

# INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

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ITF Statement

Voluntary certifications and standards

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# VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS

The ratification of the work in fishing convention (ILO C188), proper consultation with workers and worker's representatives, formal social dialogue and implementation of CBAs, either at national, sectoral, port, fleet, vessel or company level are all essential parts of this convention that cannot be sidestepped through voluntary standards. They cannot be relied upon for the protection of human rights and are not a substitute for public regulation, nor do they eliminate the need to protect rights holders from corporate abuses.

The use of voluntary tools in response to labour abuses in fisheries has been growing – but workers are often excluded from the development of these tools.

These standards fail to meet all three fundamental principles of the UNGPS: support for human rights policy, HRDD, and access to remedy. Furthermore, they fail key tests compared to worker-centric processes.

Voluntary standards and tools will be ineffective in improving human and labour rights within seafood supply chains without the transformation of:

- 1) the business models of seafood businesses
- 2) the long and opaque seafood supply chains
- 3) worker participation in governance of seafood supply chains
- 4) the widespread adoption of ILO C188 and similar laws and conventions by fishing nations.

Instead of increased investment in these voluntary tools, seafood brands and retailers need to move toward a more transformational, transparent, and worker-centric approach, for labour participation, monitoring, and remediation.

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