



# SEA FISHERIES PROCESS EVALUATION

Evaluation of the SEA Fisheries Project: A Multistakeholder Initiative to Strengthen Coordination for Combatting Trafficking in Fisheries in Southeast Asia

*Final Report*

**March 2019**

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## **Evaluation of the SEA Fisheries Project: A Multistakeholder Initiative to Strengthen Coordination for Combatting Trafficking in Fisheries in Southeast Asia**

### **FINAL REPORT**

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### **DISCLAIMER**

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Department of State or the United States Government.

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# ACRONYMS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COMMIT	Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking
CSO	Civil society organization
EU	European Union
GKII	Group Key Informant Interview
GOI	Government of Indonesia
ILO	International Labour Organization
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IUU	Illegal, unreported, and unregulated
KII	Key informant interview
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
MSI	Multistakeholder initiative
MSRCB	Multistakeholder regional coordinating body
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
RCB	Regional Coordinating Body
SEA	Southeast Asia
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
TIP	Trafficking in persons
TIP Office	U.S. State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Office at the U.S. Department of State commissioned EnCompass LLC to conduct a process evaluation during early formation of the SEA Fisheries project, a novel approach to combat trafficking in the fisheries industry in Southeast Asia. The SEA Fisheries project aims to establish and sustain a broad regional multistakeholder coordinating body (MSRCB), also known as the SEA Forum for Fishers, across ten ASEAN countries to improve and address gaps in anti-TIP coordination and information sharing efforts and to improve the efficiency and efficacy of existing national and regional initiatives designed to combat human trafficking in SEA fisheries industries.

## Methods

In collaboration with the TIP office and the ILO SEA Fisheries project team, the evaluation team developed four overarching evaluation questions, listed in the box at right, and used five methods to answer the evaluation questions:

*In-Country Data Collection:* 79 interviews conducted with government, employer, labor, academic, private industry, civil society and international organization stakeholders during field visits to four countries in Southeast Asia.

*Remote Interviews:* 15 interviews conducted with government, employer, labor, academic, private industry, civil society and international organization stakeholders.

*Survey:* Online survey to all participant emails (94) from the November 2018 regional meeting

*Meeting Observations:* Observations of three national and two regional convenings, including plenary, working group, and drafting committee meetings.

*Document Review:* Review of relevant ILO and TIP Office documents, newly developed website pages, and Twitter feed; other regional coordinating body and multistakeholder initiative documents, and SEA TIP, illegal fisheries and SEA fisheries industry related documents, academic studies, NGO studies, news articles and press release for related context and developments in the region.

This project represents a unique approach to combatting TIP at a regional level for a complex industry and supply chain for trafficking. This developmental process evaluation examined strategies and processes implemented during the formative stages of MSRCB development. The evaluation was conducted to support achievement of the TIP Office's SEA Fisheries project objectives through timely

## EVALUATION QUESTIONS

**Strategy and Design:** To what MSRCB likely to affect TIP in SEA fisheries? How does the strategy align with national and regional needs and context?

**Building the MSRCB:** How is the MSRCB being developed and what is needed to strengthen its development?

**Implementation:** What has been learned about how the MSRCB can, should, and will operate within the SEA Fisheries context to complement mechanisms already in place? How is "ownership" of MSRCB participants being developed and maintained?

**Early Success/ Potential for Results:** What early successes are likely for the MSRCB? What results seem plausible over the next few years and how will these be measured?

sharing of independently collected evidence and considerations that add value to the evolving project design. The evaluation further supports TIP Office efforts by providing suggested considerations if attempting to expand, replicate, or adapt the MSRCB concept to combat fisheries-related TIP in other regions.

## **KEY EVALUATION TAKE-AWAYS**

Based on the evaluation findings and conclusions, four key messages emerge for the SEA Fisheries project:

1. The SEA Fisheries Forum for Fishers (the MSRCB) is filling a critical and unique role for the region and appears to be occurring at the right place at the right time
2. The TIP Office, ILO, and Government of Indonesia funding and strategic sense has facilitated the successful formation of an MSRCB to combat TIP in fisheries, having buy-in and agreement on objectives and structure from a broad swath of leverage-holding stakeholders and countries
3. The TIP Office and ILO project team's proactive approach to ensuring broad stakeholder engagement throughout MSRCB development and formation, and responsiveness to evolving regional developments and to unforeseen challenges associated with a limited budget and a complex stakeholder set, were key to successes realized to date
4. Additional funding, time, ongoing communications and quick wins shared and valued by key stakeholders will be key to managing MSRCB sustainability challenges

The evaluation was divided into two phases covering a 15-month period of a three-year project. Phase 1 evaluation activities investigated processes used to socialize stakeholders to the MSRCB concept and gain early buy-in from key groups and countries. Phase 2 focused on processes designed to form, operationalize, and gain agreement across a broad set of stakeholders and countries about the structure and functions of the MSRCB, and early efforts to ensure the MSRCB's sustainability. Below are findings aligned to each evaluation theme, followed by overarching conclusions and recommendations. Findings, conclusions, recommendations and considerations are based upon evidence and learning emerging from both phases of the evaluation.

## **Findings**

### ***Strategy/ Design***

1. Respondents across countries and stakeholder groups find value in the goals and objectives of the SEA Forum for Fishers. Stakeholders believe the forum fills existing gaps and can improve coordination and standards in combatting trafficking in persons in Southeast Asian fisheries.

### ***Building the MSRCB***

2. The ILO project team, working cooperatively with the TIP Office, consistently worked with stakeholders to secure buy-in, convened national and regional meetings, and utilized short-term staffing to increase commitment across SEA countries.



3. Stakeholders across the region reported that the participatory, iterative approach used to develop goals, objectives and structure for the SEA Forum for Fishers helped to create a forum reflecting their views.
4. Lessons from the March 2018 regional convening were incorporated into the November 2018 regional convening. Both events served a broader strategy to develop the SEA Forum for Fishers.
5. ILO and the TIP Office have worked to address resource constraints and communication challenges across a diverse and dispersed set of stakeholders, and ILO has established a SEA Forum for Fishers website as a central platform for forum communications.
6. Stakeholders recognize ILO as a successful convener who can bring together diverse stakeholders across the region to address regional anti-trafficking issues

### ***Implementation***

7. Stakeholders across regions reported broad agreement and appreciation for the increasingly diverse composition of the SEA Forum for Fishers.
8. November 2018 convening participants expressed agreement and early commitment to the structure of the SEA Forum for Fishers, even though some held mixed views about the drafting process that led to the resulting structure.
9. November 2018 convening participants were generally satisfied with the topics for forum working groups and saw value in the role of technical advisors to provide expertise within those groups.
10. Stakeholder perceptions improved regarding communications by the ILO project team between March and November 2018 regional convenings. Participants emphasized an ongoing need for consistent and thorough communications to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.

### ***Early Success/ Potential for Results***

11. Stakeholders view demonstrated progress in working group functionality and usefulness as one key indicator of forum sustainability and have some uncertainty about how the forum will operate beyond the November 2018 convening.
12. Over the long-term, stakeholders reported SEA Forum for Fishers sustainability would rely on the forum's ability to remain relevant and useful to the diverse set of stakeholders and to manage and adapt to changing regional and national contexts.
13. The TIP Office, ILO and most stakeholders noted that successful operationalization and sustainability of the SEA Forum for Fishers requires sufficient funding and a more secure timeline.
14. The ILO project team plans to focus on ensuring working groups are operational, securing buy-in across countries, broadening stakeholder involvement and fundraising as means to officially launch the forum and ensure its sustainability. The TIP Office plans to maintain a cooperative relationship to ensure TIP Office expectations for the forum are met

## **Conclusions, Recommendations, and Considerations**

### ***Conclusions***

The SEA Fisheries project has made substantial progress in a short period of time. The resulting SEA Forum for Fishers, having agreement across a broad swath of stakeholders in SEA countries, has potential as a game changer to anti-trafficking efforts in the region. In addition to “key takeaways,” the evaluation team notes the following conclusions and recommendations on how to strengthen and sustain this fledgling mechanism.

1. The ILO project team’s iterative, participatory, and adaptive approach to developing the SEA Forum for Fishers—in addition to ILO’s reputation as a successful convener and respected international organization—contributed to early foundations of success for forum establishment.
2. MSRCB stakeholders appreciate the strength in the diversity of participating countries and organizations, while also recognizing the challenge this presents for the communication needed to maintain engagement and momentum.
3. The establishment and sustainability of the SEA Forum for Fishers will depend upon expanded funding and longer timelines; the forum’s ability to successfully operationalize working groups and sustain stakeholder engagement; and capacity to adapt to changing realities and stay relevant to regional priorities.

### ***Recommendations***

Below are recommendations for the TIP Office and ILO project team moving forward to ensure funding invested in the SEA Fisheries project and MSRCB formation to date, lead to realized results. These recommendations could be addressed in future internal and partnership meetings to be prioritized and operationalized by different groups, depending upon the actions. Groups could include the TIP Office, the ILO project team as the MSRCB Secretariat, or the forthcoming MSRCB steering committee.

1. The TIP Office should support the successful establishment of sustainability of the SEA Forum for Fishers by expanding the timeline and providing additional funds to include additional staffing needed to secure buy-in and strengthening communications across regional stakeholders. They should maintain a cooperative relationship with the ILO to ensure TIP Office expectations are met as the body is established and underway. They should ensure both internal and independent monitoring and evaluation plans are developed for this next phase of forum development.
2. The ILO project team should ensure working groups are operational and making progress toward objectives, maintain strong communication with stakeholders, increase country presence to secure buy-in, expand stakeholder participation and decisionmaking, and work with the forum to develop a monitoring, evaluation and learning plan for the forum that includes a theory of change

### ***Considerations for Other Initiatives of This Kind***

As the TIP Office reflects on lessons for future multistakeholder initiatives and regional coordinating

bodies, a few key considerations from the SEA Forum for Fishers development should be applied moving forward

1. It is important to adjust time and resources to match the expected breadth, reach and scope for the multistakeholder initiative.
2. Leadership of the body in the short term and long term do not need to be the same. In the short term, there are advantages to having a recognized and well-reputed international organization convene, design, and gain buy-in across a wide range of stakeholders and countries. In the long term, body ownership and actions need to reflect the body's membership and scope of objectives to sustain buy-in and investment.
3. Preliminary, early, and ongoing evaluation efforts can ensure a positive return on investment. Preliminary assessments can determine the need for and challenges associated with an initiative under consideration. An independent developmental evaluation can enhance early initiative formation. Multistakeholder initiatives, due to their complexity and orientation toward results, benefit from operating under a theory of change and measurement-based strategic framework.

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

The SEA Fisheries Project is a 3-year project funded by the U.S. State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office) and implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) from their office in Jakarta, Indonesia. The project, which began in April 2017, aims to reduce human trafficking in Southeast Asia's (SEA's) fisheries by strengthening coordination and increasing the efficiency and efficacy of existing initiatives at national and regional levels. The project also seeks to identify sets of core issues that regional stakeholders can address through strengthened collaboration. The project involves the creation of a multistakeholder regional coordinating body (MSRCB) to improve coordination and information-sharing across SEA countries to combat trafficking in persons (TIP) in fisheries. As a novel and high-risk regional anti-trafficking approach, the project's success depends on good information, strong engagement, and buy-in across the region. While the MSRCB is still under formation, the initiative has been named the SEA Forum for Fishers, and both terms will be used throughout this report.

Creation of an MSRCB requires proposing and gathering feedback, in consultation with governments and other stakeholder groups, on (a) gaps served by an MSRCB, (b) an appropriate MSRCB mandate, (c) corresponding MSRCB functions and composition, and (d) potential for integration of the MSRCB into existing structures for sustainability and increased relevance. ILO is partnering with a broad set of stakeholders across the region, beyond the traditional ILO tripartite structure (select government, employer, and labor representatives), to develop and populate the MSRCB. Stakeholders include national ministries of labor, fisheries, and law enforcement as well as international law enforcement groups such as Interpol, workers' and employers' organizations, recruitment/manning and placement agencies, buyers and retailing groups, the United Nations and other intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs).

Given the complex and ambitious nature of this project, the TIP Office commissioned EnCompass LLC to conduct a process evaluation from August 2017 through mid-February 2019. This report outlines the purpose, design, methods, and limitations of the evaluation along with key findings and recommendations.

# EVALUATION PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

## Evaluation Purpose

This two-phase process evaluation was designed to help the TIP Office better understand the processes used in the formative phases of MSRCB development to garner support for, establish, and operationalize an MSRCB aimed at reducing TIP in SEA fisheries. The formative process evaluation sought to (a) provide data to support project design adaptation in the early stages of MSRCB formation, and (b) inform the TIP Office about the value and feasibility of sponsoring other initiatives of this type.

## A Note on Terminology

The evaluation discussed two types of coordinating bodies (reflected in this report):

- A **multistakeholder initiative, or MSI**, refers to a body involving strategic alliances between CSOs, corporations, citizens, research organizations, and governments to address identified issues or problems. MSIs can be intra-national, national, regional, or global in scope.
- A **multistakeholder regional coordinating body, or MSRCB**, involves strategic alliances between multiple stakeholder groups *and* across countries within a geographic region to address identified issues or problems through coordinated actions and/or policies. This is the category under study in this evaluation.

## Evaluation Questions

Evaluation sub-questions ([Exhibit 1](#)) evolved over the two phases of the evaluation (see next page for a description of Phase 1 and Phase 2). Following the Phase 1 Interim Report, Phase 2 sub-questions were created to align with evolving ILO planning, decision-making, and activity implementation as well as modified timelines and emerging stakeholder perceptions regarding the project.

### Exhibit 1: Illustrative evaluation questions and sub-questions for Phase 1 and Phase 2

Questions	Phase 1 Sub-questions	Phase 2 Questions
<b>1: STRATEGY/DESIGN</b>  To what extent is the strategy for forming the MSRCB likely to affect TIP in SEA fisheries? How does the strategy align with national and regional needs and context?	1. What perceptions do stakeholders hold about proposed and desired MSRCB goals, objectives, and added value?  2. What features of the proposed MSRCB appear to be motivating buy-in and accountability from various countries and stakeholder groups?	1. What perceptions do stakeholders hold about proposed and desired MSRCB goals, objectives, and added value?

