, traceability, compliance with Thai Union's Codes of Conduct, and stakeholder engagements. To set new milestone targets for 2025, we

conducted a survey in 2019 for internal and external stakeholders on top sustainability issues of their concern. Among other things, the findings indicate that the issue of human rights remain a key concern among our stakeholders. Further details of the survey findings can be found on pages 29-33 of our [Annual 2019 Sustainability Report](#). The updated 2025 milestone targets for the “Safe and Legal Labor” Pillar of our sustainability strategy will be published in early 2021.

**2. Pillar 2 – Assess Risk** – *assessing actual and potential risks of human rights violations caused by or linked to Thai Union’s operations and value chains.*

Most recently, Thai Union repeated the desk-based research on human rights risk at a country level using a similar methodology to the previous exercise in 2018-19 but with more updated data sources. In addition, the VCoC program documents were reviewed; in this program, third party audits are conducted against our [Vessel Code of Conduct \(VCoC\)](#) and the reports provide Thai Union with an understanding of human rights risks in the fisheries we purchase fish from.

In partnership with Verité, in 2019, Thai Union conducted a baseline assessment of the worker voice mechanisms in the key Thailand-based processing facilities which we own; this was completed as part of the broader project to improve worker voice systems. The assessment results provided better and more nuanced understanding about labor rights risks in Thai Union facilities.

Finally, with the onset of COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, Thai Union identified health and safety risk to workers as one of the salient issues. Health & Safety measures to address this emerging risk are explained in the response below.

Going forward, Thai Union plans to continue to further refine risk assessment findings by considering: (i) wider scope of human rights risks (beyond labor trafficking, forced labor, and child labor) and (ii) fieldwork and consultation with stakeholders, prioritizing on parts of operations and supply chains that have been identified as high priority from previous risk assessment exercises. Risk assessment methodologies and assessment results for the latest round of country-level human rights risk assessment are published [here](#).

**3. Pillar 3 – Prevent** – *implementing policies and measures to prevent or minimize the risks of human rights violations in our operations and value chains*

**3.1 Employees training on labor and employment rights**

In 2019-2020, Thai Union is continuing to implement labor rights training through the in-house orientation training program for new employees as well as pre-departure training on labor rights and Thai labor law for migrant workers employed in our Thailand-based facilities.

**3.2 [Ethical Migrant Recruitment Policy](#)**

In 2019-2020, Thai Union is continuing to implement the Ethical Migrant Recruitment Policy that was introduced in 2016. As previously reported, the Policy aims to prevent and reduce the risk of debt bondage and forced labor for migrant workers.

In 2019, an [independent evaluation](#) of the Thai Union Ethical Migrant Recruitment Policy was completed and published so that broader community working on ethical recruitment can learn from the experience of implementing such a policy. The six-month evaluation of the policy was led by ethical trade consultancy Impactt and commissioned by Humanity United and The Freedom Fund. Among other things, the report found that the Policy has resulted in a large reduction in recruitment-related costs paid by workers, an increase in job applicants, and reduced labor turnover.

**3.3 Policies & measures to protect health and safety of employees from COVID-19**

Since the onset of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020, Thai Union put in place monitoring systems and preventive measures globally to ensure the safety and health of its employees. These measures include social distancing, testing and contact tracing regimes, site separation policies to prevent cross-site contamination, enhanced hygiene and sanitation measures at the various work sites, employer-provided housing and transportation. Further details about the COVID-19 measures are captured in Section 9.1 of our [2019 UK Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement](#).

**3.4 Supplier Training & Capacity Building Resources on the Thai Union's Codes**

In 2019-2020, Thai Union is continuing to implement training and capacity building programs for suppliers to increase understanding of our policies, codes and relevant

international standards related to human and labor rights. Various supplier training and capacity building programs are explained in Section 8.5 of our [2019 UK Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement](#). Some key examples of the programs include:

**3.4.1 Implementation of the Vessel Improvement Program (VIP) to raising fishing vessels' capacity to meet our VCoC standards**, including through health and safety focused workshops in Thailand in collaboration with International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). For the rest of 2020, Thai Union is planning three additional workshops. Also in 2020 Thai Union is developing projects and partnerships to address areas for improvements that were identified in the VCoC audits such as increasing crews understanding of their employment contract. The VIP has been developed based on the findings from the third-party audits against the VCoC. In the audit reports that companies receive (including tuna companies fishing in the Pacific) following an audit, the details of where Areas For continuous Improvement (AFI) have been identified are provided and the auditor will follow up. The VCoC audit program is further explained in Pillar 3 of our due diligence framework, below.

