International Labour Organization

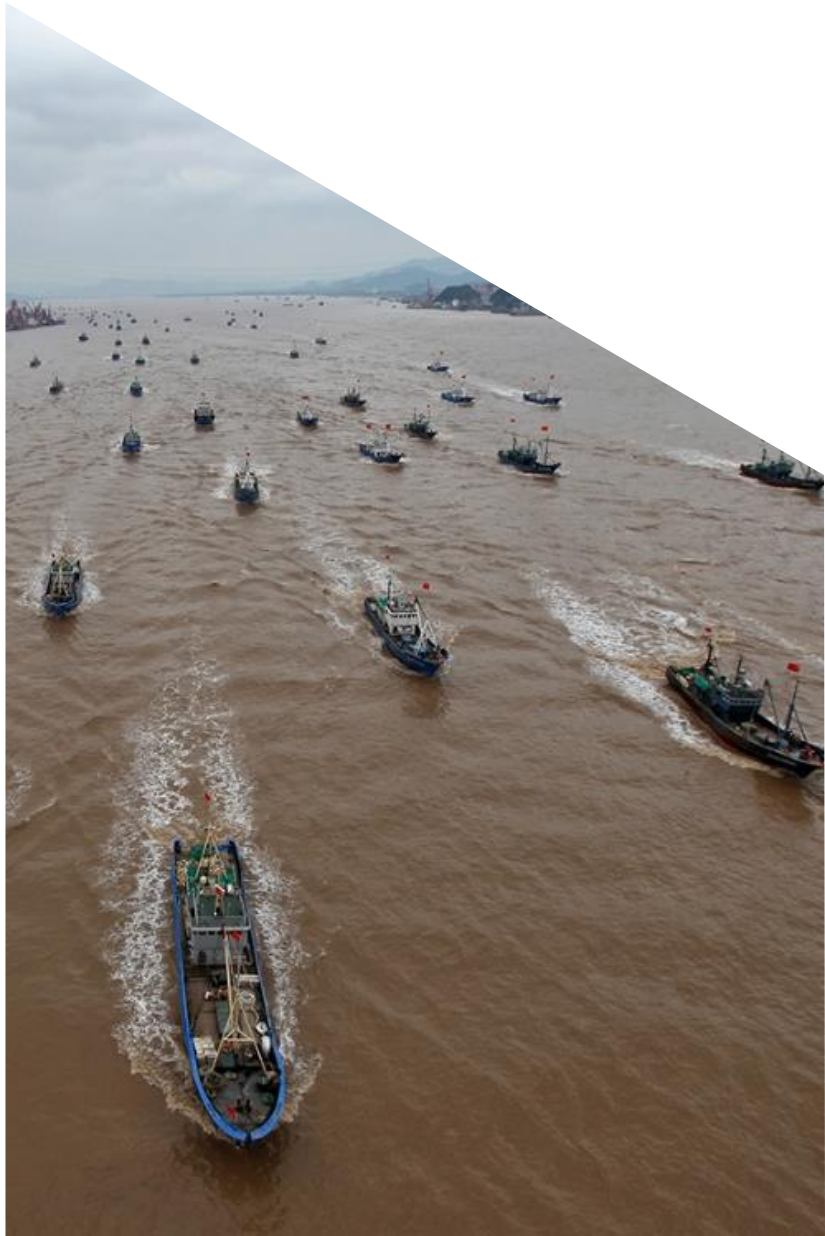
Targeted inspections

How can vessel tracking technology support the fight against forced labour in fishing?

Date: Wednesday 10th January 2024

The Challenge: a drop in the ocean

- The sheer number of vessels calling into port
- Different issues for port authorities to deal with: EEZ permit, IUU fishing, Safety, Working Visas, **AND** working conditions
- Limited human resources
- Labour inspectorate generally don’t carry out routine, unannounced inspections on board fishing vessels



The solution: narrowing the search

A range of initiatives and innovative digital tools have been developed to detect forced labour at critical points along the seafood supply chain **using new and existing technologies. They:**

- Identify high risk vessels by **monitoring vessels' behaviours** (e.g., going dark, transhipment, time spent at sea)
- **Expand** the use of vessel tracking technology (VMS, AIS), developed to address IUU fishing and safety at sea, to the detection of labour rights abuses in combination with AI
- Use data scraping and new analytical tools to map and make **vessel ownership** more transparent

New collaboration between ILO and OceanMind

Objective: offer a low-cost alert system for port authorities that uses Automatic Identification System (AIS) data to assess risk of forced labour indicators on board

- This project would adapt and test the model using worker interviews and machine learning refinements
- Cape Town, South Africa has been identified as a case study port to train OceanMind's algorithm
- The project will provide preliminary outputs of risk vessels to authorities (Department of Employment and Labour – DEL – and Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment - DFFE)