Questions	Phase 1 Sub-questions	Phase 2 Questions
<b>2: BUILDING THE MSRCB</b>  How is the MSRCB being developed and what is needed to strengthen its development?	1. How are stakeholders perceiving the value and appropriateness of proposed MSRCB composition, structure, and governance?  2. How is recruitment occurring and who is being recruited for MSRCB development, membership, and partnership? How is the recruitment process influencing proposed MSRCB features and buy-in?  3. What strategies and actions are being taken to address MSRCB sustainability?	1. How are national and/or regional meetings used and how successfully do meetings achieve objectives?  a. To what extent are meetings perceived by ILO and external stakeholders successful in achieving the MSRCB's goals and objectives?  b. To what extent have the design and implementation of meetings evolved from Phase 1 to Phase 2?
<b>3: IMPLEMENTATION</b>  What has been learned about how the MSRCB can, should, and will operate within the SEA Fisheries context to complement mechanisms already in place? How is "ownership" of MSRCB participants being developed and maintained?	1. How will the proposed MSRCB complement and coordinate with existing relevant MSRCBs in the region (e.g., Bali Process, ASEAN, SEAFDEC)? What is being learned from other multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs) and regional coordinating bodies (RCBs)  2. How is the MSRCB development strategy adapting to available resources, needs, and limitations?  3. How are supporting activities in the project plan (e.g., gap-filling research, communications platforms, gender-responsive strategies) influencing MSRCB implementation and progress?	1. How have MSRCB objectives, composition, and structure changed over time?  a. What is the level of clarity in understanding the (1) objectives, (2) composition, and (3) structure of the MSRCB following the second (November 2018) regional convening?  b. How satisfied are stakeholders with the (1) objectives, (2) composition, and (3) structure of the MSRCB following the second (November 2018) regional convening? (And what, if anything, is not being met, in their view?)  2. Who (organizations and individuals) is participating in the MSRCB and why?  a. What and how do stakeholders participate in national and regional meetings and how does that differ from previous meetings/convenings in Phase 1?  b. What are the incentives for stakeholders to participate in the MSRCB for the long-term? (and disincentives – e.g., concerns regarding

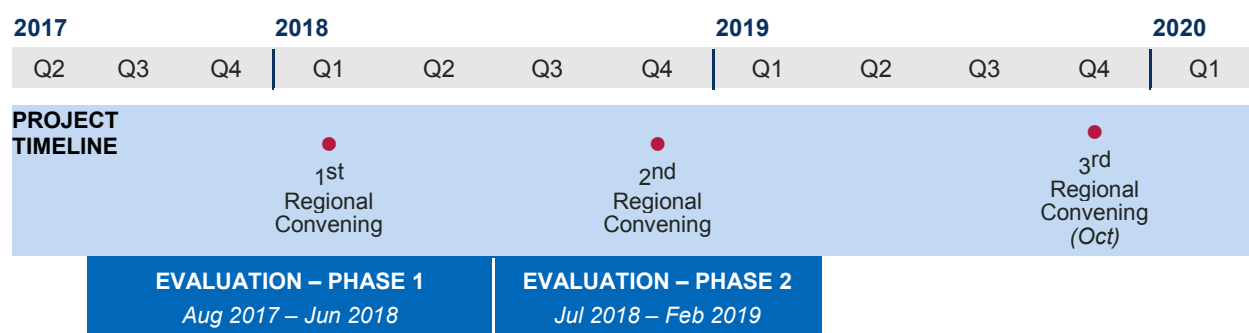
Questions	Phase 1 Sub-questions	Phase 2 Questions
		<p>the sustainability of the MSRCB)</p> <p>c. To what degree do stakeholders feel that the right complement of organizations (and people) are involved in the MSRCB? [leadership, Secretariat, participating members, advisors]</p> <p>3. How is communication occurring to effectively create and sustain interest in the MSRCB?</p> <p>a. How does the project team feel their communication strategy is working? What would they like to improve, and how?</p> <p>b. How do stakeholders perceive communication from ILO and how could it be improved?</p>
<p><b>4: EARLY SUCCESSES/ POTENTIAL FOR RESULTS</b></p> <p>What early successes are likely for the MSRCB? What results seem plausible over the next few years and how will these be measured?</p>	<p>1. What early successes in MSRCB development have been achieved? How are stakeholders perceiving the effectiveness of ILO project implementation in terms of its potential to achieve desired results?</p> <p>2. How is the proposed MSRCB evolving to address stakeholder input?</p> <p>3. What lessons are being learned and what more can be done to learn?</p>	<p>1. What are ILO plans and progress regarding development and sustainability for the MSRCB?</p> <p>a. What would ILO suggest is needed to appropriately develop an MSRCB of this scope and magnitude for a satisfying experience for the project team? What factors are critical?</p> <p>b. How much has ILO applied learning from other MSIs to their model(s) for MSRCB sustainability?</p> <p>c. How do stakeholders perceive the likelihood and quality of sustainability of the MSRCB at this point in time? Has this changed for them (if they were socialized earlier?)</p>

# EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The SEA Fisheries Project period spans from April 2017 through March 2020. The process evaluation covered activities from August 2017 through mid-February 2019 ([Exhibit 2](#)). The project and the evaluation were conducted developmentally, with an evaluation design featuring two phases of data collection and analysis. Phase 1 (August 2017 through June 2018) addressed processes during the early buy-in period of the SEA Fisheries Project, while Phase 2 (September 2018 to mid-February 2019) focused on the operations associated with MSRCB formation and early efforts to ensure the MSRCB’s sustainability.

These phases aligned to two SEA Fisheries Project milestones, namely the regional convenings in Bali that brought together participants from across key stakeholder types and Southeast Asia. The Consultative Forum on Regional Cooperation against Human Trafficking, Labour Exploitation, and Slavery at Sea was held during March 27-28, 2018 (referred to in this report as “March 2018 regional convening”), while the Southeast Asia Conference on Regional Coordination and Action to Combat Trafficking and Labor Exploitation in Fisheries was held during November 26-29, 2018 (referred to in this report as “November 2018 regional convening”). Most of the evaluation’s data collection activities centered around these two convenings, as outlined in the project proposal. The March 2018 regional convening represented a milestone for socialization of the proposed MSRCB, and the November 2018 convening was designed to establish and launch the MSRCB. (Note that by the November 2018 regional convening, the MSRCB was recognized as the “SEA Forum for Fishers,” frequently referred to as “the forum” in this report.)

**Exhibit 2: SEA Fisheries Project approved timeline with process evaluation timeline overlay**



## Data Collection Methods and Sampling

Data during Phases 1 and 2 were collected using qualitative and quantitative methods, including semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs), meeting observations, document reviews, and an online survey. The evaluation team designed data collection samples and tools in consultation with the ILO project team and the TIP Office.



### ***Key Informant Interviews***

The evaluation team used participatory and appreciative inquiry<sup>1</sup> approaches to collecting data from key informant stakeholder groups. These approaches guided data collection on perceptions of processes undertaken for the development and formation of the MSRCB and perspectives regarding regional, national, and stakeholder contexts as well as potential drivers of MSRCB development. Appreciative Inquiry is a useful technique when collecting data around complex issues and sensitive topics that respondents may find difficult or risky to discuss. The issue of combatting TIP in the SEA fisheries industry exhibits both of these features.

Due to the wide range of influencing and affected groups, interviews spanned beyond the traditional ILO tripartite groups of select employer, labor, and government representatives. The broader collection of stakeholders included recruiters, buyers, CSOs, NGOs, international organizations, and other experts ([Exhibit 3](#)). The evaluation team also interviewed project funders and implementers.

#### **Exhibit 3: Key stakeholder types interviewed**

<b>Key informant stakeholder groups</b>	<b>Description</b>
Implementer/Funder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regional and international ILO staff (if related to or supporting SEA Fisheries work)</li><li>• TIP Office staff</li></ul>
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Different government ministries or agencies involved in combatting trafficking in fisheries (e.g., Department of Labor, Department of Fisheries, Department of Manpower, etc.)</li></ul>
Employer/Recruiter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fish processing plant owners</li><li>• Employer associations</li><li>• Recruiters/Manning agencies</li></ul>
Labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Labor unions</li><li>• CSOs representing workers</li></ul>
CSO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CSOs or NGOs that primarily work at a national or sub-national level</li></ul>
International Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International NGOs</li><li>• Intergovernmental organizations, including ILO staff who do not work directly on or support the SEA Fisheries Project</li></ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experts</li><li>• Private sector representatives, other than employees</li><li>• Diplomats</li><li>• Buyers/Retailers</li></ul>

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<sup>1</sup> For information on Appreciative Evaluation, see the seminal book by Hallie Preskill and Tessie Tzavaras Catsambas, *Reframing Evaluation Through Appreciative Inquiry* (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2006).

Phase 1 and Phase 2 qualitative interview sampling used purposive and snowball designs<sup>2</sup> to conduct 94 remote and in-person interviews with convening and national meeting participants, other stakeholders socialized to the MSRCB, MSI experts, and a snowball sample of other key informants identified through interviews ([Exhibit 4](#)). Data collection oversampled ILO-identified priority countries (Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines). During Phase 2, the team conducted 17 in-person and 4 virtual interviews before, during, and immediately following the November 2018 regional convening ([Exhibit 4](#)). Due to the small number of interviews conducted during Phase 2, findings are not disaggregated in this final report. Data collectors were trained in and used EnCompass’ appreciative, semi-structured interview and transcription protocols using interview guides (Annex 2), consent forms (Annex 3), and an introductory briefer (Annex 4) produced in coordination with ILO and the TIP Office.

**Exhibit 4: Interviews conducted in Phase 1 (73 interviews, 86 respondents) and 2 (21 interviews, 28 respondents) by stakeholder group and country**

By Stakeholder Group	Ph 1	Ph 2	By Country Represented	Ph 1	Ph 2
Implementers/Funders	8	4	Indonesia	22	7
Government	13	5	Philippines	13	3
Employer/Recruiter	8	3	Thailand	9	4
Labor	11	3	Other SEA (Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam)	3	3
CSOs	9	5	International (Non-SEA)	26	4
International Organizations	15	1			
Other	9	1			

*One Phase 2 group interview involved both a government and labor representative, and is therefore reflected twice in this table.*

### Online Survey

Two months after the November 2018 regional convening, the evaluation team developed and distributed an online survey (Annex 5) in consultation with ILO and the TIP Office. The evaluation team sent the survey to all participants included on the regional convening attendance sheet who were not from ILO or the U.S. Government and who provided email addresses (89 individuals, or 77 percent of convening participants). Thirty (30) individuals (34 percent) submitted survey responses, with 23 respondents (77 percent of survey respondents) completing all questions. Respondents represented six SEA countries and all but one stakeholder group ([Exhibit 5](#)).

<sup>2</sup> “Purposive” sampling indicates that the evaluation team selected interview participants in a non-randomized manner. In this case, interview participant selection was determined by expertise, experience, and exposure to TIP in the fishing industry and the MSRCB development process, as well as ability to set up interviews. “Snowball” sampling indicates that some interview respondents recommended other stakeholders which the evaluation team subsequently interviewed.

## Exhibit 5: Number of survey respondents by self-reported stakeholder group and country

By Stakeholder Group		By Country	
Government	10	Indonesia	11
Employer (both industry associations and private employment agencies)	5	Philippines	6
Labor (including trade unions)	8	Thailand	5
International NGO	4	Malaysia	4
Local and/or national CSOs	2	Viet Nam	2
Academic/Research	0	Cambodia	2
Other	1		

### Observations

The evaluation team conducted observations at all accessible plenaries and breakout groups occurring during the two regional convenings in Bali and three national convenings (one in Thailand, two in Indonesia). The evaluation team developed observation tools and adapted these tools based on meeting objectives and format. (Annex 6). The evaluation team used the observation tools to describe participating stakeholders, levels of engagement, roles stakeholders took on, energy levels around topical discussions, areas of debate and agreement, results, conclusions, and, when possible, use of information from meetings.

### Document Review

The evaluation team compiled, categorized, and reviewed more than 100 documents to understand and describe (a) evolving project designs, (b) influences from the project's cooperative agreement with the TIP Office, (c) how project implementation processes and proposed structures aligned to MSI promising practices, (d) influencers on MSRCB implementation, and (e) stakeholder perceptions of the MSRCB. The evaluation team reviewed ILO project team notes, work plans, strategic plans, budget updates, and quarterly reports; email communications shared among ILO, the TIP Office, evaluation team members, and stakeholders; documents and references identified by ILO, the TIP Office, and key informants; other regional coordinating body and other MSI reports, publications, and website content; documents describing features of TIP in the SEA fisheries context; and website materials developed for the SEA Forum for Fishers. Evaluators also conducted consultative and informational meetings with ILO and TIP Office staff to better understand the initiative and its relationship to human trafficking in Southeast Asia, trafficking in persons in the various work areas within the fisheries industry, illegal fisheries reduction efforts in the region, and practices and learning from other MSIs and RCBs.

### Strengths

The evaluation team applied a flexible, coordinated, and transparent approach to data collection to mitigate risk to the project during this sensitive early formation stage. The team developed tools, briefers, and interview protocols in consultation with ILO and TIP Office staff to ensure the evaluation

was clearly distinguished from the project, given that both the evaluation and project were funded by the Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Data collectors made efforts to coordinate interviews with ILO as much as possible, recognizing that the small project team was traveling significantly and had limited availability for coordination. This was done to reduce any negative impact the interview might have on early ILO relationship building. To further mitigate risk, interviews during the November 2018 regional convening were minimized and targeted to specific individuals. The evaluation team deployed an online survey following the convening to fill gaps in information. This strategy had added value, providing perception data after participants had time to reflect on the convening.

The evaluation team remained independent in conducting data collection and analysis, ensuring data collection, interviews, observations, and document reviews addressed key questions in the evaluation design and were ready when needed. The team remained agile and responsive to an evolving project process and meeting schedule. This coordination, flexibility, and readiness allowed the team to observe the March and November 2018 regional convenings and multiple national consultative meetings despite short notice and changing timelines, in some cases.

After Phase 1, the evaluation team combined data collection and analysis activities related to the evaluation with considerations for next steps in MSRCB development (see Interim Report). This effort provided opportunities to strengthen both the project and the evaluation through learning obtained from diverse voices across countries and stakeholder groups. The team shared relevant, tangible, utilization-focused data emerging from evaluation activities as available. Additionally, as coordination permitted, the team shared emergent interim findings and incorporated feedback from ILO into interim and final reports.

## **Limitations**

As an investigation of a complex project involving a diverse set of actors, this evaluation needed to balance depth and breadth of analysis. Resource, time constraints, and intentional project risk reduction tactics affected the timing and total number of remote and in-person interviews conducted.

To reduce the possibility that the evaluation could negatively affect early socialization to the SEA Fisheries project, initial government interviews were only held with Government of Indonesia (GoI) officials. As an early project partner, GoI officials had been socialized to the proposed body. Other country officials, as well as employer and labor groups in these countries, were interviewed following the first regional convening and additional socialization time requested by the ILO project team. This reduced early interview data that could have provided information about views on fisheries related trafficking issues, concerns and needs held before the project was described, and before early socialization may have influenced these views. Prior to interviewing government, employer and labor groups across the region, the team expanded interviews beyond the Indonesian government to CSOs, international organizations, buyers and experts either invited to a first regional convening as observers, or identified by interviewees through snowball sampling. June and July data collection therefore focused on government, employer and labor groups, as well as organizations and individuals identified from these interviews, to make up for this early limitation.

