

# Warmwater shrimp social risk profile

Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous  
child labor risks

China, Aquaculture and Processing

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SEAFOOD SOCIAL RISK TOOL V2

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The Seafood Social Risk Tool has been prepared for information purposes only, and is not intended to constitute business, legal, market, financial or investment advice. The Seafood Social Risk Tool is designed to serve as an informational resource and does not override legislation or internal policies or procedures. It is recommended that all users of the Seafood Social Risk Tool seek independent legal advice. The Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation shall not be responsible to any party related to its use or interpretation of the information contained in the Seafood Social Risk Tool.

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# About the Seafood Social Risk Tool

The Seafood Social Risk Tool (SSRT) is a risk assessment tool that assesses the risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor associated with a seafood product and producing country. The tool includes more than 80 risk indicators that assess evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in seafood supply chains and the underlying drivers of risk associated with these abuses. This information is used to create risk profiles to help businesses and other interested stakeholders to better understand the risk of human rights abuses in seafood supply chains and to focus businesses' due diligence efforts to improve conditions for seafood workers.

To learn more about the SSRT and access the full list of available risk profiles, visit <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/our-projects/seafood-social-risk-tool>.

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## Overview

China is the world's largest producer of farmed shrimp and prawns, accounting for 34.7 percent (2.57 million metric tons, MMT) of global production in 2022.<sup>i</sup> The main species produced by China is the warmwater shrimp, Whiteleg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*), which comprised 72.3 percent (1.9 MMT) of China's total farmed shrimp and prawn production in 2022.<sup>ii</sup> China is the world's top producing country of Whiteleg shrimp, accounting for 32.1 percent of global production in 2022.<sup>iii</sup> China is also one of the world's top import markets for shrimp, with total estimated imports of 658,117 tonnes in 2021, representing a 7.4 percent rise in annual imports.<sup>iv</sup> The main origin countries for shrimp imported to China are Ecuador and India, which together provided an estimated 75 percent of China's shrimp imports in 2021.<sup>v</sup> To a lesser extent, China also exports shrimp. In 2021, China exported an estimated 180,070 tonnes of shrimp to Japan, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, and other countries.<sup>vi</sup> Main products of processing shrimp for export are frozen head-on shrimp, frozen headless shrimp, frozen shrimp, and frozen tailed shrimp.<sup>vii</sup>

## Base risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country in general

Overall, the content about China indicates that the base risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor appear to be high. Drivers of risk include inequalities between rural and urban areas of China combined with limited social protections for internal migrants; restrictions on freedom of association and poor enforcement of workers' rights; and a government-led policy of discrimination against minority ethnic and religious groups, including mass detention and state-imposed forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Xinjiang or XUAR).

China is now categorized as a "high human development" country in the Human Development Index, reflecting rapidly declining numbers of people in poverty and improving health and education rates.<sup>viii</sup> But the country has high rates of income inequality regionally and between rural and urban areas, which have been worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>ix</sup> Internal migrants moving from rural to urban areas are especially vulnerable to forced labor due to the national household registry system (*hukou*- *hukou* in Chinese: 户口), which restricts the ability of rural inhabitants to legally change their residence and therefore to access social services in their new area of residence.<sup>x</sup> Policy reforms have resulted in improvements to the hukou system over time but further changes are needed to improve access to social services, especially for ethnic minorities.<sup>xi,xii</sup> China has not published official statistics on child labor.<sup>xiii</sup> According to Tang et al. 2018, the risk of child labor is associated with place of residence, with children more likely to be engaged in child labor in rural areas and child labor found to be most prevalent in the Western region of China.<sup>xiv</sup>

During the COVID-19 pandemic, China’s pursuit of a strict “zero-Covid” policy increased the vulnerability of workers to exploitation and prompted further violations of workers’ rights. Strict lockdowns made it difficult for people in China to access food and other essentials.<sup>xv</sup> Meanwhile, media reports of workplaces being locked down describe poor living conditions in factory dormitories, payment issues, and violence by police and security personnel against protesting workers.<sup>xvi,xvii</sup> In December 2022, China’s Covid measures underwent a significant loosening.<sup>xviii</sup> China shifted away from its zero-COVID-19 strategy, lifting prevention and control measures and easing the strict quarantine requirements.<sup>xix</sup>

Workers’ rights to organize are restricted by law and overall, there is “No guarantee of rights” for workers in China, according to the International Trade Union Confederation’s 2023 Global Rights Index.<sup>xx</sup> Enforcement of anti-trafficking and forced labor laws appears to be insufficient. China has demonstrated some recent efforts to eliminate human trafficking, for example, through the adoption of a new Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2021-2030) in April 2021<sup>xxi</sup> and the provision of increased funding for training of law enforcement in 2022.<sup>xxii</sup> However, trafficking crimes are usually prosecuted under laws relating to other offences that carry lesser penalties and forced labor crimes are sometimes treated as administrative issues.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Most significantly, the Chinese government has itself been implicated in a pattern of widespread forced labor involving minority ethnic and religious groups in Xinjiang. International concerns over human rights violations in China have increased significantly since evidence emerged on the government’s campaign against Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, ethnic Kyrgyz, and members of other minority groups in Xinjiang.<sup>xxiv</sup> Documented human rights abuses include coercive population control methods, forced labor, and arbitrary detention in internment camps.<sup>xxv</sup> Despite significant international attention on the human rights situation and the cutting of international supply chain links to Xinjiang, the Chinese government continues to deny these accusations while local officials obstruct access for observers, impeding international investigations into the allegations of forced labor in Xinjiang.<sup>xxvi</sup>

## **Adjusted risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country’s seafood supply chain**

China’s seafood industry has been connected to forced labor and human trafficking including the alleged use of North Korean labor in the country’s distant water fishing (DWF) fleet, and the alleged use of North Korean labor and state-sanctioned Uyghur forced labor in seafood processing, including potentially in shrimp processing. But no direct evidence was found of forced labor and human trafficking in aquaculture or more specifically in the farmed shrimp and prawn industry in China. Nor was evidence found of hazardous child labor across China’s seafood industry.

Conditions in the DWF fleet are not necessarily an indication that similar abuses occur in shrimp farming, but they do indicate a heightened risk in the seafood industry overall. Many of China's DWF vessels have been found to harbor serious human rights abuses including conditions indicative of forced labor.<sup>xxvii</sup> Evidence and risk factors associated with the DWF fleet are provided here for information. The majority of crew employed in the DWF fleet are foreign migrant workers who are especially vulnerable to exploitation. Crews are mostly from the Philippines and Indonesia, with others from Africa and other Asian countries.<sup>xxviii</sup> A 2025 briefing by Environmental Justice Foundation also reports on the suspected use of North Korean workers on Chinese-flagged tuna longliners in the Indian Ocean, which may amount to forced labor of overseas workers by the North Korean government and may breach UN sanctions relating to North Korea.<sup>xxix</sup>

Deceptive recruitment practices, including false promises about wages and terms of the contract are used to hire fishers.<sup>xxx</sup> Other reported indicators of forced labor include overwork, underpayment or nonpayment of wages, debt bondage, abusive living conditions, isolation at sea, confiscation of identity documents, verbal abuse and physical violence, sometimes leading to the deaths of workers.<sup>xxxi,xxxii</sup> In 2021, the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued a Withhold Release Order on seafood from fishing vessels owned or operated by the Chinese company, Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd based on an investigation that found all 11 of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s indicators of forced labor.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

The correlated risk of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing has also been linked to the DWF fleet. China is a major contributor to global IUU fishing due to the size and geographic expanse of the country's DWF fleet.<sup>xxxiv,xxxv</sup> Notably, the Chinese government introduced a plan to stop expansion and stabilize the number of vessels in the DWF fleet at 3,000 by 2020.<sup>xxxvi</sup> But, estimates of the actual number of vessels vary widely from less than 3,000 to nearly 17,000 and China is thought to operate the world's largest DWF fleet.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The government appears to have difficulties monitoring and wielding control over the fleet on the high seas and in foreign countries' EEZs. Opaque bilateral agreements with coastal countries and weak regulations enable DWF companies to conduct IUU fishing.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Concerns have been expressed by the international community and fishing observers about China's limited oversight of the DWF fleet, which contributes to an increased risk of forced labor.<sup>xxxix,xl</sup>

Nonetheless, some changes have been observed. Most recently, in April 2025 China ratified the Port State Measures Agreement, indicating the country's commitment to combatting IUU fishing, and is working to amend its legislation to align with the international agreement.<sup>xli</sup> To monitor ocean fishery populations and improve supply chain traceability, the Maritime Traffic Safety Law was revised, and the protection of crew's rights was added in this provision for the first time in 2021: A fundamental provision that the State must ensure the safety of labor, occupational health, and legitimate rights and interests of sailors.<sup>xlii</sup> It involves several crew rights, including ensuring the seafarers' environment, protecting their interests and health, and providing social insurance.

Also, the PRC Crew Rules state several fundamental rights for seafarers. However, due to the characteristics of DWF, enforcement is low, and the regulation is ineffective in solving existing problems. Moreover, shortcomings in the catch verification methodology, loopholes created by the role of transshipment vessels, and a lack of concrete enforcement measures pose significant obstacles.

In addition to evidence of human trafficking and forced labor in China's distant water fishing fleet, an investigation by The Ocean Outlaw Project, published in October 2023, identifies the apparent employment of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in forced labor and the use of North Korean labor in seafood processing in China. According to the findings of the investigation, more than 1,000 people have been forcibly transferred by the Chinese government from Xinjiang Province to work for 10 seafood processing companies in Shandong Province since 2018.<sup>xliii</sup> Five of the 10 implicated companies export seafood to the United States. All of them have been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), and four have been certified by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), raising concerns about the reliability of social audits in the country and industry.<sup>xliv</sup> In addition, North Korean labor is allegedly being used in seafood processing plants in Liaoning Province, including by seafood processing companies known to have exported seafood to the United States.<sup>xlv</sup>

China's national policy to increase aquaculture outputs and reduce the reliance on wild capture seafood production could result in a changing landscape of human rights risks in China's seafood industry. Since 2000, the share of aquaculture in China's total seafood output has grown from 60% in 2000 to 80% in 2020.<sup>xlvi</sup> Catch limits and efforts to reduce fishing vessel numbers alongside a need for increased seafood production means that the quantity and share of aquaculture outputs are expected to continue to grow.<sup>xlvii</sup> While China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs has set out an action plan to promote more environmentally sustainable aquaculture,<sup>xlviii</sup> attention will also need to be given to ensure that human rights, labor rights and labor conditions prevention and safeguards are instituted in aquaculture production.

Very little information was found on industry and employee characteristics or working conditions in shrimp farming and processing in China, making it difficult to assess the risks of human trafficking, forced labor, and hazardous child labor for the sector. But the presence of significant information gaps and a lack of transparency can itself be seen as an indication of risk. Anecdotal information describing the isolation of farm sites could indicate increased risk, including greater difficulty monitoring labor conditions on farms, but the shortage of skilled workers may encourage employers to offer better contract terms. Meanwhile, The Ocean Outlaw Project 2023 investigation's claim that seafood processing companies exporting shrimp to international markets are connected to the use of Uyghur workers raises concerns regarding the possible presence of Uyghur forced labor in China's shrimp processing industry.<sup>xlix</sup>

Globally, China is the main consumer of shrimp and large volumes of shrimp are imported and exported by the country. Despite having great potential for vertical integration with respect to supply management, the supply chain remains horizontal. The great amount of volume imported from other countries for processing increases the complexity of China's shrimp supply chain, which increases the risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor. Of the source countries identified, SSRT risk profiles will be made available for farmed warmwater shrimp tuna produced in Ecuador, India, Thailand, and Vietnam.<sup>1</sup>

## Summary of evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain

### Country-level indicators

- China has been implicated in a state-sponsored campaign of mass detention, human trafficking, and forced labor against Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang, with goods produced by forced labor linked to international supply chains.
- In addition, the North Korean government allegedly subjects its people to forced labor in China as part of a revenue generation effort.
- Forced labor occurs in the production of various goods including Artificial Flowers, Christmas Decorations, Coal, Fish, Footwear, Garments, Gloves, Hair Products, Polysilicon, Nails, Thread/Yarn, and Tomato Products.
- Goods identified as produced by child labor and forced labor include bricks, cotton, electronics, fireworks, textiles, and toys.

### Seafood industry-level Indicators

- No direct evidence was found of hazardous child labor in China's seafood industry, but there is evidence from several sources of human trafficking and forced labor in the seafood industry.
- 'Fish' from China is identified as a good produced by forced labor by the US Department of Labor's List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor, with specific reference to China's distant water fishing (DWF) fleet.
- Evidence from an investigation by Environmental Justice Foundation published in 2025 indicates that North Korean labor may have been used on at least 12 Chinese-flagged tuna longliners operating in the Indian Ocean.

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<sup>1</sup> Not all profiles will become available at the same time and this profile may refer to forthcoming profiles.