**3.4.2 Labor recruitment agencies capacity building** – In 2019, Thai Union conducted a refresher and informational training for the labor agents and their sub-agents on the topics of Thai Union's Business Ethics and Labor Code of Conduct (CoC), Ethical Migrant Recruitment Policy, a new standard for workers' dormitories, and roles and responsibilities of agents. As a follow up, in 2019 the agents completed SelfAssessment Questionnaire (SAQ). Our second-party audit of the agents is expected to take place in 2020, pending travel restriction due to COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, at the invitation of the Seafood Task Force, the recruitment agencies in our supply chain recently began to participate in a capacity building program by the Fair Hiring Initiative (FHI) in order to raise their standards towards On The Level (OTL) core principles and Standards of Ethical Recruitment. Full assessment of the agents' practices against the OTL standards was completed in October 2020.

### **3.5 Transshipment Policy**

As stated in the previous response to the BHRRC's 2019 survey, there is the understanding that transshipment at sea can increase risk of labor abuse including forced labor. In 2019-2020, Thai Union continue to maintain [a policy that bans transshipment](#) at sea in Thai and



international waters in line with the Royal Thai Government Resolution and the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation Resolution to refrain from transactions with at sea transhipped purse seine caught tuna. In addition, to meet our 2020 commitments in the Greenpeace agreement, we are developing partnerships and projects on electronic and human observer programs for longline tuna vessels. Thai Union's Greenpeace commitment and the related progress on transshipment components can be viewed in the latest [independent audit of progress against the Greenpeace agreement](#).

Finally, Thai Union is a member of [Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship](#) (SeaBOS). In September 2020, SeaBOS issued [a statement](#) calling on governments to support boat crews and ocean workers given the critical humanitarian, safety and economic crisis in the seafood and shipping industry, that has been created by restrictions on crew movement onto and off vessels during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**4. Pillar 4 – Detect – *implementing policies and measures to identify actual and potential human rights in both our operations and value chains, including through social audits and worker voice mechanism***

As stated in the previous response to the BHRRC's 2019 survey, Thai Union conducts various internal, secondparty, and third-party social audits of its operations and supply chains against its policies, codes, or other globally recognized social standards; these include requirements which relate to modern slavery such as ETI Base Code, Amfori BSCI Code of Conduct, Sedex or specific codes of customers. These audit schemes remain in place in 2019-2020. Further details about these audit schemes are explained in sections 6 and 7 of our [2019 UK Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement](#). Finally, in 2020, Thai Union is developing a program which will extend the third-party VCoC audit program of fishing vessels to assess aspects relating to ethical recruitment of crew; the extension trial will include tuna vessels operating in the Pacific.

Worker Voice mechanisms remain an important tool to empower Thai Union employees and workers to raise any concerns they may have and also help us detect actual and potential noncompliance against the Thai Union policies and codes. Efforts that have been made to provide access to grievance mechanism and the broader worker voice mechanism is described in the response to Question 9 below.

5. **Pillar 5 – Remedy** – *providing remedies or facilitating access to effective remedies to affected rights holders.*

To verify compliance of the Thai Union operations to policies and codes, internal audits are conducted annually of the Thailand-based factories specifically the Business Ethics and Labor Code of Conduct and related Thai labor laws. Through this process it is possible to identify actual and potential non-compliance against the Code from the feedback of employees and workers' through grievance and complaints channels. Following findings, the relevant management teams will implement time-bound corrective action plans if there are identified noncompliances. This will then be verified by our central internal audit team or the relevant Human Resources team. At this time, a standardized pre-prepared remediation guideline for Thai Union workers is being developed. The purpose of this is to ensure that any remedial actions going forward are compatible with workers' rights, that potential negative impact on affected workers is accounted for and they can be deployed in a timely manner.

Similarly, for suppliers to Thai Union, different second or third-party audit schemes are conducted which identify potential non-conformities against the Thai Union policies/CoC and related laws and regulations, as explained under Pillar 4. This Union states clearly in the policies/CoC that working with suppliers to drive continuous improvement is important and to ultimately resolve non-compliances. If the need for remediation is identified then suppliers are expected to inform Thai Union and implement a time-bounded corrective action plan, this will be verified through a reaudit. The timeline for remediation will depend on the severity of the non-compliances in question. Failure to implement timely remedial action can lead to suspension until proof of rectification is available.

