

Workforce Characteristics Guidance and Definitions

Last Updated July 2025

Understanding the makeup of a FIP's fisher workforce is critical to supporting meaningful and inclusive implementation of both environmental and social work across the FIP, including the HRSR Policy. Detailed workforce information enables the design of targeted actions, fosters more inclusive engagement strategies, and allows for better tracking of key workforce changes over time—ensuring that efforts to improve both environmental outcomes and working conditions are responsive to the realities of the people who make the fishery function.

These data also support enhanced human rights due diligence. By understanding workforce dynamics, buyers and key stakeholders can better partner with FIPs in making improvements, such as stronger grievance mechanisms or supporting capacity-building programs.

This document provides guidance and instructions to support FIPs as they complete the “Workforce Characteristics” section of their profile on FisheryProgress. FIPs are required to review this section of their profile annually and are encouraged to update it regularly, as workforce information may evolve over time and as engagement efforts lead to a deeper understanding of the individuals involved.

To support FIPs in going above and beyond the workforce characteristics reporting required on FisheryProgress, we have developed an optional Workforce Data Collection Tool. This tool is designed to help FIPs gather detailed and structured data on their fisher workforce, including demographics, nationalities, languages, remuneration models, and employment structures. The tool can be leveraged to:

- ***Ensure Inclusion:*** Identify and address barriers to participation for all fishers, ensuring that workforce engagement strategies are representative and equitable.
- ***Design Targeted Interventions:*** Use data insights to improve access to grievance mechanisms, tailor training programs, and address specific workforce needs.
- ***Foster Collaboration:*** Provide stakeholders and buyers with a clearer understanding of workforce dynamics, enabling more effective partnerships and support.

The Workforce Data Collection Tool is currently in beta form. Please reach out to contact@fisheryprogress.org if you would like to support testing of the tool.

FIELD	GUIDANCE AND DEFINITIONS
Maximum trip duration (days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the maximum duration of a fishing trip for any of the vessels within the Unit of the FIP. Note that it is possible that average trip duration, or maximum trip duration for a subset of vessels, may be significantly shorter. Fishing Trip: Any voyage during which fishing takes place. The duration of a fishing trip includes all time spent away from the port(s) of origin. That includes but is not limited to time spent at-sea, docked in foreign ports, soak time, and time spent resting in remote areas without access to communications.
Number of vessels (large and small)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vessel: A vehicle used to catch or transport fish or fishers. This includes transshipment vessels. FisheryProgress defines vessels by their size, as outlined below. Large Vessels: Those that weigh 10 GT or more or measure 12 m or longer Small Vessels: Those that weigh less than 10 GT or are smaller than 12 m
Number of fishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the total number of fishers across the Unit of the FIP. May be an estimate or approximate number based on available information. Fisher: Any person of any age or gender employed or engaged in the capture or gathering of seafood, either from shore or from a fishing vessel. Fishers also include persons employed or engaged in any capacity or carrying out an occupation on board any fishing vessel, including persons working on board who are paid on the basis of a share of the catch but excluding pilots, naval personnel, other persons in the permanent service of a government, shore-based persons carrying out work aboard a fishing vessel and fisheries observers. For example, a cook employed on the vessel is considered a fisher.
Number of Migrant or Guest Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the approximate total number of foreign migrant fishers across the Unit of the FIP, which includes all fishers whose citizenship does not match the vessel flag state¹, as well as guest workers, i.e., fishers who participate in a formal visa/guest worker program, defined as a temporary immigration permit that allows foreign workers to live and work in a host country for a specified period under specific terms.
Number of hired fishers (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the approximate total number of <i>hired</i> fishers across the Unit of the FIP. Hired Fisher: A fisher that is hired and employed either formally or informally under a vessel owner, fishing company, labor broker, or cooperative. May be compensated through wages or a share of the catch. Hired fishers are to be distinguished from self-employed fishers. (ex: Crew members on a commercial fishing vessel)