- Evidence from investigative journalism reported by The Ocean Outlaw Project in 2023 suggests that state-sanctioned Uyghur forced labor and North Korean labor is used in China’s seafood processing industry.
- The US Department of State’s Trafficking in Persons Report states that Uyghur and other Muslim ethnic minority workers and North Korean overseas workers are subject to conditions of forced labor in seafood processing.

### **Aquaculture indicators**

- No direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in China’s shrimp aquaculture industry was found.

### **Processing indicators**

- No evidence was found directly linking China’s shrimp processing industry to forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor.
- However, the findings of a 2023 investigative journalism report by The Ocean Outlaw Project connect seafood processing companies exporting shrimp (among other seafood) to the state-sanctioned employment of Uyghur workers since 2018.

## **Summary of factors that affect the likelihood of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain**

### **Factors that increase the likelihood**

#### **Country-level indicators**

No guarantee of workers’ rights, including restrictions on the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, and a prohibition on the right to strike.

- An increased migration movement without proper policies that encourage both foreign and internal migrants to adapt to a new environment.
- Inequalities between rural and urban areas affect access for workers to social protections and administrative constraints make it difficult for workers and their families to access social protection, health, and education when relocating from rural to urban areas.
- Non-transparent and insufficient enforcement of anti-trafficking laws and allegations of official complicity in human trafficking.

## Seafood industry-level indicators

- China has the world's largest distant water fishing (DWF) fleet, which operates with limited oversight.
- Difficulties in monitoring extensive bounds and a vast number of DWF vessels.
- Widespread illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing enforcing crew members to engage in their illegal activities on board.
- Deception by recruitment agencies is prevalent, and fishers often suffer from overworking under poor labor conditions.
- Many illegal and unregistered agencies are present and recruit men from other Asian countries into fishing with false promises with migrant workers leaving the vessel without wages.
- Insufficient oversight of labor conditions and recruitment agencies in the fishing industry, including a lack of screening for indicators of forced labor among migrant fishers.

*The risk factors above are associated with the fishing industry and the DWF fleet and do not necessarily reflect conditions in the farmed shrimp industry; However, due to a lack of clear information, it is difficult to determine whether any of the issues evident in DWF are also present in shrimp farming.*

## Aquaculture indicators

- No direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in China's shrimp aquaculture industry was found.

## Processing indicators

- No evidence was found directly linking China's shrimp processing industry to forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor. However, the findings of a 2023 investigative journalism report by The Ocean Outlaw Project connect seafood processing companies exporting shrimp (among other seafood) to the state-sanctioned employment of Uyghur workers since 2018.

## Factors that decrease the likelihood

### Country-level indicators

- China is primarily a source country for migrants rather than a destination country.
- Education and literacy levels in China are high and considerably better than in some of China's neighboring countries.
- China became a Party to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) in April 2025 to help combat IUU fishing.

- China's State Council published a new national Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons (2021–2030) in 2021.

### **Seafood industry-level indicators**

- An overhaul of China's 1986 Fisheries Law was recently conducted to amend the patchy legal framework.
- Provisions for crew rights were added to *the Maritime Traffic Safety Law in 2021* to improve basic labor conditions.
- China's Agriculture Ministry dispatched observers for the first time in 2021 to monitor transshipments and the legality of catches by high seas vessels in the Pacific and Indian oceans.
- China has introduced several other measures in the past decade to address IUU fishing including improved vessel monitoring, training on regulations, a blacklist for noncompliant DWF skippers, and the removal of fuel subsidies for DWF companies and vessels involved in IUU fishing.

### **Aquaculture indicators**

- Advanced techniques for shrimp farming require a skilled and experienced worker. A shortage of skilled workers may encourage employers to offer better contracts.
- Publicly available certification audit reports observe that workers are mainly from surrounding communities and villages and are paid above the local minimum salary, but this evidence is limited to only three farms and may not be representative of the industry.

### **Processing indicators**

- None.

# Aquaculture

China is the world's largest seafood producer and consumer, with total seafood production in 2021 forecast to reach 66 million metric tons (MMT). Of that total, farmed seafood makes up eighty percent of the country's seafood production (forecast at 52.9 MMT in 2021).<sup>i</sup> The country's farmed seafood is mostly produced by small-scale farms owned by individual farmers.<sup>ii</sup> The total estimated shrimp production takes place over 421,000 hectares, of which around 246,000 hectares corresponds to marine shrimp production.<sup>iii</sup> China leads the production of farmed shrimp, including the warmwater species, Whiteleg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*), globally.<sup>iiii</sup> Other main species cultured by China are Oriental river prawn (*Macrobrachium nipponense*) and Giant freshwater prawn (*Macrobrachium Rosenberger*).<sup>liv</sup>

Whiteleg shrimp production is mainly located in the south of China: Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, and Shandong.<sup>lv</sup> It accounts for 76.8% of the national production of Whiteleg shrimp in China (5.4 MMT).<sup>lvi</sup> Oriental River Prawn is mainly cultivated in Jiangsu, Anhui, and Zhejiang; Giant River Prawn shrimp in Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang Province.<sup>lvii</sup> Whiteleg shrimp is the most productive shrimp among these species. According to the national fisheries statistical yearbook for 2020, the production volume for Whiteleg shrimp is 1,862,935 tons, accounting for approximately 72% of the production of whole shrimp. In the same year, Oriental River Prawn accounted for 9% and Giant River Prawn accounted for 6%.<sup>lviii</sup> Various pond production systems are used: about 15% of shrimp farms in China are intensive systems, which tend to produce products destined for export markets, while the remaining 85% are semi-intensive or extensive shrimp farms, which tend to supply to domestic markets.<sup>lix</sup> The traditional method of cultivating shrimp is to build a dam based on the natural topography of the intertidal zone of the sea area and use the dam as a farm. The workers develop levees and gates, open ponds, and repair ditches to farm shrimp. Intensive shrimp farms source broodstock from Specific Pathogen-Free (SPF) certified hatcheries in Hawaii.<sup>lx</sup>

China's shrimp aquaculture industry has continued to improve its cultivation, but many problems still need to be solved to achieve the equivalent amount of production in a sustainable way.<sup>lxi</sup> Shrimp farms are vulnerable to diseases such as red body disease and white spot syndrome but a 2016 study found that shrimp farmers on small and medium scale farms in Guangdong lack sufficient formal education and training to diagnose and manage diseases effectively and have little awareness of the occupational hazards associated with preparing medicated feed.<sup>lxii</sup> Practical guidelines for a new way of farming in organic aquaculture are needed.<sup>lxiii</sup> In response to these problems, China has been developing various methods of sustainable aquaculture for shrimp. The growing acceptance of the environmentally friendly integrated multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA) model can be attributed to its emphasis on efficiency and environmental and social concerns.<sup>lxiv</sup> This approach has gained significant popularity, particularly in the northern and central coastal

regions of China, where it has been carefully customized to suit local conditions and the unique characteristics of various organisms.<sup>lxv</sup>

## Processing and Trade

China is a major processing and trade hub in global seafood supply chains, importing and processing seafood for re-export to Europe, Japan, and the United States.<sup>lxvi</sup> China imports a significant amount of shrimp in addition to its domestic production. In 2021, the Chinese import market for shrimp was the world's third largest, following the U.S. and the European Union.<sup>lxvii</sup> It recorded the highest compound annual growth rate globally (CAGR) of 39.9% from imports valued at US\$475.7 million in 2014. China imported shrimp 258.1 million kilograms in 2018 and its volume increased by a CAGR of 62.7% from 2016 to 2018 when import volumes of shrimp registered 78.2 million kilograms in 2014.<sup>lxviii</sup> Ecuador, Argentina, and Thailand accounted for 58% of Chinese imports by value in 2018.<sup>lxix</sup>

The annual processing volume of shrimp in China in 2020 was 490,773 tons, an increase in volume of around 11% compared to 2019.<sup>lxx</sup> A brief procedure of the shrimp processing process is as follows: 1) Purchasing shrimp, 2) Washing shrimp, 3) Classification of standards, 4) Immersion in ice water, 5) Moisture control and measurement, 6) Processing of imported raw materials, 7) In warehouse packaging.<sup>lxxi</sup> Export processed products include anchovy shrimp, breaded shrimp, and cooked shrimp, but these account for a small proportion of processed products.<sup>lxxii</sup> Frozen shrimp accounts for more than 80% of China's total exports of shrimp, and about 16% are processed products with high added value, such as shell shrimp, raw tempura shrimp, and sushi shrimp.<sup>lxxiii</sup>

In addition to China's four major export markets of the United States, Japan, European Union, and Korea, China's corporates have opened new export markets in North America, Oceania, and ASEAN countries, such as Canada, Mexico, Australia, Malaysia, and Singapore, ranging from 6,000 tons to 10,000 tons.<sup>lxxiv</sup> The growth rate slowed following the economic downturn in 2018. Not only did the export growth rate to the U.S. decrease year-on-year, but exports to Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and China all declined. Moreover, the Sino-US trade war in 2019 further exacerbated China's shrimp exports.<sup>lxxv</sup>

# Due Diligence for Warmwater shrimp in China

## Important Country-Specific Considerations

- China's fishing industry is connected to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, human trafficking and forced labor, and poor working conditions.
- Ineffective enforcement of forced labor laws and lack of measures to protect workers, particularly in remote areas, and corruption in authorities increase the vulnerability of workers to forced labor, human trafficking, and child labor.
- Limited information was found on shrimp processing in China.

## Suggested Due Diligence Priorities & Questions

### Worker demographics

No information was found on the workforce in shrimp farming and processing in China, making it difficult to assess risks. Inequalities between rural and urban areas and the remoteness of production sites may increase the vulnerability of shrimp farm workers to exploitation. Claims regarding the use of ethnic minority Uyghur workers in seafood processing, including potentially shrimp processing, raises concerns regarding the possible presence of state-sanctioned forced labor in China's shrimp processing industry.

1. What is the proportion of temporary and contract workers to permanent workers?
2. What proportion of workers are internal migrants or ethnic minorities?
3. What proportion of shrimp farm workers are considered low-skilled?
4. What is the proportion of young workers (15-18 years old) in the workforce, especially in the rural areas? What protocols are in place to protect young workers from workplace hazards?
5. What kind of understanding do businesses have regarding the geography of their shrimp suppliers' sourcing locations?
6. Does production take place in areas where child labor is known to be more prevalent? E.g., rural western China.

## **Recruitment and contracts**

There is a lack of basic information on recruitment, employment contracts, and compensation practices in shrimp farming and processing in China. In China's fishing industry, workers hired by recruitment agencies are sometimes deceived about the terms of their contracts and made to pay recruitment fees.

1. Are workers hired directly and/or through recruitment agents? What procedures are in place to manage recruitment agents?
2. Does the recruitment process include a procedure for verifying that workers are not charged fees and a mechanism for workers to report violations?
3. Are workers employed using a formal contract written in a language that they understand?
4. Do you know if workers in your supply chain are paid at least the minimum wage in their country of employment?
5. Do you know how the workers are being paid, including what payment structure (e.g., fixed salary, piece rate) is used?

## **Grievance mechanisms**

In China, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) is the only trade union. The ACFTU does not get involved in most disputes and workers are subject to anti-union discrimination and intimidation.

1. Do workers in your operation/supply chain have access to a complaint mechanism?
2. Are there procedures to document, track, and resolve workplace grievances and complaints?
3. Are workers who submit complaints protected against adverse repercussions?