During Phase 2, as socialization to the proposed MSRCB moved toward negotiations regarding a proposed framework for the body, the evaluation team reduced risk to the project by delaying

interviews until the second regional convening, and reducing the overall number. The team intentionally maintained a similar proportion of interviews from key stakeholder groups across the two evaluation phases. Interviews were limited to participants during this key period when there was supposition that the body might be officially launched. The risk to the evaluation of having fewer interviews during Phase 2 was partially mitigated through the use of an online survey, which received a strong, 34 percent response rate. However, online survey respondents are self-selected, while interviews are less so. Therefore, the data from online interviews could be skewed toward engaged participants. Similarly, by limiting interviews to individuals who participated in the second regional convening, we did not learn from those who were not invited, and those who chose not to attend.

The ILO project team's limited resources and limited availability to collaborate with the evaluation team reduced the evaluation team's ability to access project staff and coordinate early evaluation activities. This prohibited early implementation of some data collection activities (e.g., interviews and observations of early internal and external meetings to learn how the project team socialized stakeholders and countries to the MSRCB). This also limited the evaluation team's access to interim versions of documents, correspondence between the SEA Fisheries project team and their oversight organization, ILO Geneva, and curtailed understanding of decision making and reasons for decisions occurring behind the scenes that affected process on the ground, but that then lacked context for the evaluation team. The team attempted to fill in these gaps during meetings with the project team. The team also interviewed the team at the beginning, at the end of Phase 1 and at the end of Phase 2 of the evaluation. This also limited learning by the evaluation team to inform the evaluation, and limited the ability the evaluation team had to share data back with the project team in ways that could have further advanced their goals.

The diversity of languages represented at the SEA Forum for Fishers posed a challenge to data collection. Through the project's cooperative agreement, ILO and the TIP Office targeted ten ASEAN countries. To obtain clear, accurate responses to questions on this complex topic, the team limited data collection to six higher priority countries and included data collectors who spoke the local languages to conduct in-country interviews and national meeting observations. Regional convenings were conducted in English. The survey distributed following the November 2018 regional convening was only available in English and therefore excluded participants who could not read English. Although the data do not indicate this, there is a chance that some respondents misinterpreted translated interview guide questions since some interview language was modified during the translation process.

# EVIDENCE AND FINDINGS

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## OVERARCHING QUESTION 1

**Strategy/Design:** To what extent is the strategy for forming the MSRCB likely to affect TIP in SEA fisheries? How does the strategy align with national and regional needs and contexts?

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1

**Respondents across countries and stakeholder groups find value in the goals and objectives of the SEA Forum for Fishers. Stakeholders believe the forum fills existing gaps and can improve coordination and standards in combatting trafficking in persons in Southeast Asian fisheries.**

During Phase 1, stakeholders saw value in developing an MSRCB for setting regional standards, monitoring practices at sea, and increasing regional pressure to strengthen weak labor laws. During Phase 1, respondents highlighted that the MSRCB development process seemed more focused on obtaining inputs regarding MSRCB governance than on its goals and objectives; this did not seem to be a strong concern for participants in Phase 2.

By the November 2018 regional convening in Phase 2, countries and stakeholder groups had reached general agreement on the SEA Forum for Fishers' goals and objectives. The forum's key role was defined as a hub for "regional cooperation to coordinate and promote dialogue, research, policy, and sharing of best practices," serving as a vital resource for combatting trafficking in the fisheries industry.<sup>3</sup> In interviews, even individuals who reported some uncertainty in understanding the specific objectives or structure of the forum highlighted ILO's efforts to socialize them before the November convening as helpful.

*[My understanding of the goals and objectives of the forum is] not that crystal clear, but I think from the explanation during the visit of ILO, [the SEA Fisheries Project Manager] already explained what they want to achieve, what the area [is], why they want to focus on these fisheries, and we support the idea for ILO to focus on the fisheries. – Malaysia, government*

Although traditional ILO tripartite (select government, employer and labor representatives) and non-tripartite stakeholders (other CSOs, international organizations, academic experts and private industry representatives) throughout the evaluation's Phase 1 and 2 had different perspectives on the reasons the forum was important, they agreed its formation was a necessary step forward. All stakeholders saw a need for a regional forum with an anti-TIP orientation and mandate to address gaps and improve coordination and standards among actors in the fisheries industry (Annex 7). In interviews at the November 2018 regional convening, stakeholders focused on the value of creating a "level playing field" across the region, and the critical role the forum could play as a central communication and information

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<sup>3</sup> Source: ILO news, December 2018, describing opening remarks at the November 2018 regional convening by Mr. Sukoyono, Senior Adviser to The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries for Indonesia; ILO website: [https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS\\_654546/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/info/public/pr/WCMS_654546/lang--en/index.htm)

sharing platform for stakeholders. A panel discussion with representatives from three priority governments (Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines) highlighted the importance of this forum for their countries.

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## OVERARCHING QUESTION 2

***Building the MSRCB: How is the MSRCB being developed and what is needed to strengthen its development?***

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2

**The ILO project team, working cooperatively with the TIP Office, consistently worked with stakeholders to secure buy-in, convened national and regional meetings, and utilized short-term staffing to increase commitment across SEA countries.**

The ILO project team conducted significant work in Phase I to secure early engagement and commitment from the Government of Indonesia, as well as socialize other country and stakeholder groups to the SEA Fisheries MSRCB. ILO built off these achievements in Phase 2 by expanding efforts to secure buy-in before and after the November 2018 regional convening ([Exhibit 6](#)). For example, in the third quarter of 2018, ILO reported engaging with Indonesian stakeholders such as the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). This relationship is exemplified by attendance at two regional convenings, with approximately 120 members across multiple ministries and stakeholder groups representing between eight and nine countries at each. This relationship was exemplified during the November 2018 regional convening when ILO showed a video from AICHR showing their support for the forum even though they could not attend in-person.

Most recently, ILO reported focusing specifically on understanding and securing participation from Indonesian, Thai, Philippine, and Malaysian stakeholders. During missions to Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines in the fourth quarter of 2018, in addition to securing stakeholder engagement, ILO developed a better understanding of stakeholder roles and sentiments, consulted with proposed technical advisors and steering committee members, and met with broader Malaysian stakeholders who did not participate in the March 2018 regional convening.<sup>4</sup> ILO reported that continued commitment to securing buy-in from priority governments—and the various offices within them—was needed to a sustainable body.

### Exhibit 6: Timeline of ILO stakeholder engagement activities

Date	Activities
Apr–Nov 2017	• Identifying key issues, stakeholders, and background research (based in Indonesia)
Nov 2017	• National consultative meetings and consultations in Indonesia and Thailand • National Consultation Meeting in Indonesia
Nov 2017–March 2018	• Further background research, national consultative meetings, and consultations in

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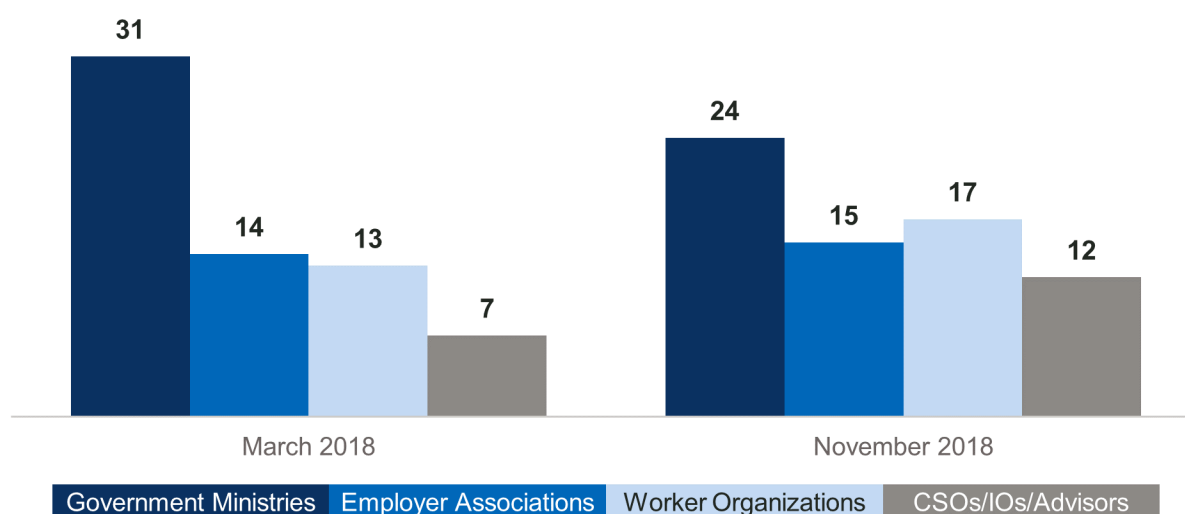
<sup>4</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)

Date	Activities
	the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia
March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultative Forum on Regional Cooperation against Human Trafficking, Labor Exploitation, and Slavery at Sea</li> </ul>
March–June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First round design and consultations on the proposed MSRCB. National consultative meetings in Myanmar and Thailand</li> </ul>
June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thai National Consultation on the first draft design</li> <li>• Indonesian National Consultation on the first draft design</li> </ul>
July–Nov 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisions and second round design on the proposed MSRCB. National consultative meetings and consultations in Thailand and Malaysia. Dissemination of the second round design for consultation</li> </ul>
Nov 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southeast Asia Conference on Regional Coordination and Action to Combat Trafficking and Labor Exploitation in Fisheries</li> </ul>

As part of their process to secure stakeholder engagement, ILO hosted two regional convenings in March 2018 and November 2018. Participants reflected a broad range of stakeholder types and nationalities, though the strength of stakeholder representation was greater for some countries than others. [Exhibit 7](#) provides a summary of participants (excluding implementers and related representatives) at each convening. Overall numbers of participants were similar between the two convenings, though the distribution of stakeholder types varied slightly. While the March 2018 regional convening had one more SEA country represented, the November 2018 regional convening had more CSOs, and worker organizations represented.

### Exhibit 7: Types of organizations represented at regional convenings<sup>5</sup>

*n=120 participants (March 2018); n=122 participants (November 2018)*



<sup>5</sup> These data do not reflect ILO, TIP Office, or other implementer representatives, nor do they depict the level of representation for particular departments/directorates/bureaus/offices within each government ministry or organization.



To execute regional convenings ILO supplemented funding from Department of State project funds with nearly \$100,000 in contributions from the Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs in Indonesia.

Qualitative respondents from both Phase 1 and Phase 2 highlighted the importance of the Government of Indonesia's partnership as a sign of legitimacy and sustainability for the forum, providing not only funding but also a demonstration to other stakeholders that a government was highly committed to this forum.

In another example of collaboration, the ILO project team coordinated the November 2018 regional convening to occur directly before a planned Workshop to Promote Decent Work for Fishers in Southeast Asia, which focused on ILO Geneva Convention 188 (C188)<sup>6</sup>. Some ILO stakeholders reported that linking the November 2018 regional convening with the Workshop to Promote Decent Work for Fishers provided cost-savings and supported forum establishment and sustainability. Others from ILO believed linking the two meetings could help generate buy-in for the passing of C188. Evaluation team observations from the C188 workshop included that ILO Geneva referred back to the SEA Forum for Fishers multiple times as a positive way forward to operationalize discussions regarding the passage of C188 and other ILO conventions.

ILO quarterly reports and interviews also reported that ILO hired consultants and interns to fill gaps in staffing needs. ILO hired country-level staff for in-country consultations to assist in logistics and socializing key stakeholders to the initiative, a private sector consultant to liaise with and gain a better understanding of private sector needs, and a communications consultant to help with website launch and external communications.

### 3

**Stakeholders across the region reported that the participatory, iterative approach used to develop goals, objectives and structure for the SEA Forum for Fishers helped to create a forum reflecting their views.**

At the end of Phase 1, the evaluation team noted the need to examine buy-in toward concrete objectives prior to addressing the structure and governance of the SEA Forum for Fishers (see Finding 1, above). Phase 2 evidence shows that ILO lobbied with SEA country governments, employers and labor representatives, conducted the March 2018 regional convening, and held ongoing consultations with partners in Indonesia to secure buy-in toward forum objectives prior to the November 2018 regional convening. Observations at the November convening showed the focus had shifted from objectives to finding agreement on the structure and composition of the SEA Forum for Fishers.

In the two most recent ILO quarterly reports,<sup>7</sup> ILO stated that revisions to the proposed MSRCB design and terms of reference (TOR) documents were based on feedback they received during:

- The March 2018 regional convening

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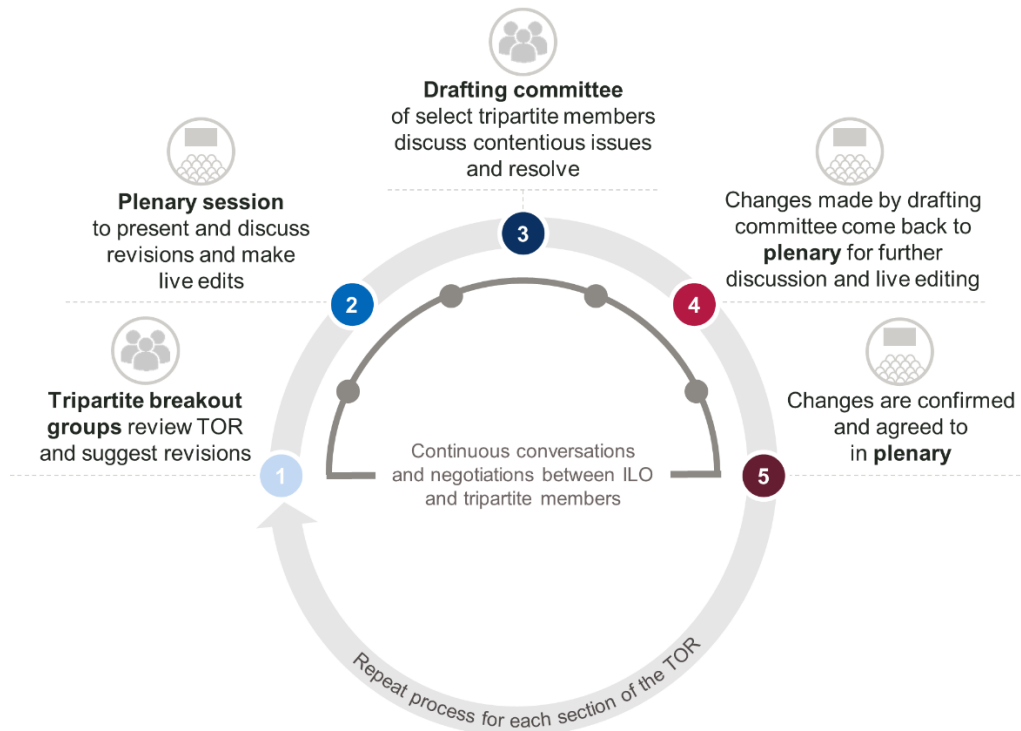
<sup>6</sup> ILO Convention 188 (C188) is an ILO convention designed to protect fishers from poor labor practices, including practices that enable forced labor and trafficking for fishing vessels. At the November Workshop to Promote Decent Work for Fishers in Southeast Asia, government representatives discussed ways that adoption of C188 would support improved labor practices for fishers and improve their national economic standing in the fisheries industry.

