



**COMMISSION  
FIFTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**  
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA  
10 – 14 December, 2018

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**Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels**

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**WCPFC15-2018-LabourSWG-01  
13 December 2018  
1900**

**Submitted by  
Labour SWG Chair**

## ***Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels***

### ***The Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stock in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean,***

***Recalling*** Articles 6 and 8 of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries which set out international standards, including labour standards for the responsible conduct of fishing operations to ensure fair work and living conditions;

***Noting*** the Commission has to consider adopting generally accepted international minimum labour standards for the responsible conduct of fishing operations;

***Noting*** the increasing global attention to instances of poor labour conditions and mistreatment of crews including forced labour and child labour on board fishing vessels;

***Acknowledging*** the important role played by crew members in assisting the conduct of fishing vessel operations in compliance with WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures, and the central role that crew members play in contributing to effective fishing operations;

***Recalling*** efforts that WCPFC Members have made in recent years in improving the conditions and welfare of observers on board fishing vessels, and acknowledging the equal importance of the welfare of crew members;

***Reaffirming*** the importance of the responsibilities of flag States under international law regarding fishing vessels flying their flag, including with respect to safety at sea and labour conditions on fishing vessels;

***Mindful*** that WCPFC Member Small Island Developing States and Participating Territories have a legitimate interest in increasing the participation of their labour force in the crewing of vessels that catch highly migratory fish stocks in their waters, and that CCMs are interested in promoting safe and decent employment for their nationals;

#### ***Resolves that:***

1. CCMs are encouraged to make every effort to ensure that their relevant national legislation fully extends to all crew working on fishing vessels flying their flag in the WCPF Convention Area and, where appropriate and applicable, CCMs are encouraged to adopt measures into their national legislation to establish minimum standards regulating crew labour conditions. CCMs are further encouraged to ensure the adequate enforcement of all relevant legislation, including by identifying and prosecuting breaches of relevant national laws relating to the treatment of crew by vessel operators landing fish in their ports or operating in their waters.
2. CCMs are encouraged to implement measures, consistent with generally accepted international minimum standards for crew on fishing vessels, where applicable, to ensure fair working conditions on board for all crew working on fishing vessels flying their flag and operating within the WCPF Convention area, including, *inter alia*:
  - a) A safe and secure working environment with minimum risk to health and wellbeing;
  - b) Fair terms of employment, that are enshrined in a written contract or in equivalent measures, which is made available to the employee, in a form and language that facilitates the employee's understanding of the terms and is agreed by the employee;

- c) Decent working and living conditions on board vessels, including access to sufficient fresh water and food, operational safety protection and medical care, and that facilitates acceptable standards of sanitary hygiene;
  - d) Decent and regular remuneration as well as purchasing appropriate insurance for the crew; and
  - e) Providing crew members with the opportunity to disembark and seek repatriation if so entitled.
3. CCMs are encouraged to work with any entities involved in recruitment of crew to implement the provisions of this Resolution.
  4. CCMs are encouraged to strengthen effective jurisdiction and control over vessels flying their flag and to exercise due diligence to improve and enforce requirements regarding labour conditions on board fishing vessels.
  5. All CCMs are encouraged to share progress on implementation of this Resolution annually to the Commission.
  6. To implement this Resolution, developed CCMs are encouraged to make concerted efforts and consider innovative options to assist developing CCMs – both flag CCMs and coastal CCMs – in the development and strengthening of relevant domestic legislation and in the enforcement of that legislation, including working with local industries (which includes labour agents) to help them meet the minimum standards in this Resolution.