## China: Country-level indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Poverty levels in a country	<p>Human Development Index</p> <p>HDI Value (2021): 0.768</p> <p>HDI Rank (2021): 79</p> <p>China’s HDI value for 2021 places it in the ‘high human development’ category and positions it 79<sup>th</sup> out of 191 countries and territories.</p> <p>China’s HDI value for 2021 is above the average of 0.749 for countries in East Asia and the Pacific.</p> <p>China shows progress against each of the HDI indicators for income, health, and education from 1990 to 2021. However, when China’s HDI value is discounted for inequality, it falls to 0.651, a loss of 15.2% due to inequality in the distribution of the HDI dimension indices. The average loss due to inequality for high HDI countries is 16.8% and for countries in East Asia and the Pacific it is 15.9%.</p>	<p><a href="#">UNDP Human Development Index</a></p> <p><a href="#">UNDP Country Profile: China</a></p>
	<p>Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population): 0% (2020), showing decrease over 19 years from 49.8% (2000).</p> <p>The poverty headcount ratio is considerably lower in China than that of its neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan (2016) 54.5%</li> <li>• Bhutan (2017) 8.2%</li> <li>• India (2011) 21.9%</li> <li>• Kazakhstan (2020) 5.3%</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic (2020) 25.3%</li> <li>• Lao PDR (2018) 18.3%</li> <li>• Mongolia (2020) 27.8%</li> <li>• Myanmar (2017) 24.8%</li> <li>• Nepal (2010) 25.2%</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">World Bank</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Korea (No information available)</li> <li>• Pakistan (2018) 21.9%</li> <li>• Russian Federation (2020) 12.1%</li> <li>• Tajikistan (2019) 26.3%</li> <li>• Vietnam (2018) 6.7%</li> </ul>	
	<p>Global Hunger Index (2022): &lt;5</p> <p>China ranks 1-17<sup>th</sup> out of 121 qualifying countries. With a score of less than 5 out of 100, China suffers from a level of hunger that is 'low'.</p> <p>China scores at a lower rate of hunger than neighboring countries, Afghanistan, India, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Vietnam. China suffers from a similar level of hunger to neighboring countries, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia and the Russian Federation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan: 29.9%</li> <li>• Bhutan (No information available)</li> <li>• India: 29.1%</li> <li>• Kazakhstan: 5.9%</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic: 7.8%</li> <li>• Lao PDR: 19.2%</li> <li>• Mongolia: 5.7%</li> <li>• Myanmar: 15.6%</li> <li>• Nepal: 19.1%</li> <li>• North Korea (No information available)</li> <li>• Pakistan: 26.1%</li> <li>• Russian Federation: 6.4%</li> <li>• Tajikistan: 13.9%</li> </ul> <p>Vietnam (2018) 6.7% Note: GHI is scored on a 100-point GHI Severity Scale, where 0 is the best score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst (where <math>\geq 50</math> is 'extremely alarming').</p>	<p><a href="#">Global Hunger Index (GHI)</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
Country's position in the regional economic power system	<p>Comparing HDI ranking to other countries in the region</p> <p><b>China</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HDI Value (2021): 0.768</li> <li>HDI Rank (2021): 79</li> </ul> <p>Neighboring Countries:</p> <p><b>Afghanistan</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.478 HDI Rank (2021): 180</p> <p><b>Bhutan</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.666 HDI Rank (2021): 127</p> <p><b>India</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.633 HDI Rank (2021): 132</p> <p><b>Kazakhstan</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.811 HDI Rank (2021): 56</p> <p><b>Kyrgyz Republic</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.692 HDI Rank (2021): 118</p> <p><b>Lao PDR</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.607 HDI Rank (2021): 140</p> <p><b>Mongolia</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.739 HDI Rank (2021): 96</p> <p><b>Myanmar</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.585</p>	<p><a href="#">UNDP Human Development Index (HDI)</a></p> <p><a href="#">UNDP Human Development Index</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>HDI Rank (2021): 149</p> <p><b>Nepal</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.602 HDI Rank (2021): 143</p> <p><b>North Korea</b> Not Available</p> <p><b>Pakistan</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.544 HDI Rank (2021): 161</p> <p><b>Russian Federation</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.822 HDI Rank (2021): 52</p> <p><b>Tajikistan</b> HDI Value (2021): 0.685 HDI Rank (2021): 122</p>	
	<p>Comparing its recent economic growth to the general economic growth rates in the region</p> <p><b>China</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 8.1 (2021), compared to 6.0 (2019)</p> <p>Neighboring countries:</p> <p><b>Afghanistan</b> GDP Growth (annual %): -20.7 (2021), 3.9 (2019)</p> <p><b>Bhutan</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 4.1 (2021), 5.76 (2019)</p> <p><b>India</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 8.7 (2021), 3.74 (2019)</p>	<p><a href="#">World Bank Databank figures on annual economic growth</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p><b>Kazakhstan</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 4.3 (2021), 4.5 (2019)</p> <p><b>Kyrgyz Republic</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 3.6 (2021), 4.6 (2019)</p> <p><b>Lao PDR</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 2.5 (2021), 5.5 (2019)</p> <p><b>Mongolia</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 1.6 (2021), 5.6 (2019)</p> <p><b>Myanmar</b> GDP Growth (annual %): -18 (2021), 6.8 (2019)</p> <p><b>Nepal</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 4.2 (2021), 6.7 (2019)</p> <p><b>North Korea</b> GDP Growth (annual %): No Data</p> <p><b>Pakistan</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 6.5 (2021), 2.5 (2019)</p> <p><b>Russian Federation</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 4.8 (2021), 2.2 (2019)</p> <p><b>Tajikistan</b> GDP Growth (annual %): 9.2 (2021), 7.4 (2019)</p>	
	<p>Migration data</p> <p>The net migration rate (immigrants minus emigrants per 1,000 population) for China is -0.1 (2021).</p>	<p><a href="#">IOM Migration Data Portal: China</a></p>
	<p>Regional migration trends and patterns</p>	<p><a href="#">International Organization for</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>China is primarily a source country for migrants and to a lesser extent also a destination country for migrants. <a href="#">International Organization for Migration, No date</a></p> <p>Migration trends in China are largely driven by economic factors, with citizens migrating overseas in search of economic opportunities and internally from rural areas to manufacturing hubs in coastal areas.</p> <p>According to United Nations estimates, over 10 million Chinese nationals lived abroad in 2020. Chinese nationals typically migrate to Europe and North America for work and family reunification, and increasingly also for study. Many people migrate internally to other regions, with nearly 376 million people residing somewhere other than their household registration area in 2020.</p> <p>Increasingly, China has attracted foreign migrants, primarily from South Korea, the United States and Japan. In 2020, 1.4 million overseas residents were living in mainland China. This number includes 846,000 foreign nationals and 585,000 residents of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, but does not count people with irregular status. Around one-third of immigrants reside in the southern province of Guangdong, which is a major manufacturing area. Guangdong province has an especially diverse foreign-born population including people from Africa and South Asia. Foreign migrant workers include foreign experts, investors, and traders.</p> <p>Most recently, China’s migration trends have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. China’s “zero-COVID” strategy resulted in strict border restrictions, which significantly limited movement over 2020 and 2021. <a href="#">Migration Policy Institute, 28 January 2022</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Migration, No date, ‘China’</a></p> <p><a href="#">Migration Policy Institute, 28 January 2022, ‘China’s Rapid Development Has Transformed Its Migration Trends’</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Known human trafficking routes</p> <p>China is a source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking. Human traffickers exploit Chinese victims in China and abroad. Traffickers also exploit foreign victims in China and use China as a transit country to traffic foreign victims to other countries in Asia and in international maritime industries. Men from countries in Africa and Asia are subject to conditions indicative of forced labor on Chinese-flagged and Chinese-owned, foreign-flagged fishing vessels operating worldwide in China’s distant water fishing fleet. Women and girls from China are subject to sex trafficking within China and abroad. Women and girls from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa are subject to labor trafficking and sex trafficking in China.</p> <p>Trafficking for forced labor also occurs within China under the authority of the government. Since 2017, more than one million ethnic Muslims, including Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and ethnic Kyrgyz among others, have been detained in internment camps to erase ethnoreligious identities. Thousands of people have reportedly been transported to other provinces for forced labor under the premise of poverty alleviation, with thousands more convicted for dubious charges and transported to prisons throughout the country where they are subject to conditions indicative of forced labor. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>Many people remained ineligible to leave China through regular channels. Unmet migration aspirations laid the foundation for a smuggling industry involving transnational networks of Chinese brokers who sometimes demanded steep fees or forced service. However, intense Western media attention on human smuggling from China was</p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Migration Policy Institute, 28 January 2022, ‘China’s Rapid development Has Transformed Its Migration Trends’</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>arguably disproportionate to the problem’s scale.  <a href="#">Migration Policy Institute, 28 January 2022</a></p>	
<p>Governance practices and systems in a country (measured through indexes)</p>	<p>WGI (2021) Percentile Rank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice and Accountability: 5.31</li> <li>• Political Stability and Absence of Violence: 29.25</li> <li>• Government Effectiveness: 76.44</li> <li>• Regulatory Quality: 41.35</li> <li>• Rule of Law: 53.85</li> <li>• Control of Corruption: 58.17</li> </ul> <p>China’s percentile ranks range between 5.31 and 76.44. “Voice and Accountability” is the lowest ranked indicator at 5.31 and is ranked significantly less than the regional percentile rank for East Asia and Pacific of 55.35. Its other indicators rank in the mid-percentiles. In general, China scores lower than average for the six indicators compared to neighboring countries in the East Asia and Pacific region but higher in the Government Effectiveness category.</p> <p>Note: Percentile rank among all countries ranges from 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest) rank, where the higher the score, the better the governance.</p>	<p><a href="#">World Governance Indicators (WGI)</a></p>
	<p>Corruption Perception Index (2021):</p> <p>Score: 45/100</p> <p>Rank: 66/180 countries</p> <p>More than two-thirds of countries score below 50 on this year’s CPI, with an average score of just 43. China’s score of 45 places it above the average and positions it 66<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries and territories. China performs better than neighboring countries, Afghanistan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos,</p>	<p><a href="#">Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI)</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Vietnam. China performs worse than neighboring country Bhutan. China scores exactly the regional average of 45 for East Asia and the Pacific.</p> <p><b>Neighboring countries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan: 16/100</li> <li>• Bhutan: 68/100</li> <li>• India: 40/100</li> <li>• Kazakhstan: 37/100</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic: 27/100</li> <li>• Lao PDR: 30/100</li> <li>• Mongolia: 35/100</li> <li>• Myanmar: 28/100</li> <li>• Nepal: 33/100</li> <li>• North Korea: 16/100</li> <li>• Pakistan: 28/100</li> <li>• Russian Federation: 29/100</li> <li>• Tajikistan: 25/100</li> <li>• Vietnam: 39/100</li> </ul> <p>Note: Based on 0 = Highly Corrupt, 100 = Very Clean.</p>	
	<p>Basel Anti-Money Laundering Index (2022):</p> <p>Rank: 21/128 countries</p> <p>Overall score: 6.69/10</p> <p>China scores high middle range of the risk scale for Basel AML Index and scores higher than most of its neighboring countries, including Malaysia, Russia, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Bhutan, but lower than Myanmar.</p> <p><b>Neighboring countries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malaysia: 5.33/10</li> <li>• Bhutan: 6.15/10</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic: 5.92/10</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Basel Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Index</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mongolia: 5.86/10</li> <li>• Myanmar: 7.78/10</li> <li>• Pakistan: 6.16/10</li> <li>• Russian Federation: 5.24/10</li> <li>• Tajikistan: 5.83/10</li> </ul> <p>Note: Ranking is out of 128 countries; top possible score is 0 (low risk,), lowest score is 10 (high risk).</p>	
	<p>Global Rights Index (2023):</p> <p>Rating: 5 (No guarantee of rights.)</p> <p>With a rating of 5, China has “No guarantee of rights” for workers. China has a worse rating than the Asia-Pacific region, which is notably the second worst region in the world for workers’ rights, with a rating of 4.18. Rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining are restricted, and the right to strike is prohibited.</p> <p>Note: Countries are ranked from 1 to 5+, where five plus corresponds to “no guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the law” and 1 corresponds to “sporadic violations of rights”.</p>	<p><a href="#">International Trade Union Conference (ITUC) Global Rights Index (GRI)</a></p>
<p>Education and general literacy levels in a country</p>	<p>Adult literacy rates, among the population aged 15 years and older (2018): 96.84%</p> <p>Adult female literacy rate (2018): 95.16%</p> <p>Adult male literacy rate (2018): 98.47%</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan (2021): 37.26%</li> <li>• Bhutan (2017): 66.56%</li> <li>• India (2018): 74.37%</li> <li>• Kazakhstan (2018): 99.78%</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic (2018): 99.59%</li> <li>• Lao PDR (2015): 84.66%</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">World Bank Open Data</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mongolia (2020): 99.18%</li> <li>• Myanmar (2019): 89.07%</li> <li>• Nepal (2018): 67.91%</li> <li>• North Korea: (2008): 99.99%</li> <li>• Pakistan (2019): 58.00%</li> <li>• Russian Federation (2018): 99.73%</li> <li>• Tajikistan (2014): 99.80</li> <li>• Vietnam (2019): 95.75%</li> </ul>	