<sup>7</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR2 (July to September 2018), Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)

- National consultations in Thailand and Indonesia
- Missions to Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines
- Ongoing consultations with Indonesian stakeholders

The revised TOR document describing the forum goals, objectives, and structure was shared with participants for additional input at the November 2018 regional convening. Evaluation team observations noted that the ILO project team used a participatory, iterative approach to generate agreement on the TOR through reviews and edits of forum goals, objectives, and structures, using technology as a medium. The process for receiving participant feedback included breakout sessions for government, employer, and labor representatives at the convening. First, stakeholder breakout groups met, reviewed, and revised the TOR, as appropriate to their particular group's recommendations. The stakeholder breakout groups were then brought together to present their suggested changes to the plenary. Projecting their proposed changes (using track changes), one rapporteur per group gave a rationale for those changes. Throughout this process, the ILO project team conducted live editing to make changes to the document, which they shared shortly after the session. Particularly contentious issues were reserved for drafting committee sessions, although most of the editing was discussed in plenary. Representatives of eight countries agreed on the TOR, structure, and mandate of the MSRCB by the end of the November 2018 regional convening, as well as defined regional priorities and working groups.<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that in the background, the TIP Office continued to work cooperatively with the ILO project team to broaden decisionmaking representation and ensure a participatory process occurred.

#### Exhibit 8: ILO process for collecting TOR feedback at November 2018 regional convening



<sup>8</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)

Online survey data confirmed that across stakeholder types, nearly all survey respondents agreed or somewhat agreed that their views were and will continue to be reflected in the structure and decision-making process of the SEA Forum for Fishers, with no respondents disagreeing ([Exhibit 9](#)). While more than half of these respondents agreed that their views were included in the November 2018 regional convening, a slightly smaller proportion seemed confident in their potential for future input.

### Exhibit 9: Self-reported stakeholder input to the SEA Forum for Fishers

n=25

	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
3a. My views were included in the decision-making processes during the November 2018 SEA Conference.	0%	0%	44%	56%
3b. My views are reflected in the current structure of the SEA Forum Fishers.	0%	0%	60%	40%
3c. My views will be included in decisions the SEA Forum For Fisheries makes in the future.	0%	0%	52%	48%

## 4

**Lesson from the March 2018 regional convening were incorporated into the November 2018 regional convening. Both events served a broader strategy to develop the SEA Forum for Fishers.**

Quarterly reports and qualitative interviews, along with emails between the TIP Office and ILO showed how they each used the 2018 regional convenings to fulfill two distinct purposes in the broader strategy to develop the SEA Forum for Fishers. The project team designed the March 2018 regional convening to serve as an introductory gathering to build consensus on the need for regional coordination to combat trafficking in SEA fisheries. The TIP Office utilized findings from Phase 1 to increase efforts to diversify participation in the November 2018 regional convening. The project team used the time between convenings to further socialize stakeholders across the region. The November 2018 regional convening was meant to launch the forum. When it was clear not all countries would have decisionmaking participants present, this objective was adapted to instead work with stakeholders to finalize and agree on key texts, priorities, and structures, as well as share information with each other.

*“[The meetings were] very different in purpose. The first meeting was about starting the discussion; we just wanted recognition that a coordinating body was needed, and that took two days. The second was much more specific in terms of what we wanted, which was an actual agreement on the structure of the body itself. – Implementer*

A range of government, employer, labor and ILO representatives agreed that the first regional convening laid the foundation for positive progress in the second, though they held mixed opinions on the extent to which the two meetings differed. For example, two stakeholders interviewed in Phase 2 did not see significant changes in meeting structure, while two others found the November 2018 regional convening to be more concrete and action-oriented.

Qualitative interviews, document review, and observation notes from the November 2018 regional convening provided evidence that ILO incorporated both lessons from the March 2018 regional convening and conclusions and considerations from the evaluation team’s Interim Report into their subsequent planning process. ILO representatives expressed satisfaction with the March 2018 regional convening and described how they consciously integrated progress and lessons from that meeting—including interest in C188, specific thematic topics, translation needs, and a desire for more group discussion—into the November 2018 regional convening design. Emails between the ILO project team and the TIP Office also include references to Interim Report suggestions to improve engagement and meeting outcomes, which they used to advocate for desired changes to meetings, including the use of electronic translation for participants.

Evidence suggests that ILO was generally able to address multiple considerations related to meeting management raised in the Phase 1 Interim Report, as seen in [Exhibit 10](#). While this exhibit is not exhaustive, it demonstrates the work ILO has done to adapt their processes and priorities throughout the SEA Forum for Fishers’ development, particularly in light of logistical and financial constraints.

### **Exhibit 10: ILO responses to key Phase I conference feedback**

<b>Feedback Identified in Phase 1 Interim Report</b>	<b>ILO Action</b>
Use technology to increase participation and collect feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of a website to share information and solicit participant questions (66 submitted) over the course of the regional convening</li> <li>• Circulation of an online feedback survey following the November 2018 regional convening</li> <li>• Engagement and sharing of information via social media</li> <li>• Introduction of online newsletters to provide project updates</li> </ul>
Provide translation or interpretation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of smartphone app to provide remote and simultaneous interpretation during the conference from English to Bahasa, Thai, Burmese, and Vietnamese (accessed by 147 users through smartphones and web browsers)</li> <li>• Translation of core documents, such as the draft TOR</li> </ul>
Increase staffing capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of a communications consultant and a private sector engagement consultant</li> <li>• Use of interns to fill gaps in country language communication capacity, including a Thai-speaking intern for the first quarter of 2019</li> <li>• Consistent use of facilitators between the March and November 2018 regional convenings to provide an impression of team continuity</li> </ul>

*Source: Qualitative interviews, quarterly report<sup>9</sup>*

5

**ILO and the TIP Office have worked to address resource constraints and communication challenges across a diverse and dispersed set of stakeholders, and ILO has established a SEA Forum for Fishers website as a central platform for forum communications.**

<sup>9</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)

Phase 1 data identified ongoing updates and communication across SEA countries to be a primary challenge for the ILO project team. The ILO project team concurred with this assessment, citing a lack of fully-staffed offices in some SEA countries and a lack of funding for project staff, travel, and meetings needed to secure government buy-in as limitations to implementing their strategy. The TIP Office and ILO project team have coordinated to creatively manage these limitations toward the development of the forum. The TIP Office team recognized that the budget should have included space for unforeseen needs, and worked with its leadership in creating and adopting more feasible work plan targets (Interim Report). The ILO project team initially hired an assistant who could nurture the early commitment offered by the Indonesian government. When this person left, the team hired a staff member who could add value to regional buy-in leveraging efforts based upon their skill set, languages spoken, and prior experience. As mentioned previously, the team augmented their small staff by hiring consultants and interns for specific tasks (e.g., developing a communications platform and increasing engagement with the private sector), while also negotiating with the Government of Indonesia and ILO Geneva to secure co-investment and achieve regional convening objectives.

The interim report presented key considerations to address issues with stakeholder communications: (a) increased communication pre-meeting; (b) the use of technology to strengthen engagement before, during, and after the convening; and (c) translation of key documents into participant languages. Phase 2 data provides evidence that the ILO project team increased technology use to strengthen participation in the November 2018 regional convening, provide timely follow up, and maintain ongoing communication and engagement among SEA Forum for Fishers stakeholders.

According to document review and qualitative interview data, the ILO project team is now using a website produced for the SEA Forum for Fishers as the main communication platform for forum participants, including as a storage and sharing site for key documents. First launched in 2018 Q4, document review and observations from the November 2018 regional convening show the website used heavily as a resource during the regional convening to electronically and in real-time share and store drafts, updates, and participant input. For example, participants submitted 66 questions through the website during the convening that were discussed and compiled for future reference. The website also features a “Knowledge Platform” including pertinent national and regional resources that ILO plans to further develop in the coming year.<sup>10</sup>

*You have this forum [website] and everything and you can work together, you can upload everything that you did, upload everything that you need as seamless[ly] as possible, you can work from wherever you are...as the gateway for everything. – Implementer*

In addition to the website, evidence from quarterly reports shows that ILO is using Twitter, shared infographics and flyers to communicate and engage stakeholders. The ILO project team, as Secretariat for the SEA Forum for Fishers, launched the first forum newsletter in February 2018.<sup>11</sup> This newsletter features a summary of the November 2018 regional convening, information on website resources and a

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<sup>10</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)

<sup>11</sup> Source: ILO project team email, February 20 2018: “FYI, we just sent this first newsletter of the SEA Forum for Fishers to the participants of the regional meeting we held in November 2018 and to other stakeholders that we have interacted with over the last 18 months across the Southeast Asian region. This dispatch sets out steps going forward in the next few months.” <https://mailchi.mp/3f8dbc99c75c/sff1902a>

request for contributions to the knowledge platform, save the date information and details of Working Group meetings to be held in March 2019, and broader news about trafficking in fisheries, particularly in Southeast Asia.

## 6

### **Stakeholders recognize ILO as a successful convener who can bring together diverse stakeholders across the region to address regional anti-trafficking issues.**

During Phase 1, numerous government, employer, and labor participants, observers, and implementers cited ILO's meeting structure and facilitation—including time management and the ability to create an engaging atmosphere—as key contributors to the perceived success and productivity of the March 2018 regional convening. Participants of the November 2018 regional convening shared similar accolades. The two strengths stakeholders most frequently mentioned were (1) the diversity of stakeholders present who participated actively and (2) the speed, progress, and productivity of the convening.

*Overall, I like it. How they make the presentation and how they make the drafting process so we can quickly make a draft and the result we can see tomorrow [sic] and we can already see what we are talking about from yesterday. They are getting a lot of information from workers, employers, [and] international orgs individually, and....it helps to speed up the ratification and also give us an insight into the trafficking examples from all of these groups. – Indonesia, government*

Employer and government representatives attributed much of these key strengths to ILO's ability to bring together different stakeholders and make rapid progress in real-time on the forum's structure and composition. Stakeholders highlighted differences between other events hosted by ILO and those hosted by national governments or other international or bilateral organizations that were not as productive.

*It's kind of encouraging because in ILO, it's like everyone has an equal vote, something like that. It's quite different when you go to the national governments...how the different governments address it and handle it may be different. – Philippines, employer*

*I was happy because the process that is done under ILO is very fast in compared [sic] to other international organizations....They have a different approach and the way they take decisions is different, I was caught by surprise because even at the first conference, ILO had the courage to table the draft for the agreement...[T]hey knew what they wanted to do and what they want to achieve, and all of a sudden I saw all of us were involved in discussion of a draft without any reaction at all, and without any rejection at all. – Indonesia, government*

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### OVERARCHING QUESTION 3

**Implementation:** *What has been learned about how the MSRCB can, should, and will operate within the SEA fisheries context to complement mechanisms already in place? How is “ownership” of MSRCB participants being developed and maintained?*

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## 7

### Stakeholders across regions reported broad agreement and appreciation for the increasingly diverse composition of the SEA Forum for Fishers.

A key process evaluation question for the development of the MSRCB during Phase 1, in particular, was *“Who is—and should be—included (a) in developing the forum, (b) as a member of the resulting forum, and (c) as a decision maker within the forum structure?”* During Phase 1 of the evaluation, the ILO project team clarified that it would be working on selecting MSRCB development participants based upon their roles within their organization, the type of organization they serve, and their potential to add value to challenging discussions regarding the focus and structure of the resulting MSRCB. The project team also sought continuity of participation at the organizational level to ensure progress could be made more quickly, understanding that turnover for some positions within organizations would make continuity of individuals unfeasible. Still, questions remained about how to have the “right” people involved in MSRCB development and membership, including the following:

The “**Tripartite plus**” design allows consultation with actors not part of the formal tripartite structure (government, labor, and employers). These other actors do not have voting/decision-making roles. The TIP Office aims to increasingly ensure broader CSO representation within the labor category of the Steering Committee to expand voting/decision-making roles.

- **Which stakeholder types?** Should the ILO tripartite paradigm—governments, labor groups, and employers—be expanded to include new actors such as CSOs, buyers, or recruitment/manning agencies?
- **Which organization and which levels?** What key agencies, organizations, and levels within agencies and organizations should be included for each country?
- **Which individuals?** What key individuals and champions need to be engaged in each organization or agency, even if the continuity of participation cannot be a feasible aspiration for other organizations?

#### Stakeholder types

Phase 1 interview respondents respected the legitimacy that the longstanding ILO tripartite<sup>12</sup> mechanism brought to dialogues and national level discussions. In both Phase 1 and Phase 2,

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<sup>12</sup> Tripartite refers to the longstanding approach and structure ILO uses in its work with countries to improve labor laws and practices. Such a design facilitates access to representatives from government, employers’ organizations, and workers’ organizations who are knowledgeable on labor rights and understand how to function in regional/international convenings and processes. However, it has been reported that traditional

stakeholders were largely supportive of broadening participation beyond traditional “tripartite” — government, labor, and employer—bounds. Respondents from most stakeholder groups believed CSOs contribute valuable expertise to the forum, reporting that they bring different perspectives, focus discussions with their subject matter expertise, and provide information about realities “on the ground.” CSOs recommended expanding participation to a wider range of organizations, particularly those that are more local or prominent in the anti-trafficking sphere.

*You have to listen to [CSOs]. There’s too many of these things [like the forum] that don’t listen to what’s happening on the ground and just go in and impose what they think should be done, and they set themselves up to fail. – Other SEA country, CSO*

Evidence from qualitative interviews, document review, and observation notes from the two regional convenings indicates that by the November 2018 regional convening, ILO had expanded forum participation to a structure with more diverse representation that formally incorporates CSOs and other experts as non-voting “technical advisors” to working groups. This shift marks a development from the March 2018 regional convening, in which non-tripartite entities—including CSOs, buyers, recruitment/manning agencies, MSIs, intergovernmental organizations, and international NGOs—were invited as observers who could listen in on panel presentations but not participate in breakout sessions. Document review shows that after correspondence from the TIP Office requesting increased CSO involvement in the MSRCB, ILO included a broader range and number of CSOs in subsequent national consultations in Thailand and Indonesia. According to ILO’s latest quarterly report,<sup>13</sup> 12 CSOs or international organizations attended the November 2018 regional convening, all of whom were invited to serve as technical advisors.<sup>14</sup>

## **Organizations and levels**

Phase 1 and Phase 2 data collection noted that the variety of country contexts and structures engaged in the forum creates challenges in identifying which organizations or agencies from each country should participate in the MSRCB. For example, many countries have a range of ministries, departments, and task forces that could be relevant to the complex topic of regional anti-trafficking efforts in fisheries, and ensuring the engagement of the right ministries can be difficult. Respondents also described the challenges of including the right labor unions (and CSOs in countries where unions are not permitted) and employers, given the diversity of these broad stakeholder types and varying country contexts; in Indonesia, for example, some labor unions organize seafarers, but only a few small unions truly represent fishers or migrant workers vulnerable to TIP. Employers also noted that while they appreciated that ILO differentiated between formal and informal employers, they sometimes felt an inherent bias in the ILO approach.