This description applies to the VCoC audit program which began in 2018 and remains in place for beyond 2020; it includes tuna vessels in the Pacific.

6. **Pillar 6 - Continuous Monitoring & Disclosure** – *Measuring and disclosing progress of our human rights due diligence activities and their impact to ensure that we achieve intended outcome*

Transparency is one of the key Operating Principles for Thai Union in implementing the Human Rights Due Diligence Framework. Efforts are made to communicate or report on any steps that have been taken to address modern slavery, and its impact is captured in the response to the Question 12 below.

7. Since January 2019, has your company taken **practical action** to ensure that modern slavery does not occur in your company's (or its subsidiaries') operations and supply chains for tuna procurement from the Pacific? If yes, please describe.

**Examples** might include:

- i) *training* staff and management, workers, suppliers or business partners about rights, risks, responsibilities and remediation;
- ii) *engaging* with NGOs, fishers/ their representatives (including unions) and policy-makers;
- iii) cascading *contractual* clauses in supply agreements;
- iv) digital *traceability* of fish (across entire supply chain, or part only);
- v) prohibition on *recruitment fees*;
- vi) protective measures to protect against exploitation of *migrant* fishers;
- vii) prohibition on sourcing from suppliers that *transship* at sea, or use *flags of convenience*;
- viii) ensuring *freedom of association* and collective bargaining by fishers/ their representatives (including unions);
- ix) oversight of *recruitment* or labour hire entities; and
- x) independent supply chain *auditing*.

Please provide details.

The efforts made to fight modern slavery are guided by Thai Union's [Human Rights Due Diligence Framework](#), which is a comprehensive six-pillar approach to address issues associated to human rights. As explained in the response to the previous question, practical actions have been taken by Thai Union to prevent or minimize the risks of human rights violations in our operations and value chains under the Pillar 3 "Prevent" of the Framework. Please refer to the response to the Question 6 for further details.

8. If the company has taken steps to identify and address human rights risks, how does it (a) **prioritise** which risks to address first; and (b) assess and track the **effectiveness** of its actions and response?

Per Thai Union's [Human Rights Due Diligence Framework](#), the actual and potential risks of human rights violations that are caused by or linked to our operations have been assessed. These have then informed subsequent risk mitigation activities and priorities (under Pillar 1 of the Framework). Further details about this risk assessment are explained in the response to Question 6.

Furthermore, Thai Union are currently implementing the **“Tell Us” project** in collaboration with Verité. This project has the goal to strengthen worker voice mechanisms in Thai Union's key facilities in Thailand. In 2019, the baseline assessment of the worker voice mechanism was conducted in order to identify gaps in the Thai Union team working in Thailand in Human Resources, specifically practice in handling worker voice. To address one of the outcomes of this project, in 2020 Thai Union issued a new global Non-Reprisal Policy. As a next step, a standard operating procedure for handling workers voice will be introduced which will contain standardized key performance indicators (KPIs) of worker voice management and guidelines for providing remediation to workers. In addition the internal worker voice database will also be strengthened to track and count reoccurrences of similar complaints. This will allow the effectiveness of the corrective actions to be measured.

## Grievance Mechanism

9. Since January 2019, per the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), has your company adopted, or made changes to improve, a **grievance/ complaints mechanism** through which workers, including fishers in your supply chains, can raise concerns about human rights? Yes / No

If so, can they access this in their own language and in a way that allows grievances, or concerns, to be reported safely, in confidence and without intimidation? Have any human rights concerns connected with the Pacific tuna sector been reported via your company's complaints mechanism? Please provide details.

As indicated in the previous response to the BHRRC's 2019 survey, access to grievance mechanism is embedded in both the CoC (applicable to all our operations and suppliers) and the VCoC (applicable to fishing vessels in our supply chain). Various internal and external grievance channels for Thai Union employees, suppliers' employees, or any whistle blowers who wish to report complaints and violations against the Thai Union policies/CoCs remain in place. Examples include internal hotlines, welfare committees, suggestion boxes, confidential email addresses ([labor.coc@thaiunion.com](mailto:labor.coc@thaiunion.com), [VesselCode@thaiunion.com](mailto:VesselCode@thaiunion.com)), or *Speak Out* – the Thai Union Compliance Reporting Hotline. Further information about the grievance channels including the broader worker voice mechanisms are described in Section 6.2 of our [2019 UK Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement](#).