	<p>Primary school completion rates, total (% of relevant age group) (2009): 98.29%</p> <p>Primary completion rates, female (% of relevant age group) (2009): 97.66%</p> <p>Primary completion rates, male (% of relevant age group) (2009): 98.85%</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan (2019): 84.33%</li> <li>• Bhutan (2020): 82.07%</li> <li>• India (2020): 94.56%</li> <li>• Kazakhstan (2020): 102.00%</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic (2020): 108.14%</li> <li>• Lao PDR (2020): 89.02%</li> <li>• Mongolia (2019): 107.48%</li> <li>• Myanmar (2018): 95.40%</li> <li>• Nepal (2019): 120.45%</li> <li>• North Korea: (2009): 97.33%</li> <li>• Pakistan (2019): 73.27%</li> <li>• Russian Federation (2019): 105.22%</li> <li>• Tajikistan (2017): 94.91%</li> <li>• Vietnam (2018): 110.02%</li> </ul> <p>Note: “There are many reasons why the primary completion rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of primary education as well as children who entered</p>	<p><a href="#">World Bank Open Data</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of primary education.”</p>	
	<p>Lower secondary education completion rates, total (% of relevant age group) (2011): 99.52%</p> <p>Lower secondary completion rates, female (% of relevant age group) (2011): 100.51%</p> <p>Lower secondary completion rates, male (% of relevant age group) (2011): 98.63%</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan (2019): 58.31%</li> <li>• Bhutan (2020): 85.08%</li> <li>• India (2020): 84.58%</li> <li>• Kazakhstan (2020): 104.03%</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic (2020): 103.90%</li> <li>• Lao PDR (2020): 62.00%</li> <li>• Mongolia (2019): 94.79%</li> <li>• Myanmar (2018): 64.77%</li> <li>• Nepal (2020): 100.04%</li> <li>• North Korea: N/A</li> <li>• Pakistan (2019): 48.97%</li> <li>• Russian Federation (2019): 103.99%</li> <li>• Tajikistan (2017): 96.18%</li> <li>• Vietnam (2018): 97.66%</li> </ul> <p>Note: “There are many reasons why the rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of lower secondary education as well as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of lower secondary education.”</p>	<p><a href="#">World Bank Open Data</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>School enrolment, tertiary (2020): 58.42% gross</p> <p>School enrolment, tertiary, female (2020): 63.93%</p> <p>School enrolment, tertiary, male (2020): 53.57%</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan (2020): 10.56%</li> <li>• Bhutan (2020): 16.45%</li> <li>• India (2020): 29.44%</li> <li>• Kazakhstan (2020): 70.68%</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic (2020): 46.45%</li> <li>• Lao PDR (2020): 13.48%</li> <li>• Mongolia (2019): 68.75%</li> <li>• Myanmar (2018): 18.82%</li> <li>• Nepal (2020): 13.46%</li> <li>• North Korea: (2018): 26.83%</li> <li>• Pakistan (2020): 12.22%</li> <li>• Russian Federation (2019): 86.40%</li> <li>• Tajikistan (2017): 31.26%</li> <li>• Vietnam (2019): 28.64%</li> </ul> <p>Note: “There are many reasons why the rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of lower secondary education as well as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of lower secondary education.”</p>	<p><a href="#">World Bank Open Data</a></p>
<p>Attitudes towards migrant workers in a country’s population</p>	<p>Migrant Acceptance Index score: 5.11/9</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afghanistan: 2.51/9 (2016) 3.61 (2019)</li> <li>• Bhutan: N/A</li> <li>• India: 4.90/9 (2016) 4.01 (2019)</li> <li>• Kazakhstan: 4.28/9</li> <li>• Kyrgyz Republic: 4.59/9</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Gallup Migrant Acceptance Index, 2016</a></p> <p><a href="#">Gallup Migrant Acceptance Index, 2019</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lao PDR: N/A</li> <li>• Mongolia: 2.99/9</li> <li>• Myanmar: 2.96/9 (2016) 4.00 (2019)</li> <li>• Nepal: 6.28/9</li> <li>• North Korea: N/A</li> <li>• Pakistan: 2.47/9 (2016) 4.21 (2019)</li> <li>• Russian Federation: 2.60/9</li> <li>• Tajikistan: 4.39/9 (2016) 5.10 (2019)</li> <li>• Vietnam: 6.08/9</li> </ul> <p>China’s score of 5.11 out of 9 (2016) indicates that people in China exhibit a similar acceptance of migrants to other countries in the region and for all countries assessed, with the regional average for East Asia the world score both 5.29/9. China exhibits a higher acceptance of migrants than most neighboring countries.</p> <p>Note: Based on 138 countries surveyed in 2016; U.S. surveyed in 2017; top possible score is 9.0. The Index was updated in 2020. However, the publicly accessible 2020 data do not include updates to China’s score.</p>	
Legislation and regulation to protect migrant workers	<p>Coverage of legal provisions under the labor laws</p> <p>China signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1998, which commits States to respect individuals regardless of their nationality and other status under Article 2.1. However, China has not yet ratified the treaty. <a href="#">U.N. Treaty Body Database</a> , <a href="#">International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</a></p> <p>As of 2022, China has not signed or ratified the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. <a href="#">U.N. Treaty Body Database</a></p>	<p><a href="#">U.N. Treaty Body Database</a></p> <p><a href="#">International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</a></p> <p><a href="#">Migration Policy Institute (MPI), 28 January 2022, ‘China’s Rapid Development Has Transformed Its Migration Trends’</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>There is a lack of legal and institutional frameworks for foreign migration, which is attributed to political sensitivity to international mobility. The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the border-control measures. Immigrants and returning migrants do not receive benefits other than an economic one, and they hardly ever gain permanence residence. Moreover, an ill-suited and incomplete immigration framework becomes an obstacle for migrants settling in China. A restrictive visa and insufficient robust labor rights also prevent workers continue working in China. <a href="#">MPI, 28 January 2022</a></p> <p>The Employment Promotion Law (2007) prohibits discrimination against internal migrant workers who move from rural to urban areas by establishing that they receive the same labor rights as urban workers. <a href="#">Employment Promotion Law (2007)</a></p> <p>The Labor Contract Law (2007) requires that all employers provide and sign labor contracts with all workers, including migrant ones. <a href="#">Labor Contract Law (2007)</a>.</p> <p>Domestic rural migrant workers are often subject to low-paid subcontracting work. There is a pervasive problem of these workers getting delayed payments or unpaid altogether. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2022</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Employment Promotion Law (2007)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Labor Contract Law (2007)</a></p> <p><a href="#">'BBC, 2 September 2021, 'China steps in to regulate brutal '996' work culture'</a></p> <p><a href="#">Safeguard Report, 11 January 2022, 'China labor laws: An overview for global employers'</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2022, 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet)</a></p>
	<p>Access to social protection, health, and education</p> <p>Access to social protection, health, and education is unequal for internal migrants in China, and while policy improvements have been made, barriers to access still exist.</p> <p>Historically, China treated its urban and rural workers unequally regarding social benefits. Urban workers often received secure jobs with comprehensive social</p>	<p><a href="#">Lixiong, Y., June 2018, The Social Assistance Reform in China:</a></p> <p><a href="#">Towards a Fair and Inclusive Social Safety Net, United Nations Department of</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>benefits, while rural ones did not. Furthermore, in 1999, the Urban Minimum Living Standard program, or Dibao (低保), provided cash subsidies to urban Chinese in need. However, rural workers received little to no social benefits. These differences contributed to many rural workers migrating internally to urban areas. Over time, the Chinese government has created new regulations to provide social welfare to more people. The Dibao program was extended to rural workers in 2007, providing social assistance to poor rural households. <a href="#">Lixiong, Y., June 2018</a></p> <p>Many of China’s migrant workers are internal migrants who have moved from rural communities to urban ones for work. When workers move from one province to another, they often struggle to transfer their social security rights and benefits under the hukou system. This is due to several reasons. China lacks adequate levels of social security funds and administration to handle requests. Additionally, the social security information system across provinces is fragmented, preventing seamless communication for requests, and household registration restrictions prevent individuals from participating in social security in a new place of employment. <a href="#">Yinghua, Z., 2019</a></p> <p>The <i>Social Insurance Law (2010)</i> was introduced and ratified to merge previous and new social security regulations and apply them to all companies and organizations. This law covers all citizens and foreigners. It establishes a social insurance system to provide basic, medical, work injury, unemployment, and maternity insurance to all its citizens, regardless of employment status. Both employers and employees will contribute to the primary medical, work-related, and maternity insurance. The State will</p>	<p><a href="#">Economic and Social Affairs</a></p> <p><a href="#">Yinghua, Z., 2019, Improving social protection for internal migrant workers in China, International Labour Organization and International Organization for Migration</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>contribute to the social insurance system. These insurances are applied to each citizen regardless of where they are in the country. <a href="#">Social Insurance Law of the Peoples' Republic of China, 2010</a></p> <p>Access to social protection still varies by location and form of employment. While China has improved coverage of social insurance schemes for rural and urban workers, as well as those in the informal economy, differences in rural-urban regulations still limit access to social insurance for some workers. <a href="#">ILO, November 2020</a></p> <p>Internal migrants also face barriers to accessing health services although access is improving. In 2009, the government issued a health policy promoting universal access to health services and a Basic Public Health Service has since been established. However, gaps still exist in access to affordable health care for internal migrants. Many internal migrants are employed on informal temporary contracts and lack workplace health benefits such as medical insurance. Additionally, local health departments are funded based on the number of hukou residents. Therefore, areas with large numbers of non-hukou (internal migrant) residents may not have sufficient resources to care for all local residents. <a href="#">Zheng et al., 2020</a></p> <p>Access to education has also been identified as an issue for internal migrants moving from rural to urban areas. Internal migrants' children experience discrimination and are disadvantaged by the household registration system. <a href="#">Zhang and Sargent, 18 September 2020</a></p> <p>Internal migrants' children are entitled to free schooling in urban areas. However, illegal fees are often charged, prompting parents to enroll their children in private migrant schools, which have</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	poorer facilities and fewer resources. <a href="#">Stanford University, No date</a>	
	<p>Bilateral MOUs or other agreements specifically designed to protect migrant workers</p> <p>According to the ILO, China does not generally publish its agreements in the public domain, but there are some bilateral MOUs that protect Chinese migrant workers in nearby countries. <a href="#">ILO, 2015</a></p> <p><i>Employment Permit System (Republic of Korea)</i></p> <p>The Republic of Korea’s Employment Permit System bilateral MOU with China and 14 other countries: This agreement allows the Korean government to coordinate the recruitment, training, and supervision of migrant laborers from 15 countries in an effort to reduce harmful practices by corrupt private recruitment agencies. <a href="#">Andrees et al., 2015</a></p> <p><i>Industrial Training and Technical Internship Program (Japan)</i></p> <p>This Japanese program aims to recruit low-skilled workers and enter them into a training program to transfer Japanese knowledge and skills in industrial technology to developing countries. Foreign nationals enter a traineeship program and then become “technical interns” with the goal of returning to their home countries to use these new skills. Japan has signed this MOU with 15 countries. Most trainees come from China. Participants in the training program are supposed to receive legal residence status for up to three years and have equal protection to national workers.</p> <p>However, this program has faced criticism for accounts of forced labor, illegal recruitment fees, and</p>	<p><a href="#">ILO’s Bilateral Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding on Migration of Low-Skilled Workers: A Review (2015)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Andrees, B., Nasri, A., Swiniarski, P., 2015, Regulating labour recruitment to prevent human trafficking and to foster fair migration: Models, challenges, and opportunities</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report: China</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	inadequate enforcement. According to the 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report on China, companies that are a part of the program “have subjected PRC nationals to forced labor, often through debt bondage, in food processing, manufacturing, construction, and fishing.” <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a>	
Ratification of relevant international conventions and domestication of conventions into a national legal framework (Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor)	Convention No. 29 - Ratified, In Force	<a href="#">Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)</a>
	Convention No. 105 - Ratified, In Force	<a href="#">Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)</a>
	Convention No. 138 - Ratified, In Force	<a href="#">Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)</a>
	Convention No. 182 - Ratified, In Force	<a href="#">Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)</a>
	Protocol 29 - Not Ratified	<a href="#">Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour</a>