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tripartite members’ roles in stipulating who represents them at international events can conflict with the need to incorporate the most knowledgeable and influential actors from these sectors. SEA fishers are not traditionally members of trade unions or workers’ organizations, so are unlikely to have access to ILO decision-making convenings. The “Tripartite plus” designs allow consultation with actors not part of the formal tripartite structure, but does not include voting/decision-making roles for these other actors.

<sup>13</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)

<sup>14</sup> All but one of the invited CSOs self-funded their cost of attendance



*'I think ILO is tripartite---government, worker, employer—but worker [groups] we must specify because this ... [forum] works across different actors. For example, the largest fishing vessel owners in Indonesia are in Bali and we are not invited to this forum. Also, fishers' unions should be part of the sea fisher's forum and they are not currently here. – Indonesia, government*

By the November 2018 regional convening, triangulation of invitee and attendee lists and interview data suggested that the TIP Office and the ILO project team had worked together to identify and invite a broader set of participants in the SEA Forum for Fishers, although not all were able to attend the convening. Respondents appeared to be satisfied overall with the diversity and range of participants at the November 2018 regional convening. As with the Phase 1 interviews, respondents interviewed in November 2018 provided suggestions for additional stakeholders missing from the convening who they felt should be included in the SEA Forum for Fishers. In some cases, ILO had invited many of the groups mentioned to the November 2018 regional convening, but a number of these did not attend. Attendance lists were not provided to participants, so some stakeholders thought these groups had not been invited. This list below ([Exhibit 11](#)) still provides insight into the organizations or stakeholders considered by attendees as important to the development of the MSRCB.

**Exhibit 11: Requested future attendees recommended for inclusion in the future by current attendees**

Type	Individual references
Law enforcement and legal representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indonesia, Ministry of Justice</li> <li>• Inspectors, broadly speaking</li> <li>• Prosecutors, broadly speaking</li> </ul>
Other government ministries, departments, and agencies, specifically:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indonesia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ministry of Transportation</li> <li>○ Ministry of Manpower</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Thailand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</li> <li>○ Command Center for Combating Illegal Fishing</li> <li>○ Department of Fisheries</li> <li>○ Department of Employment</li> <li>○ Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Malaysia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ministry of Human Resources</li> <li>○ Ministry of Foreign Affairs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Philippines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Department of Agriculture</li> <li>○ Department of Transportation*</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Myanmar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ministry of Home Affairs, Anti-Trafficking Taskforce *</li> <li>○ Department of Fisheries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Type	Individual references
More local and prominent CSOs, with specific references to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thailand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ LPN*</li> <li>○ Stella Maris*</li> <li>○ MWRN*</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
A broader range of recruitment/manning agencies and employers, with specific mention of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Fisheries of Thailand</li> </ul>
Better worker representation	<i>No specific references provided</i>
Other governments, specifically those whose boats often use trafficked labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taiwan</li> <li>• Japan</li> <li>• Korea</li> </ul>
Private sector representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing vessel owners</li> <li>• Buyers from buyer countries</li> </ul>
Academic researchers	<i>No specific references provided</i>

\* These organizations were not on ILO's invite list. Stella Maris was represented through their Philippines branch, Apostles of the Sea. MWRN and LPN are part of a "CSO Coalition being represented by other actors. While stakeholders suggested Plan International was omitted, they were present.

Given the high rates of staff turnover and transfer—particularly within government organizations in Southeast Asia—ILO reported the organizational level as the most critical for ensuring continuity within the SEA Forum for Fishers. This strategy proved fruitful. All in all, there was a significant overlap between government ministries participating in the March and November 2018 regional convenings ([Exhibit 12](#)). Stakeholder organizations averaged a 63 percent overlap between the two 2018 regional convenings across types and countries.

### Exhibit 12: Organization-level attendance and overlap at March and November 2018 regional convenings

Stakeholder Type	March 2018 regional convening (# of organizations)	November 2018 regional convening (# of organizations)	Overlap between 2018 regional convenings
Government	28	25	69%
Employer	12	9	60%
Labor	9	10	71%
NGO/CSO	7	8	67%
Multilateral	5	3	60%
Private sector	1	1	50%
<b>TOTAL organizations represented</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>-</b>

## Individuals

The Interim Report discussed whether those with the right technical knowledge, influence, and the mandate to achieve change were engaged in the March 2018 regional convening. Findings were mixed, however stakeholders emphasized the importance of this for future convenings. For the November 2018 regional convening, these criteria appear to have been taken into consideration. Additionally, in Phase 2, the ILO project team noted the TIP Office and ILO selected individuals within institutions for key roles, including for example, as drafting committee members and as champions for actions post-convening in their respective countries.

Although ensuring individual continuity throughout all SEA Forum for Fishers events may not be feasible for all stakeholder types, in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 respondents agreed that changing individual participation is a challenge and may make progress difficult, particularly in working groups. Respondents also noted that information sharing about the forum within organizations does not always occur.

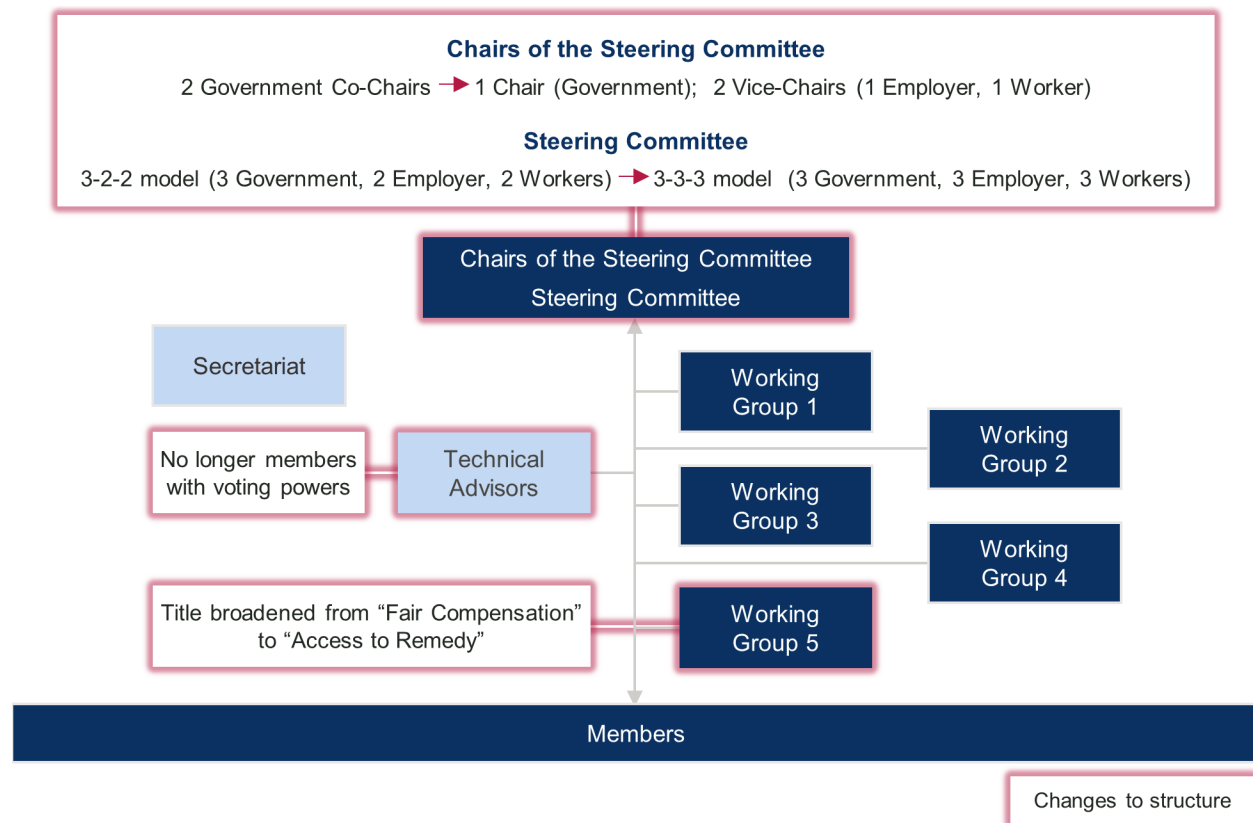
The extent of concerns about individual qualifications appeared to be much greater in Phase 1 of the evaluation, in which national and regional convening attendees reported that specific government, employer and labor participants lacked sufficient seniority, influence, language skills, and/or technical knowledge to contribute effectively. In Phase 2, in contrast, stakeholders did not appear believe that gaps in participant qualifications were a barrier to the forum's overall likelihood of success. Of important note, respondents reported that regional convening participants did not always hold seniority to make decisions once they returned to their offices, which could limit the value of their attendance at the regional convening

### 8

**November 2018 convening participants expressed agreement and early commitment to the structure of the SEA Forum for Fishers, even though some held mixed views about the drafting process that led to the resulting structure.**

The proposed MSRCB, named during the November 2018 regional convening as the SEA Forum for Fishers, has undergone numerous changes since its inception. As previously noted, the objectives, composition, and structure of the forum have been continuously updated and refined based on feedback. Exhibit 13 summarizes key changes to the forum's composition stemming from discussions during the November 2018 regional convening. The most significant changes included updating the composition of the steering committee to include more even representation across government, employer and labor organizations. and including a labor CSO representative on the steering committee. Additionally, international organizations and experts, identified as "Technical Advisors" were removed from membership to play a more advisory role.

### Exhibit 13: Changes to the MSRCB, now SEA Forum for Fishers, since its inception



Regarding roles, composition and structure, ILO was named **secretariat**, and will influence the body through technical and administrative support and in implementing decisions.<sup>15</sup>

the **steering committee** shifted from seven to nine members – from a previously proposed 3-2-2 model of government, employer, and labor representation to a 3-3-3 model. One of the labor organizations is a CSO. The following organizations were added to the steering committee:

- *Labor: Associated Philippines Seafarer's Union*
- *Employer: Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP)*<sup>16</sup>

**Chairs** were increased from two government co-chairs to one government, one employer and one labor representative. Specifically:

- *Government: Thailand removed itself as a co-chair*
- *Employer: Employers' Confederation of the Philippines was added*
- *Labor: Fishers' Rights Network for Thailand was added*

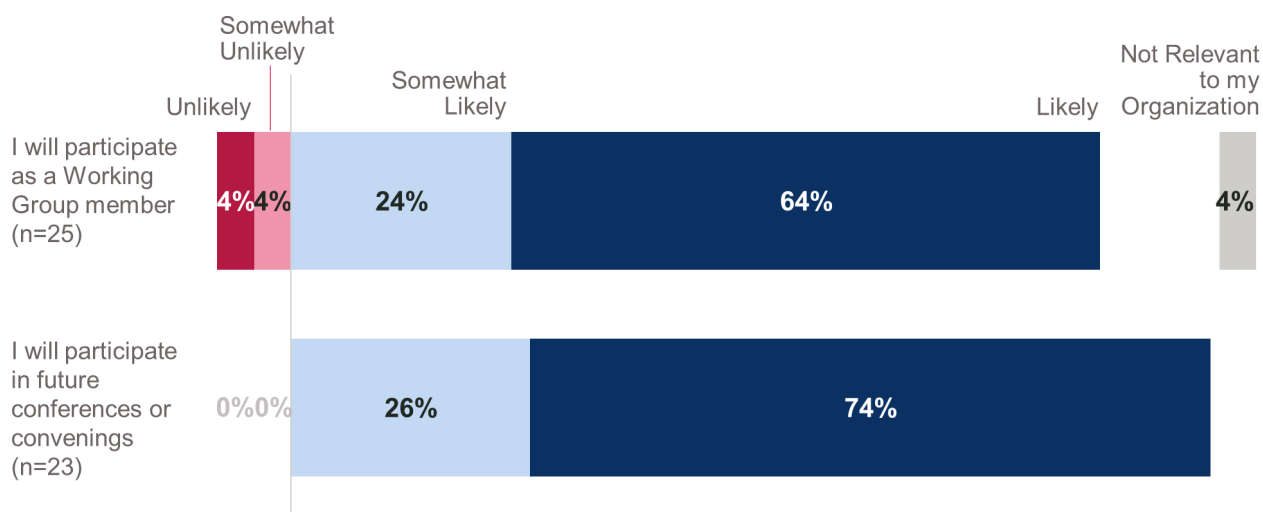
<sup>15</sup> From SEA Fisheries website March 24, 2019: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_ktyMIBIEEn5KIUxPLt83\\_FTGHgnfolTR/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_ktyMIBIEEn5KIUxPLt83_FTGHgnfolTR/view)

<sup>16</sup> Email from ILO SEA Fisheries Project Team, March 18, 2019: "While SOCKSARGEN Federation of Fishing and Allied Industries (SAFAII) was considered a possibility for the Steering Committee in October 2018, by the time of the November convening, ECOP was the proposed Steering Committee member."

**Technical advisors** are no longer members, and therefore no longer share a voting role. The previous iteration of the Terms of Reference included Technical Advisors as members. Observations at the November 2018 regional convening showed that employers were the most vocal proponents for this change. Interviews and observation following the change did not show a reaction from organizations affected by this change. Technical advisors can still provide technical advice to working groups and can suggest items to members for consideration.<sup>17</sup> The list of technical advisors was reduced, although still in development. The makeup of working groups is more fluid than previously noted with ILO currently recruiting members and technical advisors.<sup>18</sup>

Following the November 2018 regional convening, participants demonstrated strong interest, engagement, and commitment to the SEA Forum for Fishers. **Exhibit 14** shows that a large majority of post-convening survey respondents, 88 percent, said they were “likely” (64 percent) or “somewhat likely” (24 percent) to participate in the SEA Forum for Fishers as a working group member, with 8 percent responding they were “somewhat unlikely” or “unlikely” (n=25). All respondents stated they would attend future convenings. Stakeholders across stakeholder groups also reported their commitment to continue to participate as steering committee members, working group members, and technical advisors in interviews. Observations at the November 2018 regional convening also reported Indonesia’s continued commitment to helping fund this forum.

**Exhibit 14: Responses to questions regarding anticipated engagement with the SEA Forum for Fishers following the November 2018 regional convening as well as participant agreement on forum goals, objectives, structure, and composition (n=23 to 25)**



The evaluation team observed that although the process of amending the SEA Forum for Fishers structure started in plenary breakout groups, it was refined, debated, and finalized through a “drafting committee” which met in closed sessions separately at various times throughout the 2-day November 2018 regional convening. The ILO project team moderated the drafting committee, with representation

<sup>17</sup> From SEA Fisheries website: “International, regional and national organizations, academic and research institutions, non-government organizations with technical expertise, and trade union, industry and private sector associations or leaders may participate in the SEA Forum for Fishers as Technical Advisors.”  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_ktyMIBIE5KIUXPLt83\\_FTGHgnfolTR/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_ktyMIBIE5KIUXPLt83_FTGHgnfolTR/view)

<sup>18</sup> From SEA Fisheries website March 24, 2019: <http://seafisheriesproject.org/sea-forum-for-fishers/>

from ILO Geneva, employers, labor (worker) organizations, and government representatives from the three priority countries.