Furthermore, during 2019-2020, the effectiveness of worker voice mechanisms was strengthened through the following policies/initiatives:

- In 2019, Thai Union issued a [Global Whistleblower and Investigation Policy](#) to provide specific guidance on the whistleblowing system operation and for investigating fairly any violation and/or potential violation of Thai Union Employees Code of Conduct, Group or local Policies or any applicable Laws or Regulations. The Policy was announced concurrently with the launch of *Speak Out*, [a new whistleblowing platform](#) for all staff and workers to ensure strict compliance with ethical and legal standards in the workplace, including those related to labor rights.
- **“Tell Us” project** - the project was implemented by Verité in collaboration with Thai Union, with the goal of strengthening worker voice mechanisms in the key facilities of Thai Union that are based in Thailand. In 2019, the baseline assessment of the worker voice mechanism was conducted to identify key gaps of our Thailand Human Resources team's practice in handling worker voice. As one of the outcomes of this project, in 2020 Thai Union issued a robust global Non-Reprisal Policy. As a next step, a standard operating procedure for handling workers voice will be introduced which will contain standardized key performance indicators (KPIs) of worker voice management, and guidelines for providing remediation to workers.

Finally, as indicated in the previous response to the BHRRC's 2019 survey, verification of the level of compliance of Thai Union's operations against the company's own Business Ethics and Labor CoC and the fishing vessels which supply Thai Union will be against the VCoC, including the clauses related to access to grievance mechanisms. Further details about the verification of compliance through social audit schemes are explained in sections 6 and 7 of our [2019 UK Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement](#).

10. Since January 2019, have you introduced a corrective or **remediation plan** if instances of modern slavery are identified in your operations, or supply chains? Can you describe it?

Since the introduction of the VCoC audit program, tuna vessels which Thai Union source from have had third party audit program conducted and this includes in its process corrective plans to drive continuous improvement. Between January and December 2019, VCoC audits were carried out on 54 tuna vessels, including those operating in the Pacific Ocean. Subsequent to each audit, the findings are submitted to the fishing vessel containing the areas for improvement that have been identified. The fishing company/vessel was tasked to respond by completing analysis and improvement plans.

11. How many **instances** of modern slavery has your company **identified** over the last 3 years (from and including 2018) in its own operations (including subsidiaries) or in its supply chains that relate to tuna procurement from the Pacific?

Please describe by reference to:

- (a) Number of instances (broken down for each calendar year)
- (b) Do you know where they occurred? Please describe event(s).
- (c) How did the company respond to address the issue(s)?

Between January and December 2019, third-party audits against the VCoC were carried out on 54 tuna fishing vessels in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans. The vessels go to sea for varying lengths of time, and use a range of gear types including purse seine, pole and line, and long line. The interview component of the VCoC audits is important and for the Pacific Ocean fleets, the audits conducted interviews of 13 crews from 5 nationalities on purse seine vessels, and 129 crews from 6 nationalities on longline vessels. These are conducted in line with the TU VCoC program guidance document and are confidential but

a summary of the results is published in the Thai Union [annual sustainability report](#). Analysis shows that overall the VCoC Principles 7 and 10 (related to working hours and grievance procedure) have the lowest conformance percentage. In contrast, the VCoC Principles 1, 5, and 8 have highest level of conformance.

In 2020, the VCoC program guidance document was revised and updated, and a new Annex was added which outlines the Thai Union procedures in respect to the audits.

Subsequent to each audit, the outcome document was prepared and submitted to the fishing vessel containing the improvement needs in order to meet the VCoC. The fishing company/vessel was tasked to respond with completing analysis and improvement plans.

The VCoC audit program is conducted on a rolling basis for the global tuna fleets and Thai-flagged fleets and is planned to continue beyond 2020.

## Reporting

12. Does your company communicate, or **report**, externally on steps taken to address modern slavery? Yes / No

If yes, please provide relevant details, in period since January 2019. This could include statements issued under the [UK](#) or [Australian](#) Modern Slavery Acts.

Transparency is one of the key Operating Principles in implementing Thai Union's Human Rights Due Diligence Framework. All of the completed activities to uphold human rights, including eradication of modern slavery, are regularly reported in [Thai Union's Annual Report, Annual Sustainability Report, UK Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement, Safe & Legal Labor Update Report](#), and [SeaChange® Website](#). For example, the latest Annual Sustainability Report describes the third-party VCoC audit program of the vessel that supply Thai Union and includes aggregated results.