Indicator	Description	Sources
		<a href="#">Convention, 1930 (P29)</a>
	Palermo Protocol - Ratified	<a href="#">Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the 'Palermo Protocol')</a>
	Convention No. 188 – Not Ratified	<a href="#">ILO Convention 188 on Work in Fishing;</a>
	PSMA - Party to the PSMA, entered into force on 16 April 2025	<a href="#">The FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)</a>
	<p>Domestication into national legislation</p> <p>Some forms of human trafficking are criminalized by the Criminal Code. Penalties include imprisonment and fines. Labor trafficking is prosecuted under Article 244, with penalties prescribed of three to 10 years' imprisonment and a fine. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a> , <a href="#">The Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China</a></p> <p>China has a Compulsory Education Law (2006), which requires children from the ages of 6 or 7 years to receive and complete a nine-year compulsory education. <a href="#">China, Compulsory Education Law, 2006</a></p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report: China</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China</a></p> <p><a href="#">Compulsory Education Law of the People's</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Article 2 of the Regulations Banning Child Labor (2002) prohibits the employment of children under the age of 16 years, referring to it as child labor. Employers found to be using child labor can be fined and required to repatriate children to their home under the care of their parents or guardians. <a href="#">China, Regulations Banning Child Labour, 2002</a></p> <p>Article 58 of the Labor Law (2018) states that children between the ages of 16 and 18 years are classed as juvenile workers. Article 64 prohibits juvenile workers from working in certain forms of hazardous work including in mining. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2022</a> , <a href="#">Labor Law of the People’s Republic of China</a></p> <p>There is no national minimum wage. Instead, minimum wage rates are set at a provincial and local level according to standards set by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2022</a> , <a href="#">The Regulation of Minimum Wage, Minimum wage standards in regions of the country (as of April 2022)</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Republic of China, No, 52, 2006</a></p> <p><a href="#">China, Regulations Banning Child Labour, No. 364, 2002 [English translation]</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2022, 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Labor Law of the People’s Republic of China, No. 28, 2018</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Regulation of Minimum Wage</a></p> <p><a href="#">Minimum wage standards in regions of the country (as of April 2022)</a></p>
Regulation of recruitment	<p>Country’s government-sanctioned oversight mechanisms (regulations, accreditation schemes, inspection, etc.) of recruitment agents</p> <p><i>Employment Promotion Law of the People’s Republic of China (2007)</i></p> <p>The Employment Promotion Law states that recruitment agencies must provide accurate information about the jobs they are recruiting for.</p>	<p><a href="#">Employment Promotion Law of the People’s Republic of China (2007)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Labour Contract Law of the People’s</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>The law also establishes stipulations for recruitment agencies, including requirements for agencies to be licensed and have adequate staffing. Agencies may not keep laborer’s identification cards or charge a deposit to the laborers. <a href="#">Employment Promotion Law of the People’s Republic of China (2007)</a></p> <p><i>Labour Contract Law (2007)</i></p> <p>The Labour Contract Law established that workers were granted employment following a contract agreement. The Law provides several workers’ rights. The worker can revoke the contract. The worker also can quit without notice if the employer uses violence, restriction of personal freedoms, or intimidation and if the employer fails to provide appropriate compensation on time. The contract may end if the worker finds that the employer was deceptive during the hiring process. The law also provided a foundation to provide penalties for forcing a person to work using “violence, intimidation, or illegal restriction of personal freedom.” <a href="#">Labour Contract Law of the People’s Republic of China, No. 65, 2007</a></p> <p>According to the Global Slavery Index 2018, China does not have any laws to prevent recruitment fees. <a href="#">Global Slavery Index (GSI) (2018)</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Republic of China, No. 65, 2007</a></p> <p><a href="#">Global Slavery Index (GSI) (2018)</a></p>
<p>Enforcement of legislation for forced labor, human trafficking, hazardous child labor, migrant worker protections, recruitment and</p>	<p>TIP Report</p> <p>Evidence indicates that the enforcement of anti-trafficking and forced labor laws in China is ineffective.</p> <p>The US Department of State’s 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report assigns China a ‘Tier 3’ Ranking, stating: “The Government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and, even</p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report: China</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2022, 2022 Trafficking in</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
working conditions	<p>considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity, is not making significant efforts to do so; therefore the PRC remained on Tier 3.” <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>The Trafficking in Persons Report indicates that China has made some efforts to address human trafficking in recent years. In 2022, China adopted the Women’s Rights and Interests Protection Law, and prosecuted its first domestic trafficking case without a transnational component since 2017. In 2021 and 2022, the government reportedly increased funding for training for law enforcement on prosecuting trafficking cases. Authorities also supported and participated in training organized by international organizations on trafficking prevention and victim protection. Notably the government approved a new Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2021-2030) in April 2021 and maintained it in 2022. However, there is almost no mention of forced labor in the new action plan. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2022</a> , <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>Most significantly, the government has itself been implicated in a pattern of widespread forced labor involving minority ethnic and religious groups in Xinjiang. The government has strongly denied these allegations. Despite instituting new testing protocols in Xinjiang in an attempt to dispel these allegations of forced labor, observers expressed doubts about the credibility of the protocols. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2022</a></p> <p>Overall, China’s law enforcement efforts were maintained at an insufficient level in 2022. Although the Criminal Code criminalizes some forms of sex trafficking (prostitution) and labor trafficking, trafficking crimes are usually prosecuted under laws relating to other offences such as domestic violence,</p>	<a href="#">Persons (TIP) Report: China</a>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>which carry lesser penalties, and cases with indicators of forced labor are mostly handled as administrative issues through the Ministry of Justice</p> <p>Law enforcement data is not collected or reported in a comprehensive way. The authorities have not classified conviction data under relevant criminal law statutes in recent years. Meanwhile, reports of officials facilitating or benefiting from sex trafficking and forced labor continue. In the absence of published data on official complicity, investigation and prosecution efforts are difficult to ascertain.</p> <p>The authorities engage with foreign governments to investigate cases of trafficking in China and abroad. Anti-Trafficking Agreements are in place with several countries in the lower Mekong to jointly address trafficking, and some local governments are working with counterparts in bordering countries. But China’s complex law enforcement bureaucracy has hampered some joint operations. Efforts to identify and repatriate foreign trafficking victims were delayed or halted as law enforcement resources were diverted due to the pandemic. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>China’s narrow definitions of trafficking inhibit victim identification among men and boys over 14 years. Inadequate victim identification or referral procedures meant that some trafficking victims may have been arrested for crimes they were forced to commit. No data was reported on the provision of victim services in 2022. Victims are not required to testify in court, but some foreign victims are required to stay in the country to assist police in their investigation. Victims are entitled to request criminal prosecution and to seek compensation through civil actions against traffickers, however, the equitable</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>application of these benefits have been questioned by observers. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p>	
	<p>Child labor laws</p> <p>According to the US Department of State, the Chinese government enforced child labor laws when there were reports of child labor in the private sector. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2022</a></p> <p>Nevertheless, there are reports of children in forced labor involved in the production of various goods, sometimes because of arrangements between schools and factories. <a href="#">US Department of Labor, 2022</a></p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2022, 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet)</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of Labor, 2022, 2022 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor</a></p>
	<p>Global Slavery Index (2018):</p> <p>The 2023 GSI methodology states the Government Response Rating is “based on data collected on 141 indicators that are relevant to understanding how each government is tracking towards achieving 42 activities organized into five milestones. Each milestone represents an aspect of a strong government response to modern slavery; for example, supporting survivors to exit and remain out of modern slavery”.</p> <p>Est. no. of people living in modern slavery: 3,864,000</p> <p>Prevalence Index Rank: 111/167</p> <p>Vulnerability to Modern Slavery: 50.65/100</p> <p>Government Response Rating: CC/100</p>	<p><a href="#">Global Slavery Index’s overall ratings</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Note: The GSI government responses to modern slavery is presented as a percentage. Higher percentage reflects more action being taken and a higher percentage on the GSI is assumed to mean lower risk by the SSRT.</p>	
	<p>Documentation from national labor inspection and other law enforcement agencies</p> <p>China does not collect or report comprehensive law enforcement data.</p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report: China</a></p>
	<p>ILO</p> <p>Comments and observations from the ILO’s Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR)</p> <p>The Committee noted that the definition of discrimination does not cover all aspects of employment and occupation; therefore, the Committee asks the government to clarify the definition of discrimination and to identify to the extent which the Labour Law of 1994 covers. The Committee also noted that an internment programme has expanded since 2017; however, the government asserted that the programme benefits them in various ways. The Committee requested to revise policies of the activities for minorities to develop their abilities with their own aspirations and repeal provisions, which prevent enterprises and trade unions from improving the treatment in employment. <a href="#">Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111)</a></p> <p>In 2021, the ILO Committee of Experts noted the Chinese government argued that ILO’s comments on ethnic minority workers in Xinjiang is unreasonable. They also claimed that it contributes to the</p>	<p><a href="#">ILO Committee of Expert on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations</a></p> <p><a href="#">ILO Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (2022)</a></p> <p><a href="#">ILO Comments adopted by the CEACR: China</a></p> <p><a href="#">Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111)</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>eradication of poverty. Therefore, the Committee urged the Government of the Chinese to provide detailed updated information on the measures taken or envisaged to ensure that its national employment policy effectively promotes both productive and freely chosen employment and to indicate the manner in which the representatives of these groups have been consulted. The Committee requested various information about minorities to promote employment and job creation for migrant workers, including internal rural migrants. <a href="#">Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No.122)</a></p> <p>The Committee noted that interns working in conditions that do not meet national minimum standards for labor protection is over 50 percent, and many continued working involuntarily and forcibly. The committee requested the government to take measures to prevent students engaging in involuntary and hazardous work under poor conditions. The Committee also noted the trial measures to strengthen supervision work in labor laws with a focus on child labor in 2021. The Committee urged the Government to take steps to gather and make available sufficient and accurate data on working children as well as detected violations and penalties imposed to improve its transparency. <a href="#">Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)</a></p> <p>The Committee noted the council issued China’s Plan of Action against Human Trafficking 2021-2030 and the Child Development Outline of China for 2011-2020. The Committee requested the government to continue committing to investigations and prosecutions against the child-relevant crime. It also requested the Government continue to monitor the implementation and supervision of the laws to</p>	<p><a href="#">Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No.122)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006)</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>protect child domestic workers. <a href="#">Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182)</a></p> <p>The Committee expressed deep concern about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the protection of seafarers’ rights. The Committee also noted that the Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on the Working and Living Conditions of Seafarers (hereinafter, Regulations on seafarers’ conditions) only apply to seafarers working on board Chinese-flagged ships engaged in international navigation, the Committee requested the Government to indicate how it implements various provisions of the Convention regarding seafarers working on ships engaged in national navigation.</p> <p>The Committee also noted that crew service agencies might not charge seafarers who don’t have proper documents for providing employment opportunities, so it requested the Government to provide details on the scope of “other fees”. <a href="#">Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006</a></p>	
<p>Evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country</p>	<p>General evidence from other sectors</p> <p>The US Department of State’s 2023 Trafficking in Person Report outlines allegations against China of state-sponsored forced labor. According to the report, authorities in China have utilized discriminatory surveillance technologies, including facial recognition and DNA sequencing technology, as well as arbitrary administrative and criminal provisions to detain more than one million people from ethnic minorities, including Uyghurs, ethnic Hui, ethnic Kazakhs, ethnic Kyrgyz, ethnic Tajiks, and ethnic Uzbeks in internment camps called Vocational Skills Education and Training Centers, which the report alleges are designed to erase ethnic and religious identities under the pretext of</p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report: China</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2022, 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet)</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>“deradicalization.” In addition, the government has reportedly transported at least 80,000 individuals to other provinces for forced labor under the guise of poverty alleviation and industrial aid programs; and have convicted many, potentially thousands, more people, under spurious criminal charges and transferred them to urban prisons throughout the country, where they are subject to conditions of forced labor. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>Human trafficking, forced labor, and child labor have been linked to multiple sectors and goods in China.</p> <p>The Bureau of International Affairs (ILAB) identifies goods made by child labor and/or forced labor in China: 1) Artificial Flowers, 2) Bricks, 3) Christmas Decorations, 4) Coal, 5) Cotton, 6) Electronics, 7) Fireworks, 8) Fish, 9) Footwear, 10) Garments, 11) Gloves, 12) Hair Products, 13) Nails, 14) Polysilicon, 15) Textiles, 16) Thread/Yarn, 17) Tomato Products, 18) Toys. <a href="#">U.S Department of Labor, 2022</a></p> <p>The US Customs and Border Protection has issued Withhold Release Orders against 35 entities, all of which are at least partially active. Thirteen companies have been added to the list during the past five years and the associated products, including hair products, garments, apparel, cotton, tomatoes, tea, computer parts, downstream products, and silica-based products. <a href="#">U.S Customs and Border Protection, 2022</a></p> <p>China has not published any official statistics on child labor. <a href="#">ILO, January 2023</a></p> <p>A 2018 study found that in 2010 about 7.74% of children aged 10 to 15 years were working, and they worked for 6.75 hours per day on average, spending 6.42 hours less per day on study than other children.</p>	<p><a href="#">H.R. 6256</a></p> <p><a href="#">U.S Customs and Border Protection: Withhold Release Orders and Finding List</a></p> <p><a href="#">International Labour Organization (ILO), 6 January 2023, ‘Child labour in China and Mongolia’</a></p> <p><a href="#">Tang, C., Zhao, L., Zhao, Z., October 2018, Child labor in China, China Economic Review. Vol. 51, pp 149-166</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	About 90% of child laborers worked while still in school. <a href="#">Tang et al., 2018</a>	