### Exhibit 15: Drafting Committee Members

Type	Country/Office Represented
ILO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ILO Jakarta</li><li>• ILO Geneva</li></ul>
Employer Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Philippines</li><li>• Indonesia</li></ul>
Labor Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thailand</li><li>• International Transport Federation (ITF)<sup>19</sup></li></ul>
Government Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thailand</li><li>• Indonesia</li></ul>

Convening observations noted that the ILO project team representative served an important role as moderator, facilitating discussion and resolving conflict when there was disagreement on components of the SEA Forum for Fishers. Most drafting committee members reported that they were satisfied with the process overall.

*Very productive, useful and back and forth discussions. The debate/discussion over the steering committee composition... in the end, there was no feeling of loss or gain for either side or any group at the table. More consensus and understanding of [a] more balance[d] way to move forward... – Thailand, labor*

However, even before the November convening began, it was clear that some government officials were not in a position to make decisions on behalf of their governments during this process, and they reinforced this limitation during discussions. Interpreters were available for Bahasa Indonesian and Thai speakers during drafting committee meetings. Still, participants noted that English speakers dominated discussions, thereby limiting input from others.

Some drafting committee members lacked clarity on how drafting committee membership was determined. The TIP Office worked with the ILO to select Drafting Committee members. The ILO project team reported that decisions were based upon those who had shown active participation at previous convenings or conversations throughout the socialization process, as well as those who demonstrated leadership and the ability to function well in negotiation settings.

## 9

**November 2018 convening participants were generally satisfied with the topics for forum working groups and saw value in the role of technical advisors to provide expertise within those groups.**

<sup>19</sup> International Transport Federation is the umbrella organization to which labor organizations KPI (Indonesia) and APSU (Philippines) are affiliated.

All stakeholders interviewed reported agreement with the five topics ([Exhibit 16](#)) chosen for working groups, which they felt reflected the most important challenges currently facing this sector.<sup>20</sup> Many saw these working groups as the key mechanism for gaining traction and sustaining the forum—the “working hand” of the forum.

**Exhibit 16: Objectives defined for SEA Forum for Fishers working groups at the November 2018 regional convening<sup>21</sup>**

Working Group	Objectives
1: Trafficking in Persons (TIP) risk identification and alert: data sharing and vessel monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote maritime domain awareness in relation to the risk of trafficking in persons (TIP) in Southeast Asia (SEA)</li> <li>2. Promote the sharing and use of maritime information and data in SEA for the purposes of identifying TIP risks</li> <li>3. Develop operational tools for maritime front-line responders to identify TIP risks and develop protocols for a regional TIP risks alert and referral system</li> <li>4. Maximize the impact of any existing vessel monitoring and data sharing activities in relation to combatting TIP for forced labor in fisheries</li> </ol>
2: Regional protocol for port State control and inspection of labor conditions on fishing vessels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a common standard of practice in relation to the exercise of port State control over foreign flagged fishing vessels with reference to ILO’s Guidelines for Port State Control Officers Carrying out Inspections under the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) – 2012.</li> <li>2. Develop common practice for port State inspections of labor conditions on foreign-flagged fishing vessels including the notification of flag States and national stakeholders</li> <li>3. Develop mechanisms and operational tools for port State inspections of labor conditions on foreign flagged fishing vessels</li> <li>4. Maximize the impact of any existing port State control measures for identification of TIP and forced labor risks, particularly in relation to any measure taken under the FAO’s Agreement on Port State Measures and other relevant international instruments.</li> </ol>
3: Harmonizing labor standards in the fishing and seafood industry in SEA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote ratification and support the effective implementation of ILO’s Convention 188, Forced Labour Protocol (P029), and other international instruments relevant to the fishing and seafood sectors in SEA</li> <li>2. Share best practices and lessons learnt in relation to the enforcement of labor standards and protection in the region, and take into account, as appropriate, lessons learned from other regions</li> <li>3. Promote the harmonization of labor standards in SEA for the fishing and seafood industry</li> <li>4. Take into account the outcomes of the Workshop on Promotion of Decent Work for Fishers in Southeast Asia (28 and 29 November 2018, Bali)</li> </ol>

<sup>20</sup> When asked, almost all stakeholders interviewed during both Phase 1 and Phase 2 reported that they were unsure of how the topics for working groups were chosen, but this did not appear to affect their perceptions regarding the value of the selected topics. Just one employer noted, accurately, that the process for choosing working group topics was based on discussions from a previous regional meeting.

<sup>21</sup> From ILO SEA Fisheries website, March 24, 2019:

file:///C:/Users/Kim/Downloads/024%20Annex%204%20Working%20Groups%20(1).pdf

Working Group	Objectives
4: Fair recruitment of migrant fishers in and from SEA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote harmonized regional standards in relation to the recruitment and placement of workers that are consistent with ILO's Convention 181 and Convention 188, and take into account, as appropriate, conclusions and recommendations of ILO's Tripartite Meeting on issues relating to Migrant Fishers (2017) and ILO's General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment (2016)</li> <li>2. Formulate fair migration schemes at national, sub-regional, or regional levels and develop a multilateral rights-based agenda for migration governance in the fishing and seafood industry</li> <li>3. Develop and promote bilateral agreements among SEA countries for well-regulated and safe migration of workers in the fishing and seafood industry</li> <li>4. Share best practices and lessons learnt in relation to labor migration governance including the prevention of illegal recruitment of migrant workers from SEA and, as appropriate, from other regions</li> <li>5. Develop a working model for minimum standards in training/education for fishers and workers in the fishing and seafood industry that is coherent with employment trends and migration policies in SEA</li> <li>6. Develop harmonized models for training standards and guidance for workers in the fishing and seafood industry in SEA</li> </ol>
5: Increasing access to remedies for survivors and victims of trafficking in the fishing and seafood industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordinate and share relevant data for the purposes of seeking compensation on behalf of survivors</li> <li>2. Identify opportunities for strategic litigation on behalf of survivors</li> <li>3. Coordinate and improve access to legal advice and assistance for survivors in relation to seeking compensation</li> </ol>

CSO experts reported that ILO asked them to be technical advisors based on their expertise in the sector and previous working relationship with ILO. They noted uncertainty regarding how they were selected to advise particular working groups; some believed their participation would be ad hoc based on need. That said, it appeared that most stakeholders agreed with who the ILO project team selected to be technical advisors. During the November 2018 regional convening ILO also mentioned that additional technical advisors may be added throughout 2019. The TIP Office has voiced the need for more technical advisors within the Forum, particularly groups addressing trafficking in the fisheries through the human rights lens.

*We had good experts who could guide us during those working groups. I also learned from the conference that one way of achieving your targets is involving good experts and how...to involve other participants in the discussion. – Indonesia, government*

The majority of stakeholders reported they saw the usefulness of having technical experts from academic and international organizations in the working groups. They also found the contributions from technical advisors to be helpful during the working group discussions that occurred during the November 2018 regional convening.



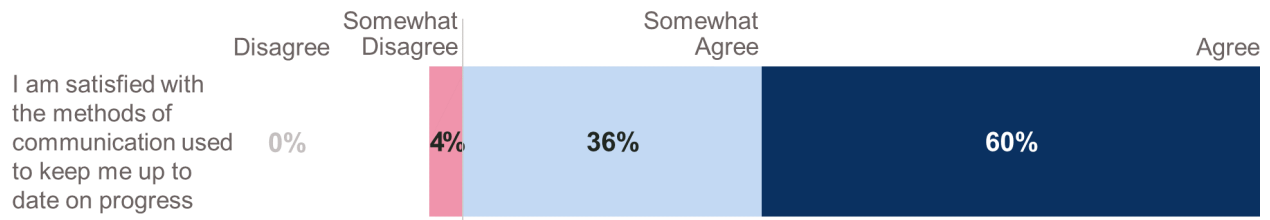
*I think the concept of the technical advisor is quite interesting. I think the technical advisors, per the TORs have lots of opportunities to make suggestions, facilitate moves forward, not assume ownership, but try to add some value to the discussions going forward. Per the TORs, I'll have lots of opportunities to do that in working group [redacted], and potentially contribute to something in other areas. – Thailand, CSO*

10

**Stakeholder perceptions improved regarding communications by the ILO project team between March and November 2018 regional convenings. Participants emphasized an ongoing need for consistent and thorough communications to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.**

The results of the February 2019 online survey provide strong evidence that participants at the November 2018 regional convening were satisfied with ILO's communications and responsiveness to date. Ninety-six (96) percent of survey respondents agreed or somewhat agreed that they were satisfied with ILO's methods of communication, with the majority agreeing ([Exhibit 17](#)).

**Exhibit 17: Survey respondent satisfaction with ILO communication (n=25)**



Qualitative interviews conducted at the November 2018 regional convening also generally indicated participant satisfaction with communication. Although a few respondents still found information sharing to be infrequent or inadequate, this represents a shift from more mixed reviews of communication quality around the March 2018 regional convening.

Stakeholders were positive about their direct communications with ILO, with most noting that they were in regular contact with SEA Fisheries Project Manager Mi Zhou over email and found her to be very responsive.

*I've been quite impressed with [communication]...[Mi Zhou] contacted us, [was] very good at responding to emails about personal concerns, and immediately made herself known to me and explained it. Overall it was really good. – Multilateral organization*

A few representatives expressed more challenges in communicating with ILO as of November 2018, noting they had not received direct communication from ILO apart from the conference invitation.

*"They should work on the feedback mechanism for participants [after the conference] to keep them engaged." – The Philippines, employer*

Survey respondents varied greatly in their suggestions for how ILO could improve communication moving forward. Among relevant open-ended answers (n=10), three respondents appeared to be entirely satisfied with communication thus far, while one CSO reported having had no follow up between the November 2018 regional convening and the survey. Interview and survey respondents across stakeholder types requested more regular updates on project progress and action items needed,

as well as improved communication in advance of the regional convening so they could appropriately prepare.

*Communication was good. It was different from before. However,...we hope details could be delivered a month before the forum is held to be learned by participants [sic] to reach optimum results – Survey respondent*

Qualitative interviews highlighted a need to ensure consistent communications with forum participants moving forward, both directly and indirectly. For example, while some stakeholders hoped for better and ongoing follow up after conferences, others suggested better sharing of conference materials such as attendee lists and contact information in advance. Additional suggestions included a desire to have key resources available on the website—which ILO is already doing—and to continue using technology as a resource as the forum moves forward.

*I would like to have seen a list of the people attending with the contact information shared [before arrival]...I think that's extremely important, because people need to be able to plan who to speak to, when to speak, and also who they send, all of that is really important. – Other SEA country, CSO*

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#### OVERARCHING QUESTION 4

**Early Successes/Potential for Results:** *What early successes are likely for the MSRCB? What results seem plausible over the next few years and how will these be measured?*

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11

**Stakeholders view demonstrated progress in working group functionality and usefulness as one key indicator of forum sustainability and have some uncertainty about how the forum will operate beyond the November 2018 convening.**

Stakeholders reported that they viewed the working groups as the real “working hand” of the forum (see Finding 9). Further, many reported the success of the forum would likely be determined by how well the working groups are organized, launched, and perceived as a useful and successful approach this first year. The ILO project team concurred with this view, noting good leadership and communication over the next year will be key.

*“Importance will be to have [in year 1 of the forum] effective meetings, effective implementation so we can demonstrate result[s] to other stakeholders that may be less eager to be involved... Monitoring working groups —ensuring working groups meet and are active in engaging in these problems and trying to achieve their objectives. That will create the examples you need to demonstrate effectiveness to future funders and participants... Not just a body talking about change in the fishing industry but doing something. – Thailand, labor*

Nearly all November 2018 regional convening participants noted uncertainty about how the SEA Forum for Fishers would become operational and carry out activities toward goals and objectives. They noted its value for creating agreements and protocols, but perceived a lack of clarity on how the forum would

collaborate with other coordinating and multistakeholder groups in the region (e.g., ASEAN) and had reservations about how feasible it would be to implement activities in their countries.

*The forum can produce an agreement; the forum can produce protocol. However, the implementation back in the countries, that [is what] we need to focus on... - Malaysia, government*

Across stakeholder groups interviewed, the most common uncertainty reported centered around the next steps for the technical working groups. While technical advisors reported they were looking forward to participating in the working groups, many were still unclear on their roles and responsibilities within these groups. Government, employer, and labor stakeholders were optimistic about the working groups, even when they weren't clear on the specifics of how they would be implemented moving forward.

Note: On February 20, 2019, after the evaluation period ended, the first SEA Forum for Fishers dispatch/newsletter proposed an initial "Save the Date" for the working groups for March 27, 28, and 29, 2019. It also included a full schedule in local times and reported the meeting would be a maximum of 2 hours, with agenda and preparation documents coming shortly. The dispatch listed the five working groups and noted, "As we discussed in November 2018, the working groups are crucial to drive the work of the Forum ahead".<sup>15</sup>

12

**Over the long-term, stakeholders reported SEA Forum for Fishers sustainability would rely on the forum's ability to remain relevant and useful to the diverse set of stakeholders and to manage and adapt to changing regional and national contexts.**

The TIP Office, the ILO project team, and numerous stakeholders interviewed in evaluation Phases 1 and 2 noted the key to achieving objectives and sustaining the forum is ongoing engagement by stakeholders across the various groups and countries. All who share an interest in the SEA Forum for Fishers' establishment and continued success noted a strong need to understand and address both the incentives and disincentives for participation as a means to strengthen engagement.

Stakeholders reported a variety of different incentives and disincentives that could affect their commitment to the SEA Forum for Fishers ([Exhibit 18](#) and [Exhibit 19](#)). Some of these are potentially within the ILO project team's sphere of control and that of its partners (ILO Geneva and the Government of Indonesia), the forum steering committee, and forum working groups; others are not.