¹ As stated in Requirement 1.5 of the [HRSR Policy](#), European Union (EU) citizens working on an EU member state-flagged vessel may be considered the same as citizens of the vessel's flag state, i.e., they do not count toward the calculation of foreign migrant workforce.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Formally-employed fisher</u>: A type of hired fisher who is hired under specific terms of employment (responsibilities, wages, hours, benefits, duration of term, etc). May be subject to labor laws (minimum wage, social security). This type of formal employment is common for situations where fishers are hired for an extended period of time (e.g., a season, a month, or one or more years). ○ <u>Freelance/independent fisher</u>: A type of hired fisher who is less bound to a single employer. They may choose, for example, to work on a different vessel each day or week (or trip), or may opt to not fish in lieu of other activities on any given day or week. These fishers are commonly hired on an informal basis. ● <u>Self-employed/independent fisher</u>: (THIS TYPE OF FISHER IS NOT BE COUNTED IN THE HIRED FISHER NUMBER) Individual who works for themselves on their own vessel (or from land) using their own gear, on a vessel they cooperatively own (for example if a member of a cooperative that cooperatively owns a fleet of small vessels), or they lease their vessel or fishing gear. Not considered to be a “hired fisher”.
Using 3rd party to hire labor (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refers to whether any external companies or third parties are used to recruit, hire, and/or employ fishers. Examples include: A vessel owner directly employs fishers but uses a recruitment agency to recruit and/or make hiring decisions about fishers; A vessel owner uses a labor broker to recruit, hire, and manage contracts with and payments to fishers. ● Note this question only appears when the “number of hired fishers” field has been completed.
Fisher Nationality(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select all known nationalities of fishers within the Unit of the FIP.
Language(s) Spoken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select all known languages spoken and used by fishers within the Unit of the FIP.
Fisher Makeup (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide estimated information about the genders of fishers within the Unit of the FIP. ● Entered percentages should add up to 100%.
Select all that apply to some or all fishers in the FIP (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select all characteristics that apply to the FIP from the provided checklist. ● In the first checkbox, “formally employed/hired fishers” includes all hired fishers, both formally employed and freelance. The second checkbox relates to self-employed (not hired) fishers. See definitions above related to hired, freelance, and self-employed fishers.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Wages</u>: Remuneration based primarily on time worked. May be paid out hourly, daily, weekly, bi weekly, monthly, or for a set period of employment. A wage-based remuneration system may also include bonuses based on collective or individual performance. • <u>Paid by share of the catch</u>: The fisher's earnings are not set and based primarily on the volume of the catch They may be paid by the weight or volume of their own catch, or a portion of the crew's total catch. • <u>Fishing Cooperative (Co-op)</u>: Cooperatives are formal organizations owned and operated by fishers who join together voluntarily to achieve shared economic, social, and cultural goals. Members contribute equitably and share in the organization's benefits. • <u>Fisher Association</u>: Associations are organized groups of fishers that advocate for shared interests and provide a platform for collective representation. They may focus on a wide range of issues, including policy advocacy, resource management, and social support. • <u>Collective bargaining agreement (CBA)</u>: A legally binding contract negotiated between a union representing fishers and their employers (such as fishing companies, vessel owners, or cooperatives). The agreement outlines the terms and conditions of employment, including wages, benefits, working hours, safety protocols, grievance procedures, and other workplace rights and responsibilities. • <u>Fisher Union</u>: Unions operate as legal entities with defined processes for collective bargaining and dispute resolution. They represent fishers in negotiations with employers, industry bodies, or government entities, and primarily focus on labor rights, wages, working conditions. • <u>Migrant/Guest Worker Visa</u>: Temporary immigration permits that allow foreign workers to live and work in a host country for a specified period under specific terms. These visas typically tie workers to specific employers or vessels and may provide some legal protections, although enforcement and oversight can vary.
Check to make checklist answers private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking this box will make the responses to the previous question (with the checklist) private, but the other workforce characteristics information will remain public on FisheryProgress.