Table 1: China - Country-level indicators

## China: Seafood industry-level indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
<p>Direct evidence of Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor</p>	<p>No direct evidence was found of hazardous child labor in China’s seafood industry, but there is evidence from several sources of human trafficking and forced labor in the country’s fishing industry including the suspected use of North Korean labor, as well as recent evidence from investigative journalism to suggest that state-sanctioned Uyghur forced labor and North Korean labor is used in the country’s seafood processing industry.</p> <p>The US Department of Labor’s 2022 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor highlights “Fish” from China as a good produced by forced labor. According to the findings, adults have been reported working in forced labor on China’s distant water fishing (DWF) fleet. Migrant workers, who are especially vulnerable to forced labor, comprise most of the crew on board DWF vessels. Workers recruited by agencies are sometimes deceived about the terms of their contracts, are required to pay recruitment fees, and experience poor living and working conditions on board. <a href="#">U.S Department of Labor, 2022</a></p> <p>In December 2022, the U.S. Department of the Treasury placed sanctions on several companies that own Chinese DWF vessels in response to allegations of forced labor and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Over 150 vessels were affected by the sanctions. From interviews, a wide range of alleged human rights abuses were found. Conditions reported by crewmembers included physical violence, nonpayment, denial of leave, malnutrition and the withholding of food, and health and safety issues, resulting in deaths of multiple workers. <a href="#">U.S Department of Treasury, 9 December</a></p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of Labor, 2022, 2022 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of the Treasury, 9 December 2022, ‘Treasury Targets Serious Human Rights Abuse Aboard Distant Water Fishing Vessels Based in the People’s Republic of China’</a></p> <p><a href="#">Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), 20 December 2022, ‘USA Sanctions Chinese Vessels Engaged in Human Rights Abuses and Illegal Fishing’</a></p> <p><a href="#">Seafood Source, 9 December 2022, ‘Pingtan Marine, Dalian Ocean hit with US sanctions’</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p><a href="#">2022</a> , <a href="#">EJF, 20 December 2022</a> , <a href="#">Seafood Source, 9 December 2022</a></p> <p>Crews aboard Chinese ships off the coast of Somalia were forced to work in harsh conditions without pay. Indonesian crew who worked on Chinese ships reported experiencing physical abuse, nonpayment of wages, and other coercive methods of control. Even after the workers’ contracts ended, they were forced to stay on board and work, and one of the crew members drowned while attempting to flee the adverse conditions. In August 2021, EJF was able to help repatriate the crew. The implicated vessels were also found to be fishing illegally in violation of local and Chinese fisheries regulations, with catches of endangered species and shark finning occurring. <a href="#">EJF, 26 October 2021</a></p> <p>Human rights violations and illegal fishing on Chinese vessels that import seafood to Japan were identified by EJF. Interviews with 15 crew working on seven Chinese tuna longline vessels linked to Japanese supply chains revealed excessive wage deductions and nonpayment of wages, physical and verbal abuse, excessive working hours, inadequate access to food and potable water, and industrial-scale illegal shark finning. <a href="#">Business &amp; Human Rights Resource Centre, 8 September 2021</a></p> <p>In October 2023, The Ocean Outlaw Project published the findings of an investigation into the conditions of China’s distant water fishing fleet and seafood processing industry. These findings corroborate the evidence reported above regarding human trafficking and forced labor in the country’s fishing industry and identify alleged forced labor in seafood processing.</p>	<p><a href="#">EJF, 26 October 2021, 'Fisherman Dies Trying to Escape Abuse Aboard Chinese Vessels Fishing Illegally in Somalia'</a></p> <p><a href="#">Business &amp; Human Rights Resource Centre, 8 September 2021, 'China &amp; Japan: NGO uncovers human rights violations and illegal fishing on Chinese ships linked to Japanese supply chains'</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Outlaw Ocean Project, October 2023, China: The superpower of seafood - Findings</a></p> <p><a href="#">Urbina, I., 9 October 2023, 'A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder', The Ocean Outlaw Project</a></p> <p><a href="#">EJF, February 2025, Trapped at sea: exposing North Korean forced labour on China’s</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>The investigation identified forced labor on 29 squid fishing vessels and the risk of forced labor on 59 other ships. Documented abuses included wage theft, physical violence, retention of identity documents, deprivation of food and drinking water, and restricted access to medical care. At least 24 workers were identified to be suffering from beriberi, a disease caused by malnutrition likely caused by excessive time at sea with limited access to fresh fruit and vegetables or vitamin supplements, of which at least 15 workers died. <a href="#">The Outlaw Ocean Project, 2023</a></p> <p>Aboard one Chinese squid jigger operating near the Falkland Islands, on which the Outlaw Ocean Project investigators were able to talk with crew, a Chinese deckhand is quoted as saying that many of the crew were being held on the vessel against their will. He reportedly said, “It’s impossible to be happy... We don’t want to be here, but we are forced to stay.” He estimated that around eighty percent of the other crew members would leave if given the choice and likened the experience to being isolated from the world and far removed from modern life. A second deckhand claimed to have had their passports confiscated. <a href="#">Urbina, 9 October 2023</a></p> <p>A 2025 briefing by EJF reveals the findings of an investigation that included interviews with Indonesian and Filipino crew who had worked on Chinese tuna longliners in the Indian Ocean between March 2019 and June 2024 as well as photo and video evidence. The investigation found that North Korean citizens were suspected to have been working aboard Chinese-flagged tuna longliners in the Indian Ocean. These workers reportedly spend up to a decade at sea under extremely harsh conditions, with most of their earnings remitted directly to Pyongyang. In many cases, they rarely set foot on land because captains</p>	<p><a href="#">Indian Ocean tuna fleet</a></p> <p><a href="#">Urbina, I., 9 October 2023, ‘The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish’, The Ocean Outlaw Project</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2025, 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report: China</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>transfer them to sister vessels before arriving in port, ostensibly to avoid detection by port authorities. When vessels do dock, other crew members may use mobile phones to contact family, but North Koreans are denied such means of communication. It should be noted that there were limitations to the investigation including that EJF were unable to speak to any North Korean workers suspected to have worked on the vessels to fully corroborate the testimonies collected. <a href="#">EJF, February 2025</a></p> <p>According to interviews with 19 Indonesian and Filipino shipmates, North Korean crew members—despite having their passports confiscated—are often among the most skilled laborers on board, having accumulated extensive experience at sea. However, they endure demanding work schedules with limited rest, sometimes sleeping only five to six hours per day. Their employment contravenes United Nations sanctions prohibiting member states from hiring North Korean workers, given concerns that the resulting remittances could support the country’s nuclear weapons program. The study identified at least 12 Chinese-flagged tuna longliners using North Korean labor between 2019 and 2022, including four vessels authorized to export fish to Europe and the United Kingdom. <a href="#">EJF, February 2025</a></p> <p>The Ocean Outlaw Project investigation also identifies the alleged employment of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in forced labor in seafood processing. According to the findings of the investigation, more than 1,000 people have been forcibly transferred by the Chinese government from Xinjiang Province to work for 10 seafood processing companies in Shandong Province since 2018. Five of those seafood processing companies have exported seafood to the United States, despite the United</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>States having prohibited the import of products made by workers from Xinjiang Province under the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act.</p> <p>All 10 of the seafood processing companies connected by the investigation to Uyghur forced labor have been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), and four have been certified by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), raising concerns raised about the reliability of social audits in the country and industry. <a href="#">The Outlaw Ocean Project, 2023</a></p> <p>The Ocean Outlaw Project investigation used the internet to help identify the apparent employment of Uyghurs at seafood processing plants. Among the evidence reported, videos uploaded to Douyin (Chinese social media) by Uyghurs between February 2021 and April 2023 appear to show Uyghurs at two seafood processing plants in China that export products to major brands throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. <a href="#">Urbina, 9 October 2023</a></p> <p>The findings also describe the use of North Korean labor in seafood plants in China’s border province Liaoning. The investigation claims that since 2017, at least three Chinese seafood-processing companies known to employ North Koreans have exported seafood to importers in the United States. <a href="#">The Outlaw Ocean Project, 2023</a></p> <p>The US Department of State’s 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report states that Uyghur and other Muslim ethnic minority workers and North Korean overseas workers are subject to conditions of forced labor in seafood processing. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2025</a></p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
<p>ILO indicators of forced labor and <a href="#">ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor</a></p>	<p>Evidence was also found relating to indicators of forced labor in China’s fishing fleet.</p> <p>The 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report states that men from Africa, Asia, and other regions experience conditions indicative of forced labor aboard Chinese-flagged and Chinese-owned, foreign-flagged DWF vessels. Indicators of forced labor include verbal and physical abuse, excessive working hours, poor living conditions, and isolation, among others. Some crewmembers are also forced to engage in IUU fishing. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>This is corroborated by other sources. For instance, the investigation reported by The Ocean Outlaw Project on October 2023 identified the risk of forced labor on 59 Chinese ships. <a href="#">The Outlaw Ocean Project, 2023</a></p> <p>In May 2021, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued a Withhold Release Order and blocked imports from a Chinese fishing fleet, Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd., based on maltreatment of the crew. During the investigation, CBP discovered indicators of forced labor: physical violence, withholding of wages, and abusive working and living conditions. Most of the affected workers were Indonesians. The impacted products included tuna, swordfish, canned tuna, and ingredients for pet food. Previously, Withhold Release Orders have not been formally issued against an entire fleet of fishing vessels before. <a href="#">US Customs and Border Protection, 28 May 2021</a> , <a href="#">The Washington Post, 28 May 2021</a></p> <p>While not a formal indicator of forced labor, IUU fishing is considered a correlated practice. Chinese fishing vessels engage in a range of IUU fishing practices. For example, China’s DWF fleet is reported</p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report: China</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Outlaw Ocean Project, October 2023, China: The superpower of seafood - Findings</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Customs and Border Protection, 28 May 2021, 'CBP issues Withhold Release Order on Chinese fishing fleet   U.S. Customs and Border Protection'</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Washington Post, 28 May 2021, 'U.S. bans seafood imports from a Chinese company, accusing it of using forced labor'</a></p> <p><a href="#">Insight Crime, 3 August 2022, 'Plunder and Danger on Argentina’s Sea Shelf'</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>to engage in IUU fishing off Argentina’s Atlantic Coast. A 2021 report by Oceana used satellite data to show that 433 Chinese-flagged vessels fished for 679,067 hours along Argentina’s EEZ border between January 2018 and April 2021, but the vessels often disappeared from tracking systems (referred to as ‘going dark’) by turning off their AIS. In addition, vessels were reported to be manipulating GPS positions and identification numbers. <a href="#">Insight Crime, 3 August 2022</a></p>	
<p>Fishing, aquaculture and processing regulations and policies</p>	<p>Labor-related fishing legislation</p> <p>The ILO’s NATLEX Database lists three pieces of legislation on fishers in China:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fisheries Act, 1929</li> <li>• The Fishermen Association Act, 1929</li> <li>• Fisheries Law of the People's Republic of China (PRC Presidential Order No. 34 of 1986).</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">ILO NATLEX Database</a></p> <p>In addition to environmental management, the Fisheries Act of 1929 is intended to improve fishers’ livelihoods. <a href="#">The Fisheries Act, 1929 (PDF of Act in English as amended to 21/08/2013)</a></p> <p>Among other duties listed by the Fishermen Association Act of 1929, fishermen associations are intended to safeguard fishermen’s rights and interests. <a href="#">The Fishermen Association Act, 1929 (PDF of Act in English as amended to 28/11/2012)</a></p> <p>However, these two Acts are enforceable only in Taiwan and are not applicable under the same jurisdiction as the Fisheries Law of the People's Republic of China.</p>	<p><a href="#">ILO NATLEX Database</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Fisheries Act, 1929 (PDF of Act in English as amended to 21/08/2013)</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Fishermen Association Act, 1929 (PDF of Act in English as amended to 28/11/2012)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Fisheries Law of the People's Republic of China (PRC Presidential Order No. 34 of 1986) (PDF of Law in English as amended to August 28, 2004)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Global Slavery Index (GSI) 2018 - Fishing</a></p> <p><a href="#">Yanan Yu, Marcin Lorenc, and Yude</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Article 1 of the <i>Fisheries Law of the People's Republic of China of 1986</i> states among its purposes “ensuring fishery workers' lawful rights and interests”. This law is meant to establish fishers’ working rights as well as regulate the economic activity in fisheries. It has chapters (Chapters II and III) for fishing and aquaculture. <a href="#">Fisheries Law of the People's Republic of China (PRC Presidential Order No. 34 of 1986) (PDF of Law in English as amended to August 28, 2004)</a></p> <p>The 2018 Global Slavery Index (GSI) for fishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Fisheries Policy (catch outside EEZ, distant water fishing, and subsidies) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Risk</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Wealth and Institutional Capacity (GDP per capita, value landed per fisher, and unreported landings) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Medium Risk</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>In 2021, the <i>Maritime Traffic Safety Law of the People's Republic of China</i> was revised, and the protection of crew rights was added for the first time.</p> <p>Chapter 1: General Provisions</p> <p>Article 6: The state ensures the working environment of seafarers, the Industrial Commission, and protects the rights and interests of seafarers by the law.</p> <p>Chapter 2 Modern, Offshore Duty-Free and Seafarers</p> <p>Article 14: The owner, operator, or manager of a Chinese ship shall apply for a maritime labor certificate for a ship on international voyages to the maritime administration. In order to obtain a marine labor certificate, a vessel must meet the following conditions:</p>	<p><a href="#">Shao(2022). Legal Challenges in Protecting the Rights of Cruise Ship Crew at the Post COVID-19 Pandemic Era, MDPI</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Maritime Traffic Safety Law of China(2021)</a></p> <p><a href="#">People's Republic of China Crew Rules (2020)</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>(2) The shipowner, operator, or manager has ensured that the crew's working environment, occupational health and safety protection, work and rest time, wages, living conditions, medical conditions, and social insurance comply with relevant national regulations.</p> <p>Chapter 9 Liability</p> <p>Article 97 : If there is a seafarer who works or holds a ship without a seafarer's license or health certificate, or if the qualification or health certificate does not meet the requirements, the maritime administrative agency imposes a fine on the owner. 10,000 - 100,000 RMB on the ship's operator or manager; 3,000 - 30,000 RMB on the crew; 30,000 - 300,000 RMB or even more fine on the owner, operator, or manager of the vessel if the circumstances are severe.</p> <p><a href="#">The Maritime Traffic Safety Law of China (2021)</a></p> <p>People's Republic of China Crew Rules stipulates the following rights:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The right to get a reward</li> <li>2. The right to claim sickness subsidies</li> <li>3. The repatriation of profit</li> <li>4. The right to leisure</li> <li>5. The right to earn insurance</li> </ol> <p><a href="#">People's Republic of China Crew Rules (2020)</a></p>	