*You have "hope", and then you have "fear". You hope that you get something out of it, and you have fear that you'll lose something if you're not involved. And I think that's the two basic motivations. On one side you think that if you don't join, you might lose something, some advantage, you might lose a benefit, you might lose on future opportunities, on the other side, you can gain all that. – Indonesia, employer*

November 2018 regional convening participants reported in qualitative interviews that one incentive for

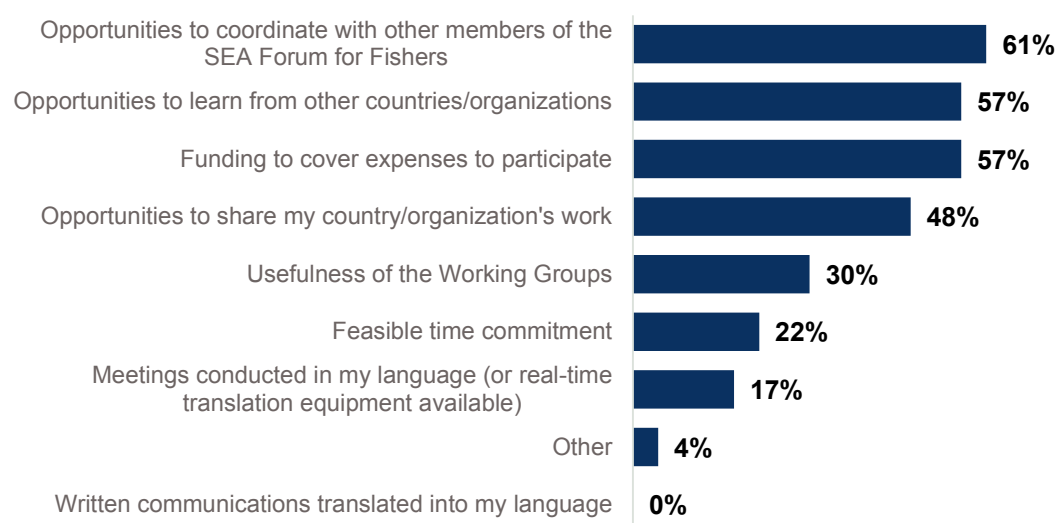
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<sup>22</sup> Source: SEA Forum for Fishers Newsletter, February 20, 2019: <https://mailchi.mp/3f8dbc99c75c/sff1902a>

staying committed to the forum is a desire to provide input on decisions that may influence their work and environment in the future. Incentives varied across stakeholder groups, see (Exhibit 19).

Respondents also highlighted the need for working groups to meet consistently, and expressed the desire for useful convenings that would allow them to connect, coordinate, and learn from each other. The factors identified through the survey as most likely to influence future participation in convenings included: opportunities to coordinate with other members (61 percent), opportunities to learn from other countries/organizations (56 percent), and receiving funding to cover participation expenses (56 percent) (Exhibit 18).

**Exhibit 18: Key incentives for SEA Forum for Fishers participation reported in online survey (n=23)**



**Exhibit 19: Incentives across stakeholder type**

Stakeholder Type	Quotes
Governments (3 GKII and 1 KII, Day 1 observation notes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government representatives reported a desire to improve law enforcement, based on CSO and public attention to the issue, to coordinate with national legislation and other internal ministry representatives, and to protect their people.</li> <li>Other stakeholders reported governments are incentivized by a desire for a good public image, trade relations and economic gains, internal political pressure to protect their own citizens, the ability to learn best practices, and their role as a regulatory force. Some respondents mentioned country-specific factors that influence participation, such as Benjina<sup>23</sup> (for Indonesia) and Thailand's recent negative publicity about trafficking.</li> </ul>
Employers (2 GKII and 1 KII, Day 1 observation notes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers reported a desire to increase their capacity and profit, protect fishers who are trafficked from their countries, and ensure that the forum</li> </ul>

<sup>23</sup> Source: IOM report June 15, 2015: Human Trafficking in the Fishery Sector: The Benjina Case; <https://indonesia.iom.int/human-trafficking-fishery-sector-benjina-case>

Stakeholder Type	Quotes
	<p><i>reflects lessons from personal and national experiences, including ensuring that the industry does not attract high-risk individuals.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Other stakeholders reported the need for employers to avoid using trafficked individuals to reduce their risk and to increase revenue.</i></li> </ul>
Labor (1 GKII and 1 KII, Day 1 observation notes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Other stakeholders highlighted their desire to increase benefits and income, as well as to eliminate trafficking and exploitation in their industry.</i></li> </ul>
CSOs (5 KII)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>CSOs agreed that civil society is eager to cooperate and coordinate with other stakeholders to increase their ability to network, share data and best practices, and produce new tools or products.</i></li> </ul>
Multilaterals (1 GKII)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expressed interest in supporting increased collaboration and coordination among key stakeholders, as well as networking and making contacts.</i></li> </ul>

The perceived relevance of C188 differed by respondent type. While several government, employer, and labor respondents believed that C188 has important implications for the forum as it builds momentum towards shared minimum standards for worker protection, CSOs believed C188 is of low to medium importance to the forum, pointing out that ratification of the measure does not necessarily indicate good implementation.

*“I’ll just say one thing. [C188] sets minimum acceptable standards in the industry. We have to start there if we’re going to get anywhere. If we don’t have these standards then I don’t know how the outcomes will be achieved, because we have different countries, we have different views on what the minimum standards are.” – Philippines, labor*

*“It could be an important tool to push for legislation that would be helpful for fishers, but if we didn’t have it...there’s other ways of getting to national policy and legislation that’s helpful to workers, and what’s ultimately important is the implementation of whatever those laws turn out to be. So, helpful tool, good thing to agree on, a good rallying point, but the main thing is going to be...the passage of domestic laws and implementation.” – Thailand, CSO*

Disincentives to sustained and expanded engagement included operational, political, and economic issues. In qualitative interviews, stakeholders identified a lack of time and funding and concerns about sharing data more widely as key considerations. Respondents noted government officials participating in or supporting the changes associated with forum objectives could face internal conflicts or backlash within and across departments. Others noted employers might be discouraged from participating if more stringent regulations are perceived to affect their operations or profits. Some employers expressed concern that only the already legitimate and well-intentioned firms will participate, limiting the value of the forum to the broader issue at hand. November 2018 regional convening observations reinforced these findings, noting the following disincentives: additional costs for employers required to rebuild vessels under new regulations; differences in government policies affecting the value of remaining engaged, such as the prohibition of labor unions in some countries and national laws that contradict C188; silos and turf battles between government departments; and concerns that increased transparency through participation may negatively affect a government or industry’s public standing.

*“Legitimate firms have no issues. The ones that are represented are generally companies that are compliant with all the regulations, [or] are on their way there, and they are the experts in the laws that they are trying to follow, so they are the good apples. The bad apples, you won’t see in these forums, generally speaking... And they probably won’t come as well [sic], even if they’re invited.” – Indonesia, employer*

Government, employer, and labor stakeholders also highlighted a need to engage the private sector more fully, including a focus on the “buying countries.” These stakeholders noted that the private sector was the “missing piece” in the current SEA Forum for Fishers, and many speculated that pressure from this cohort is what will keep countries engaged.

*Also, market countries need to be involved. Thailand, why did Thailand follow all regulations? Because [in] 2015 they got [a] yellow card. That is why they need to be there. It is not only the political will in every country, it is [economic] pressure as well. – Indonesia, government*

However, ILO also recognizes that it may be challenging for the private sector to join before the forum has developed a little further. In later stages, the private sector would be better positioned to identify incentives and how to best engage with the forum.

Challenges to MSRCB sustainability raised consistently in Phase 1 focused on the changing geopolitical realities of the region and skepticism about the feasibility of successfully integrating and sustaining an MSRCB in this context. Stakeholders highlighted the challenge of maintaining harmony across SEA countries, government, employer and labor stakeholders, and the various stakeholder types within their own countries.

ILO and other stakeholders mentioned that country context could affect assumptions and underlie perceived reasons for engagement. For example, Thailand developed a plan to combat human trafficking of fishers three years ago, so introducing new or different regional standards and regulations through this mechanism may not be timely for them. Thailand also had its yellow card status lifted, giving the government less freedom to pressure employers and buyers to change practices. The country already appears to be suffering backlash from these groups for adopting C188. Vietnam has yellow card status but sees illegal fishing as the problem (to be addressed by other fora), not labor issues.

Election results can affect government and private industry decisions depending upon which way the resulting political winds blow. Indonesia and Thailand are holding national elections this Spring, and Philippine senate elections will be taking place soon.

China’s encroachment on traditional fishing areas deemed by some countries to be their national fishing grounds also affects behaviors. Government stakeholders may be prone to risk aversion in one area while focusing energy toward another priority. That said, all interview respondents highlighted the need to continue “regional and international pressure,” especially by buyer countries, to ensure long-term relevance and sustainability.

*But as I understand it to be now, countries who are buying, they’re the ones who are giving attention to this matter. As long as they are giving attention to this matter, then the chances of success will be good. If they drop it and no longer care about it, then it’ll fall off the radar, eventually. – Indonesia, employer*

**The TIP Office, ILO and most stakeholders noted that successful operationalization and sustainability of the SEA Forum for Fishers requires sufficient funding and a more secure timeline.**

Through quarterly reports, correspondence with the TIP Office, and interviews, ILO and other stakeholders considered both the protracted timeline and funding limitations as barriers to success. For example, stakeholders noted that a lack of sufficient funds critically affects the ability of the project to support a larger footprint in other SEA countries. This broader footprint is necessary to secure and sustain engagement, including through the provision of expected incentives for continued government buy-in. Additional funds would also support the creation of a sustainable staffing model to address project gaps, such as implementing a communications plan and liaising with and encouraging participation by private industry representatives.

ILO and others also noted that without sufficient funding, stakeholders are often less likely to commit to the SEA Forum for Fishers, as they are wary that funding ends in March 2020. In their most recent quarterly report, the ILO project team highlighted that a “lack of secur[e] funding beyond March 2020 undermines confidence in [the] sustainability of the initiative.”<sup>24</sup> Government, employer, and labor stakeholders underlined the importance of continued funding as well, citing that without funding there is less coordination across countries, making the forum less likely to be successful, even in the short term. Government stakeholders focused on the need for more co-investment from other governments outside of Indonesia to both share the burden and ensure regional interests outweigh an individual funding country’s interest.

Both ILO and TIP Office stakeholders noted that initial SEA Fisheries Project planning did not adequately anticipate the complexity of the initiative, which has contributed to these funding and timeline challenges. The SEA Forum for Fishers differs from ASEAN and many other MSIs in the diversity of its multinational stakeholders, the format and extent of stakeholder engagement needed, and the multidisciplinary nature of TIP in the fishing industry.

Despite these challenges, several key stakeholders reported that they thought ILO was well positioned for the future and were impressed with their efforts thus far.

*Those persons involved are very professional and know what they want...to achieve and I think this project is in very good hands. The approaches that they use [are] very good, besides organizing working groups, conferences, they also visit countries, talk to stakeholders directly, which is very important and [a] very good approach and then hopefully it will spread...I am sure that by this year and next year, we will have already the whole structure in place and I hope to see that even within this year we can have this structure functioning so that the next year it will be evaluating what or how this functions and how to maintain it or not maintain it... –Indonesia, government*

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<sup>24</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)



**The ILO project team plans to focus on ensuring working groups are operational, securing buy-in across countries, broadening stakeholder involvement and fundraising as means to officially launch the forum and ensure its sustainability. The TIP Office plans to maintain a cooperative relationship to ensure TIP Office expectations for the forum are met.**

Building on the strategy outlined in Finding 2, the ILO project team described the November 2018 regional convening in their latest quarterly report as a forum for stakeholders to “*finalize and agree on the founding texts of the SEA Forum for Fishers, including the Terms of Reference and Resolution, and the working groups that reflected agreed regional priorities.*”<sup>25</sup> In interviews, the project team reiterated their strategy for the November 2018 regional convening as a continuation of their participatory approach to gathering feedback. The goal of this regional convening was to move from socializing and gaining buy-in from organizations for an MSRCB to achieving agreement on the structure and composition of the SEA Forum for Fishers. This shift is anticipated to improve ongoing efforts to secure buy-in and for the forum moving forward.

*I think, you know, the agreement of the structure and terms of reference, if that’s completely agreed by all the participating countries and institutions, that would be great, that would be an achievement, because then we can build on that structure many things. – Indonesia, implementer*

The ILO project team also highlighted the importance of continued communication with and operationalization of the working groups as a next step to increase commitment to the forum moving forward.

*...because we need to also prove to the government that this is kind of really starting, actually going, so that they can commit...so we just prove that this is, this working group has activities, their action has started rolling, so you see that this works. – Indonesia, implementer*

According to current work plans, the SEA Fisheries Project will remain the Secretariat of the SEA Forum for Fishers until funding ends in March 2020. ILO reported that the final composition of the steering committee and chairs/vice-chairs “*reflect[s] broad development partnerships.*”<sup>26</sup>

At the same time, ILO reported that changing national landscapes may require adaptations in 2019. For example, they reported the Thai Maritime Enforcement Coordination Centre (MECC) is not legally mandated yet but will begin to play a lead role in the fisheries space. ILO also highlighted the upcoming elections in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines that may lead to changes in some key government officials’ positions, and the need for their planning to “*remain adaptive to these local level changes.*”

ILO reported they would work toward fundraising and securing support for the SEA Forum for Fishers in 2019 Q1.

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<sup>25</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)

<sup>26</sup> Quarterly Report Y2QR3 (October to December 2018)



# CONCLUSIONS

**Conclusion 1: The ILO project team’s iterative, participatory, and adaptive approach to developing the SEA Forum for Fishers—in addition to ILO’s reputation as a successful convener and respected international organization—contributed to early foundations of success for forum establishment.**

*Based on evidence from Findings 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9*

Beginning in 2017, the SEA Fisheries team, including both the ILO project team and TIP Office representatives, used an adaptive, iterative, and participatory process to develop an MSRCB, now known as the SEA Forum for Fishers. This effort involved collaboration with a wide array of stakeholder groups across nine SEA countries. As needs evolved, ILO and TIP Office staff worked together to adapt targets in order to achieve early buy-in from priority country government, employer and labor delegations. Some other benchmarks were deemphasized by the TIP Office. The ILO project team flexed where possible to accommodate CSOs, international anti-TIP experts, law enforcement organizations, multilateral organizations, and buyers—who provided useful insights, context, and leverage for change based on their roles relative to fisheries-related TIP. These groups do not fit into the traditional ILO tripartite MSI structure.

ILO’s leadership was another key factor in early successes toward the establishment of the SEA Forum for Fishers. ILO already had a presence and a good reputation in SEA countries for creating labor rights progress, and their ability to negotiate with governments through e multistakeholder engagement was an advantage in creating the forum.

The project’s iterative and participatory approach to forum development was also instrumental in progress made to date. The project team initially established a partnership with the Government of Indonesia, which provided invaluable regional context, guidance, and financial support. ILO identified priority countries—Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines—for early engagement and input. They also launched targeted information-gathering projects that would add value to existing regional initiatives and countries and strengthen the evidence for ongoing MSRCB advocacy efforts. The ILO project team met with other relevant MSIs in the region, such as ASEAN, COMMIT, Bali Process, and others. Through these conversations, they were able to glean region-based practices for MSI development and gain buy-in for the SEA Fisheries MSRCB’s complementarity and added value.