In 2019-2020, there are also published external evaluations of our effort to address modern slavery, including:

- In 2019, the consultancy firm, MRAG Americas, conducted an [independent audit](#) of the progress which had been made against the [joint agreement with Greenpeace](#). Under the agreement made in 2017, Thai Union committed to support fisheries operating according to best practice, improve fisheries, reduce illegal and unethical practices from global supply chains, and bring more 'responsibly-caught' tuna to key markets. The agreement included commitments to enhance due diligence related to labor rights on tuna vessels supplying Thai Union and social compliance for Thai Union facilities, among others.
- In 2019, an [independent evaluation](#) of the Thai Union Ethical Migrant Recruitment Policy was completed and published with the intention that the broader community which are working on the topic of ethical recruitment can learn from these experiences. The six-month evaluation of the policy was led by ethical trade consultancy, Impactt, and was commissioned by Humanity United and The Freedom Fund. Amongst other things, the project reported that the Policy had resulted in a large reduction in recruitment-related costs paid by workers, an increase in job applicants, and reduced labor turnover.
- In June 2017, Thai Union committed to the World Economic Forum's [Tuna 2020 Declaration](#). This included a pledge to eliminate any form of slavery and ensure suppliers at least meet minimum social standards in management practices as recommended in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Labour Organization's Conventions and Recommendations, by 2020. A [recent review](#) shows significant progress in meeting commitments by the signatories of the Tuna 2020 Declaration.

## Other information

13. Since January 2019, has your company encountered **obstacles or challenges** in implementing its human rights commitments, taking practical action against modern slavery in tuna supply chains and/or in relation to any of the areas mentioned above? Yes / No

If yes, please explain and provide details of any strategies to overcome them.

The challenges relating to the monitoring of activities on the sea are widely recognised particularly related to monitoring and regulating. In spite of the challenges, Thai Union



has made progress since January 2019 and taken practical actions on the topic such as through the ongoing VCoC audit program, innovative applications of technologies, and an extension of effort into recruitment.

- **Electronic Monitoring of Vessels** - since 2018, Thai Union has been working with The Nature Conservancy to install Electronic Monitoring (EM) on board vessels which supply Thai Union and are involved in Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs). The application of EM will provide observation capabilities on board at all times and be able to record any illegal fishing and human rights abuses. Specifically, Thai Union provides financial support to two Longline FIPs to support the installation of EM; one of these is in the Pacific. In addition, Thai Union is exploring a partnership with a U.S. university to trial an artificial intelligence-based monitoring system to analyse footage from the EM.
- **Pilot project to apply blockchain technologies for workers' rights** – forced labor has been identified as a challenge in the seafood industry. The confiscation of personal documents from migrant workers such as passports or worker permits has, in some places, been common practice. In 2019, working in collaboration with KASIKORNBANK, a digital banking leader in Thailand, and an innovation team from Kasikorn Business Technology Group (KBTG), a proof of concept trial was developed to test the ability of recruiters, workers, and Thai Union to store the digital signature of the personal document on blockchain. Using KASIKORNBANK's innovation platform, this was developed to capture the standard workflow procedures for recruiting agents, workers and Thai Union, which has a role in verifying the documents of migrant workers from worker home countries such as Myanmar. Through the platform, workers could store passports, work permits and other important documents on their mobile phone as electronic documents. All of the documents can be verified as to who the real issuer is. The intention is to enable workers to have greater access to their personal data and be less likely to encounter bonded or forced labor through increased control of their own personal documents. If physical copies of workers passport or work permit were confiscated, the workers could still access them online when authorities requested them and prove that the document is authentic.

- **Extended audit and oversight on labor recruitment**

In 2020, Thai Union has started to an extension project to extend the third-party VCoC audit program to assess the ethical recruitment of crew. The parameters are still being worked out but trials on the new assessment will include vessels operating in the Pacific Region. Findings from the audit will be used to develop corrective action plan framed by the Thai Union Vessel Improvement Program (VIP). For our processing facilities, Thai Union plans to launch a second-party audit of the labor recruitment agencies into Thailand factories this year, pending travel restriction due to COVID-19 pandemic.