<p>Enforcement and implementation of industry-specific regulations and policies</p>	<p>The 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report recommends that China should increase its oversight of labor conditions in the country's fishing industry by prohibiting illegal and unregistered recruitment agencies, enhancing data collection for fishing vessels and crew lists, conducting unscheduled inspections onboard vessels, and collaborating with port authorities in other countries to investigate forced labor on DWF vessels. No measures have been</p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Yu, Y., Lorenc, M., and Shao, Y., 2022. Legal Challenges in Protecting the</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>reported to screen or identify indicators of forced labor among migrant crew on China’s coastal offshore and DWF vessels. Chinese fishermen who were victims of forced labor reportedly did not receive protection services when they returned to China. China did not report whether programs started in previous years to reduce the vulnerability of informally or illegally employed foreign seafarers continued to be implemented. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>Enforcement of fisheries regulations and policies in China is unproductive. Although there are many departmental regulations in China, these regulations tend to regulate the management of crew from an administrative perspective, and the legislative level is low, the content of rights and interests is not explicit, systematic, and incomplete. Unproductive law enforcement increases the possibility of corruption.</p> <p>The legal effect of these regulations is low and cannot fully ensure the rights of the crew. Moreover, the existing labor laws in China do not consider the particularities of offshore work. They are devised for land-based jobs, leading to a poor working environment for international cruise ships. The low efficiency in protecting crew members' rights is attributed to overlapping functions and a lack of communication mechanisms between the government department, such as market regulation, social security, and human resources. <a href="#">Yu et al. 2022</a></p> <p>In 2021, China sent five government-appointed observers to work on high seas fishing vessels to collate data as part of an effort to ensure that Chinese vessels comply with Regional Fisheries Management Organizations. The observers, appointed by China’s Agriculture Ministry, traveled to</p>	<p><a href="#">Rights of Cruise Ship Crew at the Post COVID-19 Pandemic Era, Sustainability, Vol. 14 (6)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Seafood Source, 19 April 2021, ‘Milestone reached as China assigns first on-board observers to distant-water fishing vessel’</a></p> <p><a href="#">Huihui Shen and Shuolin Huang, January 2021. China’s policies and practice on combatting IUU in distant water fisheries, Aquaculture and Fisheries, Vol. 6 (1), Pages 27-34</a></p> <p><a href="#">Congressional Research Service, 2022, China’s Role in the Exploitation of Global Fisheries: Issues for Congress</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>the Pacific and Indian oceans to monitor the legality of catches. It is the first time that China dispatched observers to monitor transshipments by high seas vessels and showed China’s willingness to participate in international ocean governance, which prevents illegal fishing activities. Three Agriculture Ministry entities, including the Ocean Fisheries International Compliance Research Center, China Ocean Fisheries Data center, and the Ocean Fisheries Training Center, analyze the data collected during the inspection. <a href="#">Seafood Source, 19 April 2021</a></p> <p>The law for distant water fisheries still doesn’t exist, despite having Fisheries Law about illegal fishing. To combat IUU fishing, China’s government is conducting several practices. First, all DWF vessels are required to install a satellite-based vessel monitoring system, which should always be in continuous operation at sea. Second, a blacklist of DWF practitioners was issued by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2017, which sanction them from the DWF industry. Third, the government reduced subsidies by structural reforms in fisheries. Between 2016 and 2021, 78 DWF companies and 264 illegal fishing vessels had their fuel subsidies deducted or suspended. Fourth, the government has improved data collection and reporting. Fifth, the government increase in observer coverage ranging 5 to 10%, some even as high as 50% in target fisheries. Lastly, the China Distant Water Fisheries Association and Shanghai Ocean University provides regular training courses for skippers and crew members to develop their awareness of international and domestic fishery laws and regulations. <a href="#">Huihui Shen and Shuolin Huang, January 2021</a></p> <p>MARA and China's National People's Congress, the country's main legislative body, are making efforts to</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>update administrative measures and laws to discourage IUU fishing and establish stricter management norms in the distant-water fishing sector. In August 2019, MARA released the "Measures for the Supervision and Location Monitoring of Distant Ocean Fishing Vessels" requiring all fishing vessels approved by the Ministry to use location monitoring equipment for offshore fisheries production. These Measures mandate vessels to report their positions multiple times a day to MARA and provincial fishing authorities. The China Fisheries Association is entrusted with equipment maintenance, technical training, and standards setting for implementing the new position monitoring system. To enforce compliance, vessels that falsify location data or remove monitoring equipment improperly will forfeit all policy subsidies for that year.</p> <p>In February 2020, MARA issued additional "Regulations on the Management of Distant Ocean Fisheries," which includes the provision that vessels engaged in IUU fishing or failing to accurately report their positions could be placed on a blacklist. This blacklist would prohibit violators from applying for fishing licenses for five years. Additionally, in August 2019, MARA published a draft revision of China's 1986 Fisheries Law, aiming to clarify penalties for IUU fishing, introduce new enforcement mechanisms, and define law enforcement powers and standards for investigating and penalizing IUU violations. The proposed enforcement measures include vessel confiscation, revocation of company fishing licenses, and recording severe violations in China's Corporate Social Credit databases, which could expose violators to various additional administrative penalties.</p> <p><a href="#">Congressional Research Service, 2022</a></p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
<p>Access to workplaces for third-party monitors (trade union representatives, on-board observers, etc.)</p>	<p>Unknown.</p> <p>There is limited information about access to seafood workplaces for third-party monitors. Evidence suggests that even more commonplace activities like the use of fisheries observers for environmental monitoring are limited. In 2021, China dispatched five fisheries observers to high seas vessels operating in the Pacific and Indian oceans to observe transshipment activities for the first time.</p>	<p><a href="#">Seafood Source, 19 April 2021, 'Milestone reached as China assigns first on-board observers to distant-water fishing vessel'</a></p>
<p>Worker access to a functional grievance mechanism</p>	<p>The 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report states that Chinese fishers subjected to forced labor were unable to report abuses to local authorities or access protection services when returning to the country. However, the report does not specify the reasons for this. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2023</a></p> <p>The main way to report crew complaints is by phone, and some complaints are received through the director's mailbox, fax, or letter. Complaints are mainly obtained from the Crew Management Office of the Maritime Safety Administration of the Ministry of Transport, the Crew Management Office of the direct maritime organizations, the Crew Management Office of the shipping branch, and other related channels. Crew complaints have been addressed under the crew management office of the maritime unit. The department resolves major complaints through mediation, and illegal acts are subject to administrative disposition according to the Seafarers Rules.</p> <p>However, the current mechanism is insufficient due to various civil complaints and protection issues of seafarers. Sailors generally have a vague understanding of their rights. In addition, there are problems such as the method of protecting the rights and interests of the infringed is unclear and the effect</p>	<p><a href="#">Cao, Y. C., and Tang, S.Y., 2017. Research of Chinese seafarers complaints mechanism, Chinese Journal of Maritime Law</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>of protecting the rights and interests is insufficient. The current complaint-handling mechanism faces many problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting seafarers' rights and interests involve many departments, including maritime, human resources and social security, policing, arbitration, and courts. The cross-management of these related departments is managed with unclear responsibilities, preventing crew members from getting help in a timely manner when they need it. The China Maritime Safety Administration has not established a department in charge of protecting the rights and interests of seafarers in order to receive seafarers' grievances uniformly as the department in charge of seafarers. In the meantime, insufficient publicity and education activities made seafarers unaware of grievance channels. As a result, the rights and interests of seafarers are infringed, and there is no grievance channel, which becomes an obstacle to the protection of rights and interests.</li> <li>• Different departments' geographic locations, jurisdictions, and business responsibilities create barriers to coordinating the department's complaint handling.</li> <li>• In general, the handling of complaints by flight attendants is often handled by staff in the flight attendant management department or other related tasks who do not have a comprehensive understanding of relevant laws to protect the rights and interests of flight attendants. Lack of experience in handling complaints leads to a decrease in work efficiency.</li> </ul>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long waits for grievance feedback seriously impact the crew's willingness to file a complaint and reduce the credibility of competent authorities. The imperfection of these mechanisms results in a lack of oversight over the effectiveness of complaint-handling agencies. In addition, the department is unable to summarize complaint information, identify complaint hotspots and adjust how they are handled in a timely manner.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Cao and Tang, 2017</a></p>	
Access to join a trade union	<p>Unknown.</p> <p>No information was found on access to trade unions for seafood workers. However, there are significant concerns for workers' rights to freedom of association in general in China.</p> <p>Ethnic and religious minorities are persecuted and subject to mass detentions by the Chinese authorities. These communities are denied a collective voice. There are reports of workers being dismissed for trying to organize and arrested for "gathering a crowd to disturb social order". Many labor activists have been imprisoned or subject to harassment and surveillance, and the whereabouts of some workers involved in protests is unknown. <a href="#">ITUC, 2022</a></p> <p>According to the US Department of State, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) is the only trade union recognized by law. Strikes are not supported by law. All China's Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) has not been involved in a majority of disputes and collective actions in the major manufacturing zones where most private business is located and where most of the workers are internal</p>	<p><a href="#">International Trade Union Conference (ITUC), 2022, Global Rights Index (GRI) 2022</a></p> <p><a href="#">US Department of State, 2022, 2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet)</a></p> <p><a href="#">ITUC, No date, Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>migrant workers. Although the Trade Union Law states that trade union officers at each level should be elected, most officials are appointed. Independent unions are illegal and are viewed as a political threat. Workers do not have the right to strike, but there have been strikes that have led to increased wages or better working conditions in some industries.</p> <p>The ACFTU does not have to represent the interests of the workers in disputes, and all union activity must be approved by the ACFTU. While the official union leaders are meant to be elected, most are selected and approved by regional ACFTU officers and CCP authorities. <a href="#">US Department of State, 2022</a></p> <p>There are multiple reports of workers and labor activists being arrested and detained in relation to trade union activity in recent years. And workers have been dismissed by employers for trying to organize. In addition, human rights lawyers and families of workers involved in organizing and protesting have experienced harassment. <a href="#">ITUC, No date</a></p>	
<p>Participation in voluntary schemes and implementation of comprehensive corporate policies and strategies to combat forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor</p>	<p>Voluntary certification schemes for aquaculture have expanded their presence in China over the past decade with the support of local organizations and firms.</p> <p>In 2014, the Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the China Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Alliance (CAPPMA), a national non-profit organization under the Ministry of Agriculture of China, to jointly promote responsible aquaculture in China and worldwide. The two organizations agreed to work collaboratively to advance responsible aquaculture through the exchange of information and research. The agreement between GAA and CAPPMA</p>	<p><a href="#">Global Seafood Alliance (GSA), June 2014, 'GAA Signs MoU with China Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Alliance'</a></p> <p><a href="#">Global Seafood Alliance (GSA), August 2023, Global Impact Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">Global Seafood Alliance (GSA), No date, BAP Certified</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>was formalized during the inaugural China International Aquatic Products Exposition and the 6th International Shrimp Industry Development Forum held in Zhanjiang, China, on June 18.</p> <p>Peter Redmond, VP of market development for GAA's Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) division, emphasized the significance of the agreement, acknowledging CAPPMA's role in the domestic and export markets. Under the MoU, CAPPMA agreed to assist in identifying and enrolling processors, farms, feed mills, and hatcheries in the BAP certification program to increase the number of BAP-certified facilities in China. In addition, CAPPMA will seek GAA's guidance and expertise in establishing good aquaculture practice standards in China, encompassing areas such as food safety, environmental responsibility, social responsibility, and animal welfare. <a href="#">GSA, June 2014</a></p> <p>In its most recently available Global Impact Report, the Global Seafood Alliance (GSA) reports that GSA's China office held a seminar on March 7 in Nanjing to educate producers and retailers about the BAP farm standard. More than 40 representatives from farms and retailers attended. <a href="#">GSA, August 2023</a></p> <p>As of August 2023, there are 230 BAP-certified facilities in China, of which there are 139 farms producing a variety of species, including 9 shrimp producing farms. <a href="#">GSA, No date</a></p> <p>In 2016, the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) established a collaboration with Qingdao Tao Ran Environmental Science and Technology (Tao Ran), an environmental firm based in China, to expedite the expansion of the ASC program in China. Tao Ran was commissioned to lead the implementation of</p>	<p><a href="#">Aquaculture Producers</a></p> <p><a href="#">Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), 14 September 2016, ASC announces partnership for development in China</a></p> <p><a href="#">Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), No date, Find a farm</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), No date, AIP Directory - Hainan Tilapia</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), No date, 'Success Story Zonal Aquaculture Management in Hainan, China'</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>strategies and promote the adoption of ASC farm standards. Qing Fang, the aquaculture program leader at Tao Ran, highlighted the benefits of integrating the ASC's certification and labeling program in China, saying the collaboration could enhance the health of China's aquatic ecosystems by incentivizing better environmental practices and improved conditions for workers and surrounding communities. <a href="#">ASC, 14 September 2016</a></p> <p>As of August 2023, there are 37 ASC-certified facilities in China, including three certified farms producing whiteleg shrimp. <a href="#">ASC, No date</a></p> <p>One of only a small number of Aquaculture Improvement Project (AIP)s currently operating globally is located in Hainan province, China. The Hainan Tilapia AIP launched in 2014. Participants include farmers and a farmer association, sustainability organizations, Hainan University, and several companies.</p> <p>The AIP program commenced with a total of 10 pilot farms located within Hainan. The primary objective was to address issues pertaining to sustainability, environmental impact mitigation, and disease control through the implementation of zonal management strategies.</p> <p>Since then, several of the farms have become BAP-certified and pilot farms are operating the Hainan Tilapia Sustainability Alliance (HTSA)'s Code of Good Practice. More than 500 farmers have undergone comprehensive technical and institutional training provided by the Association. <a href="#">SFP, No Date</a>, <a href="#">SFP No Date</a></p>	