Over time, the success of this adaptive approach has been demonstrated by changes in stakeholder perceptions of the SEA Forum for Fishers. ILO’s first regional convening (March 2018) was well attended, but afterward, confidence levels varied widely regarding the project’s direction, focus, and approach to MSRCB establishment. ILO adapted its strategy accordingly, building on strengths and creatively filling in communication gaps, where possible. By the second regional convening (November 2018), a broad range of stakeholders from across the region were eager to engage and achieve commitment to the MSRCB’s objectives, structure, action-oriented working groups, and future convenings. Key decision makers from several countries were absent from the convening, delaying a signing and launch, but the foundations for a successful launch have been established.

## **Conclusion 2: MSRCB stakeholders appreciate the strength in the diversity of participating countries and organizations, while also recognizing the challenge this presents for the communication needed to maintain engagement and momentum.**

*Based on evidence from Findings 5, 6, 7, and 10*

Stakeholders expressed appreciation that the SEA Forum for Fishers member composition has expanded beyond a traditional ILO tripartite arrangement, to include labor CSOs. They also appreciate more integral roles anticipated for local and regional labor and victim advocacy CSOs, vessel monitoring actors (ICITAP), and policy and technical advisors. The increased involvement of diverse stakeholders was a key improvement cited between the March and November 2018 regional convenings, leading to stronger and broader buy-in for the proposed forum. Stakeholders identified a desire for further expansion, recognizing the key role private industries from “buyer countries” (the U.S., European Union [EU] countries, etc.) play in achieving change by employers and governments through economic leverage. Even as the composition of the forum was broadened, ILO continued to deftly manage the associated complexity of relationships and opinions regarding the proposed forum objectives, structure, and composition. The TIP Office seeks broader voting membership and takes comfort in knowing the body is continuing to evolve, and that through the cooperative agreement with the project team, there is opportunity to continue to influence the body’s composition and governance.

The project team continues to face challenges in communicating with widely dispersed representatives with varying levels of technical knowledge and language needs. Travel costs make on-the-ground communication difficult and limited staff make remote communication a challenge. Diverse languages limit clear, multiway communication. ILO was able to address some language diversity challenges at the November 2018 regional convening, providing electronic, real-time translation and translating TOR documents into three commonly used languages. While improvements were appreciated, participants identified constraints to non-English speaker participation during discussions. To limit these challenges moving forward, ILO is using internet-based communication—including the newly launched SEA Forum for Fishers website and electronic newsletters—for multiway information and document sharing, expanding forum engagement, and organizing working group activities.

## **Conclusion 3: Establishment and sustainability of the SEA Forum for Fishers will depend upon expanded funding and longer timelines; the forum’s ability to successfully operationalize working groups and sustain stakeholder engagement; and capacity to adapt to changing realities and stay relevant to regional priorities.**

*Based on evidence from Findings 11, 12, 13, and 14*

The SEA Forum for Fishers faces ongoing and critical challenges to its establishment and sustainability beyond 2020, including time constraints, funding and staffing limitations, competing stakeholder priorities, and changing regional and national geopolitical contexts.

Both timing and funding constraints affect how stakeholders prioritize engagement with this initiative relative to other priorities. While excitement for the forum is currently high, stakeholders expressed concerns about the fast-approaching project end date and ability to maintain commitment as it nears. The activities needed to garner MSRCB support from key countries and the diverse and dispersed set of stakeholders also require larger budgets than anticipated. The ILO project team is rationing funds and seeking additional partnerships to fill funding gaps.

Two factors that can influence commitment to the forum fall more squarely within the sphere of control of the ILO project team, namely (1) operationalizing and sharing relevant results from the five working groups, and (2) maintaining momentum from the November 2018 regional convening through frequent, useful, and engagement-building communication with key stakeholders. ILO is taking steps in this direction: they have shared a descriptive electronic newsletter with convening participants and other stakeholders that highlighted next steps (that were not concrete at the time of the convening), asked for feedback, and provided a schedule for the first round of working group meetings in early March 2019.

To ensure sustainability, the forum must also stay relevant to diverse regional stakeholders who are balancing competing priorities. The three priority countries expected to have the strongest engagement are each having elections this year, which will likely affect individual and ministry-level interest and priorities. The EU is the largest seafood importer, and SEA countries are the largest exporters to this market. Changes in EU illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing card ratings (such as the lifting of Thailand's yellow card in January 2019) and reasons for these changes influence industry and government pressure to prioritize fisheries-related issues. Regional pressures, such as China's expanded fishing ground ranges, also influence decisions that may compete with some forum objectives (e.g., Indonesia's fishing range expansion). However, the forum's working group objectives cover a wide swath of issues, increasing the likelihood that quick wins from these groups can maintain interest for countries with competing priorities. More tangibly engaging private industries from "buyer countries" may also increase forum engagement given the economic leverage they have with SEA countries' economic interests.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on data collected across stakeholder types, including interviews with the ILO project team and the TIP Office. All recommendations should be discussed in consultation with key TIP Office officials and the ILO project team and should be adjusted based on changing regional and national contexts.

## The TIP Office: MSRCB Sustainability

*Based on evidence from Findings 11, 12, 13, and 14*

The TIP Office should ensure that sufficient funds and time are invested in this initiative to successfully establish and sustain this unique and well-timed approach to combat trafficking in fishers in SEA. The TIP Office should continue to be a flexible donor, using adaptive management to adjust to changing priorities and needs of the SEA Forum for Fishers. The TIP Office should continue to work closely with the ILO project team to ensure TIP Office expectations for the cooperative agreement are met. The TIP Office and the project team are still in the process of co-creating a “living” strategy that is relevant and meets the needs of both parties. Resources highlighted as most essential include:

- **Adequate Staffing:** The likelihood of project success will greatly increase with the following:
  - National Program Officer in each priority country, including Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and potentially Myanmar depending on early progress seen
  - A full-time communications staff member who will be critical to supporting stakeholder engagement (particularly as ILO rolls out working groups) and supporting a frequently updated website with relevant resources for key stakeholders
  - A private sector consultant/liaison to support the development of mutually desirable engagement by private companies from “buyer countries” with the forum
- **Expanded Timeline:** Extend for a minimum of 2–3 years (e.g., through 2022) to ensure that the SEA Forum for Fishers has the time to be officially launched (anticipated in October 2019) and fully functional for at least a year
- **Strengthened Communications Capacity:** Ensure ILO’s capacity to ensure inclusivity through adequate translation of resources on the website and during national and regional convenings

The TIP Office will be well-served to consider the importance of the implementing organization, both in terms of their added value and potential limitations regarding the legitimacy and long-term sustainability of the forum. For example, the importance of ILO’s leadership in the short term, as a well-recognized labor organization and convener across the region and this broad swath of stakeholders should not be underestimated. The TIP Office would also benefit from careful examination of the lead organization toward longer-term sustainability of the forum. Having an international organization as long-term lead can affect the degree to which SEA countries and stakeholders feel ownership and are willing to invest. United Nations bodies have longstanding protocols and traditions that could limit the out of the box fundraising strategies that could be employed to sustain the body. Similarly, these could affect the breadth of options available to expand voting membership in the body.

The TIP Office should also continue to push for a longer-term Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan for the SEA Forum for Fishers that continues to capture learnings throughout the project and support project toward benchmarks. For this to be successful, the TIP Office should support additional

funding for MEL activities. An internal evaluation can suffice for defining benchmarks and timelines and monitoring progress. An external evaluation will be needed to ensure independence in order to continue to capture lessons and developmentally support the early implementation and sustainable design of the forum.

## **ILO: Strategy and Next Steps**

*Based on evidence from Findings 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14*

Ensuring early wins for the SEA Forum for Fishers—particularly in terms of progress and productivity of working group operationalization—will be essential to securing and expanding stakeholder commitment (private sector, government, etc.) prior to the SEA Forum for Fishers’ inauguration in October 2019.

ILO should continue to build on successes to-date by putting primary focus in three key areas:

- **Ensuring Working Groups Are Operational:** The communication around the first working group meetings (planned for March 27–29, 2019), should be the main focus of the ILO project team. Consistent communication, reminders, and follow up will ensure continued high levels of participation across stakeholders. Meeting designs should mirror the participatory approach from previous convenings, while shifting to focus on deeper dives into technical issues discussed at the November 2018 regional convening. Working group meetings should conclude with clear next steps regarding communication. The leadership of working groups should be discussed during the inaugural meeting of the forum to increase long-term buy-in.
- **Maintaining Strong Communication with Stakeholders:** Consistent communication will be key to keep the momentum from the March and November 2018 regional convenings going. ILO should continue to use all methods of communication used to-date (e-mail, phone calls, and in-person meetings) and ensure that the website is continuously updated and seen as an easy to use platform for stakeholders to access useful resources. As planned by ILO, future focus should also be on creating a space on the website as a sharing and communications platform between stakeholders.
- **Increasing Country Commitment:** The ILO project team should continue to seek buy-in and commitments from SEA countries. This includes securing buy-in from:
  - Steering committee members who are providing time, but not tangible resources
  - Additional countries and stakeholders to ensure the forum is seen as a legitimate **regional** body.
  - New government stakeholders who may emerge after Indonesia, Thailand and Philippines hold elections in 2019.
  - Private sector actors from “buyer countries” after the body is launched and an appropriate level of engagement is negotiated.

**Ensuring Key Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Steps are taken:** This report provides strong evidence that evaluation findings from Phase 1 were incorporated into strategic thinking by the TIP Office and were applied by the project team during Phase 2, and early successes were achieved as a result. Importantly, during both phases of the evaluation, stakeholders identified this evaluation as a clear sign that the TIP Office was “taking this seriously” and in a way that added value to the legitimacy of the forum.

- **Process evaluation:** The TIP Office should continue to fund an independent **developmental**

**process evaluation** using an **appreciative inquiry approach** to capture lessons and support early establishment and initial work through a supportive information sharing environment. Evaluation during the formative stages of MSRCB development can reduce risk and add value to the process.

- **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Strategy:** The cornerstone of a strategic framework for this complex forum with dispersed, coordinating members and advisors is a meaningful Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan. The MEL plan applies learning from the work of the forum and its partners to ensure efforts and decisions remain clear and targeted to results the forum seeks to achieve. A MEL plan developed using Appreciative Inquiry and participatory techniques grounded in evaluation theory reduces the risk that leadership over-influences the body's decisions over time, possibly weakening the body's impact and long-term member buy-in and sustainability.
- The forum will benefit by the design of a MEL plan with an independent evaluation and learning partner to evaluate and support the early establishment and efforts of working groups and the forum as it moves beyond the proposed launch in September 2019. This forum will achieve what it measures. The three-year MEL plan would support focus and more rapid progress toward early objectives. The evaluation team recommends, at a very high level, a stepwise process for developing a realistic MEL plan for the MSRCB that will hone focus, support more rapid achievement of objectives, communicate MSRCB successes and test the validity of its strategic framework:
- **2019 – 2021 MEL Plan Development and Implementation Strategy Outline**
  - Establish working and steering group activities, timelines, and communication sharing plans
  - Work with an external evaluation team to apply an appreciative, participatory approach to develop a theory of change and MSRCB indicators that has buy-in across stakeholder groups as part of the September convening or at a convening within six months of the MSRCB's official launch
  - Utilize this as the basis for the development of the MEL plan to achieve and demonstrate interim progress
  - Have the MEL working group work with an external evaluator to determine key leverage points for change within the theory of change and set learning priorities and evaluation activities and timelines around these. Develop a portfolio MEL plan based on this strategic framework.
  - Revisit and revise the strategic framework based on MEL data

Implemented together and conducted with an external evaluation and learning partner, using these steps will result in a rigorous, independently moderated, information-rich strategy that will improve project results.

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

As the TIP Office reflects on lessons for future multistakeholder initiatives and regional coordinating bodies, a few key considerations from the SEA Forum for Fishers development should be applied moving forward.

**Time and Resources:** Developing a regional MSRCB depends upon consistent engagement by partners across multiple countries, languages, and organizations. It takes additional time and resources to establish a regional multistakeholder coordinating body of this magnitude. Socializing stakeholders from different countries and with different languages to the MSRCB concept is reliant on a consistent on-the-ground presence in priority countries. The time it takes for discussions and decision-making in MSRCB meetings takes more time and funding than typical multistakeholder and bilateral initiatives. In future MSRCB designs, the TIP Office should consider including additional resources and time to support the participatory, continuous, iterative engagement needed to develop a forum that involves many stakeholder groups and functions at a regional level. Specifically, the TIP Office should consider funding longer-term projects that have staffing and budgets that match the regional nature of an MSRCB.

**Leadership:** The TIP Office will be well-served to consider the importance of the implementing organization, both in terms of their added value and potential limitations regarding the legitimacy and long-term sustainability of the forum. For example, the importance of ILO's leadership in the short term, as a well-recognized labor organization and convener across the region and this broad swath of stakeholders should not be underestimated. The TIP Office would also benefit from careful examination of the lead organization toward longer-term sustainability of the forum. Having an international organization as long-term lead can affect the degree to which SEA countries and stakeholders feel ownership and are willing to invest. United Nations bodies have longstanding protocols and traditions that could limit the out of the box fundraising strategies that could be employed to sustain the body. Similarly, these could affect the breadth of options available to expand voting membership in the body.

**Evaluation:** The TIP Office should continue to fund evaluations.

- **An independent developmental evaluation** supports early progress when granting funds to establish a multistakeholder regional coordinating body, such as this one. The evaluation and project also benefit from using an **appreciative inquiry** approach during the formative, negotiation stages of MSRCB development to assess progress and advise on course corrections while reducing risk to the projects' aims. This type of evaluation will add the most value to the process. See above Recommendations, page 43, for additional detail.

Prior to funding design and implementation of an MSRCB, other evaluation approaches that may be appropriate and useful include:

- **Organizational/Initiative Network Analysis** and **SWOT Analysis** conducted prior to funding an MSRCB effort to ensure it is needed and adding value to existing mechanisms. The organizational and initiative network analysis can supply the project team tasked to establish the forum with key data to inform discussions that can increase early buy-in and investment. An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats conducted before initiating the work of developing the MSI could a) avoid the risk of investing in an MSI where threats and

weaknesses outweigh strengths and opportunities, and can support the development of a most appropriate strategy; b) support the implementing partner in having information to inform their strategy for developing the body and to more efficiently utilize resources.

- **Baseline/Midline/Endline** performance evaluation conducted before, during, and after project funding, depending upon the length of the project can gauge the functionality, impact, and sustained utility of these complex initiatives. If shorter than five years, a baseline and endline may be more appropriate. The TIP Office could learn from and build on the ILO's midline for the current project to inform the establishment of feasible and useful scopes of work for future performance evaluations for these initiatives.



# LIST OF ANNEXES

The following annexes have been submitted under separate cover:

- Annex 1: Evaluation Scope of Work
- Annex 2: Interview Guides
- Annex 3: Respondent Informed Consent Form
- Annex 4: SEA Fisheries Evaluation Briefer
- Annex 5: Online Survey Questionnaire
- Annex 6: Observation Guide
- Annex 7: Terms of Reference from November 2018 Regional Convening