14. **Since January 2019, has your company joined or been active in any regional, or sectoral, multi-stakeholder initiatives that address modern slavery in fishing?**

*If yes, please provide details.*

Thai Union understands that no single entity can address modern slavery and that collaboration is key. To serve as a truly effective change leader, Thai Union aligns its sustainability with globally recognized collaborative sustainability priorities and programs. Thai Union continues to actively participate in regional, sectoral, multi-stakeholder initiatives as indicated in the response to the BHRRC's 2019 survey, Question 14 including: the Seafood Task Force; the Bali Process Government and Business Forum; the UN Global Compact; Tuna 2020 Traceability Declaration; Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS).

New developments regarding our participation in multi-stakeholder initiatives include:

- In 2020, Prad Kerdpaioj, Director of Sustainability, Asia and Human Rights Manager, joined the Board of the **UN Global Compact Local Network for Thailand (GCNT)** as well as its sub-committee on business and human rights.
- Dr. Darian McBain, Global Director of Sustainability, became a member of the board of **Be Slavery Free**, a coalition of civil society, community, and other organisations working together to prevent, abolish and disrupt modern slavery in Australia and around the world.
- In 2019, Thai Union and Charoen Pokphand Foods PCL (CPF) issued [a joint statement](#) on tackling modern slavery to ensure their supply chains are free of

illegal labor. The statement was issued at the **Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS)** Dialogue 2019 annual meeting in Thailand.

- In 2020, SeaBOS issued a [statement](#) calling on governments to support boat crews and ocean workers given the critical humanitarian, safety and economic crisis in the seafood and shipping industry, that has been created by restrictions on crew movement onto and off vessels during the COVID-19 pandemic.

15. Please provide any **other information** about your company's policies and practices on human rights that may be relevant.

No further information. Crucial information has already been provided in the responses to other questions.

## COVID-19 impacts

16. Has the **COVID-19** pandemic affected your ability to identify, assess or respond to modern slavery risks in your tuna supply chains?

Please explain and provide details, including any actions (a) taken or (b) delayed/suspended, by you.

The safety and health of its employees is of the highest priority to Thai Union, as well as our ability to continue to deliver healthy and nutritious products to customers and consumers around the world. Like everyone, Thai Union has been closely monitoring the situation around COVID-19 since the first cases were reported at the end of 2019. Since then a range of policies and guidelines to protect Thai Union staff and maintain business continuity have been developed.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, everywhere Thai Union operates has an active Crisis Management Teams (CMT) that have been meeting regularly and are able to put in place action plans and execute them, as well as report on production and other key measurements. Regional CMTs are responsible for keeping up to date with local government requirements and regulations and ensuring compliance. Policies and measures to protect health and safety of Thai Union's employees are captured in Section 9.1 of the [2019 Thai Union UK Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement](#).

The pandemic also presented challenges for anyone implementing human rights due diligence activities. but it also provided the opportunity to explore innovative solutions.

For example;

- Our 2020 VCoC audit program of tuna vessels was initially delayed due to travel and other restrictions however the teams were able to develop new processes for conducting audits remotely. Of course, restrictions are noted in the aspects of crew interviews and vessel inspection. However, the ability to continue the engagement with suppliers and to progress understanding of the areas for continuous improvement that can be made through this process are still valuable. For the VCoC audits in Thailand, these were delayed but have now recommenced.
- The annual second-party audit of labor recruitment agents against our Code and Ethical Migrant Recruitment Program was delayed due to the travel restriction;
- The expansion of the previously held Health & Safety Workshops for crews on Thai-flagged vessels which supply Thai Union have been delayed. Together with the International Transport Workers Federation and Fishers Rights Network, Thai Union has planned and prepared as much as possible to include extra content in addition to health and safety for three workshops by the end of year;
- Other Vessel Improvement Programs (VIPs) in Thailand were also initially delayed due to travel restriction and social distancing precaution. We have just resumed engagement with suppliers to kickstart the Programs.
- In-person training is usually delivered on the Thai Union Business Ethics and Labor Code of Conduct to critical tier-1 Thailand-based suppliers of food ingredients, packaging, or logistics. For this year, it has been switched to provide e-learning training program instead.
- Generally, third-party social audits of the Thai Union processing facilities were delayed and rescheduled due to travel restriction, social distancing measures, and there has been difficulty in conducting workers interview remotely.
- With travel restriction and border closure between Thailand and neighboring countries, it was not possible for Thai Union to recruit new migrant workers. At the same time, the migrant workers who travelled back home to renew their papers and documents were unable to return to work in Thailand. In response, Thai Union communicated to the workers that were stuck in transit that Thai Union was committed to keeping them in our employment. So far, Thai Union has not experienced a labor shortage.