



WORK REPORT

Discussion on Strengthening Social Responsibility Practices in the Fishery

1. Background

As part of the ongoing implementation of the **Karnataka State Small Pelagic Purse Seine Fisheries – Fishery Improvement Project (FIP)**, a series of discussions were held to strengthen **social responsibility practices within the fishery sector**, particularly focusing on labor conditions, human rights compliance, and fisher welfare. These actions are aligned with international responsible fisheries standards and the objectives of the FIP to ensure that fisheries are managed in a socially responsible and sustainable manner across the supply chain.

A **Social Risk Assessment (SRA)** was conducted between **09–11 December 2025** by **Mr. Sven Blankenhorn**, an experienced SRA auditor. The assessment evaluated key aspects such as working conditions, labor practices, occupational safety, wage practices, grievance mechanisms, and awareness of labor rights among fishers and vessel crew members involved in the purse seine fishery.

Prior to the field survey, a **training session was conducted on 08 December 2025** for students from the **College of Fisheries**, who assisted the SRA team during field data collection. The team visited major fishing harbours and landing centers and conducted interviews with **vessel captains, crew members, boat owners, fishermen association leaders, and cooperative representatives**. The survey provided valuable insights into the social conditions prevailing in the fishery sector.

2. Meeting on Social Responsibility Action Plan

A **review and consultation meeting** was held on **12 December 2025** at the **Yashaswi Fish Meal and Oil Company office, Pithrody**, to discuss the findings of the Social Risk Assessment and to develop **action plans to strengthen social responsibility practices in the fishery**.

The meeting was attended by:

- **Mr. Udaya Kumar Salian**, Lead – Small Pelagic Purse Seine Fisheries, Karnataka State FIP
- **Mr. Nagaraj Suvarna**, President, Purse Seine Association
- **Mr. Santhosh**, Secretary, Purse Seine Association
- **Mr. Raviraj Suvarna**, President, Fishermen Association

- **Mr. Arun**, Director, Malpe Cooperative Society
- **Mr. Pradeep Mogher**, Senior Executive Manager-QA & QC, Yashaswi FM
- **FIP consultants and representatives from fishmeal factories**



During the meeting, **Mr. Sven Blankenhorn** presented the key findings of the Social Risk Assessment, highlighting areas that require improvement to ensure compliance with internationally recognized social responsibility standards. The participants engaged in constructive discussions on the proposed corrective measures and agreed on several practical actions to strengthen social safeguards within the fishery sector.

3. Key Tasks Discussed

YASHASWI FISH MEAL AND OIL COMPANY

No. 9 - 184B, Post Pithrody, Udyavara,
Udupi District & Taluk, Karnataka, India - 574 118.

Branch 2

Plot No. IP-25A, Mangalore SEZ, Permude Village,
Mangalore, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka, India - 574 509.



The meeting focused on the following actions aimed at improving social responsibility within the fishery value chain:

1. Written Commitments on Human Rights and Labor Practices

Participants discussed the importance of obtaining **written commitments from vessel owners and fishmeal factory members** confirming adherence to fundamental labor principles, including:

- Respect for human rights
- Prohibition of child labor
- Prohibition of forced labor
- Payment of fair wages
- Ensuring safe and respectful working conditions on fishing vessels

It was agreed that these commitments would be documented and signed by relevant stakeholders to demonstrate their adherence to responsible labor practices.

2. Establishment of a Fisher Grievance Mechanism

The meeting discussed the need for a **simple and accessible grievance reporting mechanism for fishers and crew members**. Participants agreed that the fisheries association would establish a reporting system which may include:

- A **designated contact person within the fisheries association**, and
- A **telephone hotline or contact number** where fishers can report labor-related concerns or complaints confidentially.

This mechanism aims to ensure that any labor-related issues can be reported and addressed in a timely and transparent manner.

3. Awareness and Capacity Building for Fishers

The stakeholders agreed on conducting **awareness sessions at major fish landing sites and fisher meetings** to improve understanding of:

- Human rights and labor standards
- Safe working conditions
- Responsible fishing practices
- Availability of grievance reporting mechanisms

These awareness activities will help ensure that fishers, crew members, and vessel owners understand their rights and responsibilities.



4. Annual Monitoring of Labor-Related Issues

The participants also discussed establishing a **simple monitoring system** to review and record any reported labor-related grievances on an **annual basis**. This monitoring will help track improvements, identify recurring issues, and ensure continuous improvement of social responsibility practices within the fishery.



4. Implementation Responsibility

Task	Lead	Supporting Partners
Strengthen social responsibility practices	FIP Lead	Karnataka Department of Fisheries
Written commitments from vessel owners and factories	FIP Lead	Fisheries Associations, Fishmeal Factory Representatives
Establish grievance mechanism	FIP Lead	Karnataka DoF, FIP Consultants
Awareness sessions at landing centers	FIP Lead	Fisheries Associations
Annual monitoring of labor grievances	FIP Lead	Fisheries Associations, Karnataka DoF

5. Evidence of Completion / Output (Draft)

The following evidence will be developed and maintained as part of the FIP documentation:

1. Signed Commitments from Participants

Written declarations signed by vessel owners, association representatives, and fishmeal factory members confirming adherence to:

- Human rights principles
- Prohibition of child labor and forced labor
- Fair wage practices
- Safe working conditions for fishers and crew members.

2. Grievance Mechanism Documentation

A simple documented procedure outlining:

- Contact details for grievance reporting
- Responsible person within the fisheries association
- Steps for recording and resolving grievances.

3. Awareness Session Report and Materials

Documentation of awareness programs conducted at major landing sites, including:

- Attendance records



- Photographs
- Training materials or presentations
- Summary report of discussions.

4. Annual Monitoring Summary

An annual summary report documenting:

- Number of grievances received (if any)
- Nature of issues reported
- Actions taken for resolution
- Recommendations for improvement.

6. Conclusion

The discussions held on **12 December 2025** provided a clear roadmap for strengthening **social responsibility and labor welfare practices in the small pelagic purse seine fishery in Karnataka**. The stakeholders expressed strong support for implementing the proposed actions and committed to collaborative efforts to improve social accountability across the fishery value chain.

These initiatives represent an important step toward ensuring that the **Karnataka State FIP not only promotes sustainable fisheries management but also upholds the rights, safety, and welfare of fishers and workers involved in the sector.**

Ensuring Sustainability...