Table 2: China - Seafood industry-level indicators

## China: Aquaculture Indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Direct evidence of Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	No direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in farmed shrimp production in China was found.	
ILO indicators of forced labor and <a href="#">ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor</a>	No evidence found.	
Labor supply in the domestic market	<p>Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a shortage of skilled workers in China’s shrimp farming industry. Difficulties recruiting farm labor due to the remote locations of shrimp farms have prompted employers to increase wages and improve working conditions to attract workers. <a href="#">Anonymized, July 2023</a></p> <p>A 2016 study of shrimp farmers in major shrimp producing area, Guangdong province, found that while shrimp farmers in the study had several years of experience in aquaculture, only managers at large scale farms had any formal education and training. <a href="#">Li et al., 2016</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Anonymized, July 2023, External Reviewer feedback. [Email] (Personal communication, 12 July 2023)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Li, K., Liu, L., Clausen, JH., Lu, M. and Dalsgaard, A., 2016, Management measures to control diseases reported by tilapia (Oreochromis spp.) and whiteleg shrimp (Litopenaeus vannamei) farmers in Guangdong,</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
		<a href="#">China, Aquaculture, vol. 457, pp. 91-99</a>
Aquaculture Characteristics	<p>Isolation of the site</p> <p>Anecdotal evidence suggests that shrimp farms are sited in remote working locations. <a href="#">Anonymized, July 2023</a></p> <p>In 2020, the media reported that the Xinjiang Benteng Biotechnology Co. aquaculture firm intended to conduct a pilot project for cultivation of Giant tiger prawn (<i>Penaeus monodon</i>) in a remote area of the Xinjiang region in the lower reaches of the Pamir Mountains, near the Silk Road city of Kashgar. <a href="#">Seafood Source, 21 January 2020</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Anonymized, July 2023, External Reviewer feedback. [Email] (Personal communication, 12 July 2023)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Seafood Source, 21 January 2020, 'Shrimp farm to open in remote, restive Xinjiang area of China'</a></p>
	<p>Child-adult ratio in aquaculture communities</p> <p>Unknown.</p>	
Workforce Characteristics	<p>The proportion of low-skilled migrant workers</p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p>No evidence of the presence of migrant workers was found. Audit reports for ASC-certified whiteleg shrimp farms observed that regular and temporary employees on certified farms were from surrounding communities and villages. Only one staff member from a non-local community was found and they were filling a technical position. (See audit reports – Intertek Testing Services Ltd.)</p> <p>Nonetheless, the evidence relates to only three shrimp farms. Levels of internal migration are high in China and therefore, the presence of domestic</p>	<p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd, 21 December 2022, Re-certification report (Audit report-Beilangwa ASC-F-80014 2022RA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd, 21 December 2022, Re-certification report (Audit report-Jinshuiyuan ASC-F-80015 2022RA)</a></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>migrant workers on shrimp farms can't be excluded as a possibility.</p>	<p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd., 14 January, Initial Audit Report – Final (Audit report- Maoming Xinzhou-ASC-F-80028 2021IA)</a></p>
	<p>Legal presence/regularity of migrant workers</p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p>No evidence of the presence of migrant workers was found. Audit reports for ASC-certified whiteleg shrimp farms observed that regular and temporary employees on certified farms were Chinese citizens from surrounding communities and villages who do not require work permits. (See audit reports – Intertek Testing Services Ltd.)</p> <p>Nonetheless, the evidence above relates to only three shrimp farms and may not be representative of the wider shrimp farming industry.</p>	<p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd, 21 December 2022, Re-certification report (Audit report-Beilangwa ASC-F-80014 2022RA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd, 21 December 2022, Re-certification report (Audit report-Jinshuiyuan ASC-F-80015 2022RA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd., 14 January, Initial Audit Report – Final (Audit report- Maoming Xinzhou-ASC-F-80028 2021IA)</a></p>
<p>Recruitment and Contracts</p>	<p>Use of recruitment agents</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Unknown.	
	<p>Contract-and compensation- related regulations and practices</p> <p>Audit reports for ASC-certified whiteleg shrimp farms indicate that wages on certified farms exceed local wage requirements. The employee's salary consists of basic salary, plus position salary, seniority allowance, full time bonus, and overtime allowance, etc. Workers receive the same basic salary, with increases for seniority of posts. The basic salary and the post salary exceeds local minimum wage standards. In Wudi County. Shandong province, the minimum monthly wage standard is 1,700 RMB, which compares to a basic salary on the assessed farms of more than 2,000 RMB and a post salary of more than 3,000 RMB. And in Maoming City, Guangdong province, the minimum salary is 1,410 RMB, while workers earn about 3,000 RMB to 6,000 RMB per month. (See audit reports – Intertek Testing Services Ltd.)</p> <p>There is some evidence of temporary workers being hired. Audit reports describe a situation where villagers from surrounding communities are employed by shrimp buyers or subcontracted to participate in shrimp harvesting and sorting as temporary workers. The employment conditions for these workers may differ. (See audit reports – Intertek Testing Services Ltd.)</p> <p>Nonetheless, the evidence above relates to only three shrimp farms and may not be representative of the wider shrimp farming industry.</p>	<p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd, 21 December 2022, Re-certification report (Audit report-Beilangwa ASC-F-80014 2022RA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd, 21 December 2022, Re-certification report (Audit report-Jinshuiyuan ASC-F-80015 2022RA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Intertek Testing Services Ltd., 14 January, Initial Audit Report – Final (Audit report- Maoming Xinzhou- ASC-F-80028 2021IA)</a></p>

Table 3: China - Aquaculture Indicators

## China: Processing indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	No direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in the processing of farmed shrimp in China was found. However, the findings of a 2023 investigative journalism report by The Ocean Outlaw Project connect seafood processing companies exporting shrimp, in addition to squid, cod, pollock, salmon, and crab to the employment of Uyghur workers (considered forced labor) since 2018. Much of the investigation is focused on squid, with only one mention of shrimp and no further details pertaining to shrimp processing provided. <a href="#">Urbina, 9 October 2023</a>	<a href="#">Urbina, I., 9 October 2023, 'The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World's Fish', The Ocean Outlaw Project</a>
ILO indicators of forced labor and ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor	No evidence found.	
Processing Characteristics	<p>Processing stage</p> <p>Evidence suggests that primary processing of shrimp is mainly undertaken for export products, with less than 20% of shrimp exports undergoing secondary processing. Frozen shrimp accounts for more than 80% of China's total shrimp exports. Value-added shrimp, including shell shrimp, raw tempura shrimp, and sushi shrimp, accounts for about 16% of exports are processed products with high added value, such as shell shrimp, raw tempura shrimp, and sushi shrimp. <a href="#">NetEase, 2021</a></p> <p>1. Preparations before processing</p> <p>1.1 Allocate processing personnel according to the processing ability of shrimp, conduct physical</p>	<p><a href="#">NetEase, 2021, 2019 the development report of the Whiteleg shrimp industry—process and trade market</a></p> <p><a href="#">China eel, 2014, Regulation for export cultured shrimp processing</a></p>

	<p>examinations and technical training according to regulations, and familiarize themselves with processing standards, standards, and related precautions.</p> <p>1-2. Cleans and sterilizes equipment</p> <p>1-3. Sanitary checks are performed on the water used for treatment to ensure that the water source is sufficient and meets sanitary requirements.</p> <p>1-4. It performs the necessary frosting on the cooling pipes of the deep freezer, cleans the refrigerator, and debugs the refrigeration machinery and equipment to ensure the smooth running of production.</p> <p>1-5. Recheck hygiene in processing and packaging rooms</p> <p>2. Raw Shrimp Treatment:</p> <p>2-1. Acceptance and storage: After each batch of shrimp enters the factory, quality, hygiene, ice melting, and packaging are checked in time. In the case of raw shrimp that cannot be supplied and processed on time, proactive measures must be taken to maintain freshness, such as timely entry into a fresh storage warehouse at 0-4°C or an icebreaker of 3 cm or less in a 1:3 ratio.</p> <p>2-2. Rinse: Rinse the raw shrimp with clean water that meets hygienic standards to remove debris such as crushed ice, sediment, and seaweed.</p> <p>2-3. Classification and selection: Washed shrimp are selected according to product quality standards, and raw materials such as head shrimp, headless shrimp, shrimp meat, and shrimp balls are separated, then head shrimp are processed first, and is followed by headless shrimp.</p>	
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	<p>3. Processing of dried shrimp.</p> <p>Sea-caught shrimp and large farmed shrimp are generally processed by dry-freezing.</p> <p>Process working process:</p> <p>3-1. Washing: Carefully rinse the selected raw shrimp in clean, fresh water to maintain the cleanliness of the last water. Water conditioning: Put the washed shrimp through a clean sieve and adjust the water for 5 minutes.</p> <p>3-2. Measurement: Measure according to the specifications of the shrimp and separate the various specifications.</p> <p>3-3. Immersion: This process is done according to customer requirements.</p> <p>3-4. Packaging: According to the packaging specifications with the shrimp head, put the shrimp into a special small box, put the plastic paper into the box, put the shrimp, then fold the plastic paper, cover the shrimp body and close the lid.</p> <p>3-5. Freezing: Shrimp in boxes are immediately sent to the freezer to be frozen to a core temperature of -18°C or lower. <a href="#">China eel, 2014</a></p>	
	<p>Consolidation and vertical integration</p> <p>Evidence suggests that shrimp processing in China involves many companies and/or processing facilities. A Vietnamese industry executive is quoted in a media article from 2022 saying, “China has more than 1,000 shrimp processing factories which earn huge profit by serving the domestic market.” <a href="#">Vietnam Fisheries Magazine, 3 November 2022</a></p> <p>Large-scale shrimp enterprises are expected to form an integrated industrial chain, opening up the entire</p>	<p><a href="#">Vietnam Fisheries Magazine, 3 November 2022, ‘Shrimp exports to China halt their rise’</a></p> <p><a href="#">Development Trend of White Shrimp Seed Industry</a></p>

	<p>shrimp industry supply chain and more closely coordinating the internal development of the enterprise.</p> <p>Various specialized enterprises in the shrimp industry chain, such as shrimp farming, plant nursery, aquaculture facilities, processing, and trading companies, will find a further way to cooperate between the enterprises.</p>	
	<p>Domestic versus export</p> <p>While China's shrimp production has increased by about 1.1 million tons in 11 years, the per capita consumption level of shrimp continued to grow due to the high domestic consumption. The per capita consumption level of shrimp continues to increase, and domestic production can no longer fully meet the demand. In 2018, China's imports from Ecuador, India, Argentina, and Vietnam reached 258,000 tons, and per capita shrimp consumption exceeded 3.5 kg, resulting in total imports exceeding total exports.</p> <p>Considering the international trade situation, Chinese shrimp exporters have made continuous efforts to diversify the market in recent years. In addition to the four major export markets, such as the United States, Japan, the European Union, and Korea, China opened new markets in North America, Oceania, and Asian countries such as Canada, Mexico, Australia, Malaysia, and Singapore. Exports to these new markets range from 6,000 tons to 10,000 tons.</p>	<p><a href="#">2019 China White Shrimp Industry Development Report 3 - Processing Trade and Market Consumption</a></p>
Workforce Characteristics	<p>Skilled versus low-skilled</p> <p>Unknown.</p>	
	<p>The proportion of women in the workforce</p> <p>Unknown.</p>	

	The proportion of migrant versus local workers Unknown.	
	The proportion of minority or indigenous workers Unknown.	
	The proportion of temporary and contract versus permanent workers Unknown.	
	Workers' origins Unknown.	
	Migrant worker language (vs. dominant language in the industry) Unknown.	
	GDP per capita of processing country and main worker source country Unknown.	
	Legal presence (regularity) of migrant workers Unknown.	
	The ability of migrant workers to change jobs Unknown.	
Recruitment and Contracts	Use of contractors and recruitment agents Unknown.	
	Compensation method Unknown.	

Table 4: China - Processing indicators

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