

# Zhangzhou Red Swimming Crab Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on Social Responsibility July 17, 2025 Online

## Participants:

China Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Alliance (CAPPMA)  
Zhangzhou Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Association (ZAPPMA)  
Dongshan Fishery Association (DFA)  
Processor Companies  
Tao Ran

The screenshot displays a Zoom meeting interface. The top portion shows a presentation slide with the title "漳州梭子蟹类资源可持续改进项目介绍" (Introduction to the Sustainable Improvement Project of Zhangzhou Red Swimming Crab Resources). The slide includes the logo of the "青岛市海洋生态研究会" (Qingdao Marine Ecology Research Association) and the date "2025年7月". Below the title are logos for NFI CRAB COUNCIL, Fish Biology Laboratory, OCEAN OUTCOMES, 道然 (DORAN), and QMCS. The slide is the second of 17 slides. The bottom portion of the screenshot shows a grid of 12 video thumbnails for participants, including individuals from "反理", "李的真", "李琳", "东争光", "东山县华昌食品有限公司", "崔和", "李秀球QMCS", "东山再起-刘", "福建东山海源水产有限公司", "GMCS", and "漳州市水产协会". The Zoom interface includes standard controls like mute, video, chat, and a toolbar at the bottom.

### Overview of the Meeting

At the beginning of the meeting, the President of CAPPMA delivered an opening remark, introducing the background and purpose of the meeting. Following that, the TR team presented key achievements of the FIP since 2018, along with the human rights and social responsibility policies, highlighting key elements of these policies as part of capacity-building activities for industry partners. Next, the participants reviewed the initiative letter, which was jointly developed by the TR team and CAPPMA, and provided feedback and suggestions for revisions. The participants expressed support to this initiative letter. The final session was an open discussion, where participants exchanged information on the crab fisheries, market change and ongoing FIP projects, further enhancing mutual understanding among the various stakeholders.

Regarding the proposed initiative letter, [the attending representatives provided the following suggestions for revision:](#)

1. For Article 3, it was suggested to either delete the provision regarding the "prohibition of child labor" or merge it with other relevant clauses, as there are no concerns about child labor in this fishery. Over 95% of the fishers in this fishery are aged 45–65. Therefore, this clause is considered to have limited practical relevance.
2. For Article 6, which addresses "ensuring rest and reasonable working hours," representatives noted that fishing operations are subject to spatial and temporal uncertainties, and operation vary depending on the fishing method. For example, in trap fishing and trawling, fishermen typically take rest during the intervals between gear deployment and retrieval. Thus, implementing uniform work-rest schedules poses practical challenges. It was recommended that this article be revised to better reflect on-the-ground realities.

In addition to the above revision recommendations, the participants generally agreed that this initiative letter plays a positive role in promoting attention to and safeguarding of fishers' rights across the industry, as well as in advancing corporate social responsibility. The association also expressed its commitment to actively advocate for and promote broader understanding, recognition, and support of the document.

[At the same time, the association representatives introduced existing practices already in place:](#)

1. Formal labor contracts are signed between fishers and vessel owners.
2. Regarding Article 9, which calls for the "establishment of an effective grievance mechanism," the Dongshan Fishery Association has been actively implementing such mechanisms and has set up a mediation mechanism specifically tasked with coordinating and resolving disputes arising during the fisheries.

### Key Messages of Open Discussion Session

Since the launch of the Zhangzhou Swimming Crab FIP in 2018, ZAPPMA has organized regular meetings (usually annually) to engage industry members in the project and resource conservation efforts. At the annual meetings, ZAPPMA and the fishery association advocate for the reduction of undersized crab catches, including red swimming crabs. Both processors and fishers have shown a strong willingness to participate in the sustainable management of red swimming crab. Through the project, local processing enterprises and fishers have benefited and gradually recognized the importance of sustainable crab resource management, as well as the negative impact of harvesting undersized crabs on biological stocks and their long-term interests. These efforts have already yielded positive results, particularly in trap fisheries, where the crabs tend to be larger and fresher.

In Zhangzhou, red swimming crab is primarily harvested using trawls and crab pots/traps. Over the years, the proportion of these two methods has shifted. A decade ago, trawling was the dominant fishing method. Five years ago, the yields from both trawling and trapping were roughly equal. However, since 2020, trap fishing has accounted for about 70% of the total crab catch. Based on years of experience, fishers have found trap fishing to be more economically beneficial, as the crabs tend to be larger and fresher, which has driven the shift from trawling to this method. The proportion of swimming crabs harvested through traps is expected to continue rising.

The change has also been driven by market incentives. Over the past three years, the rise of e-commerce channels has fostered the development of a new domestic market for crab consumption. Red swimming crabs weighing over 80 grams are typically bundled at sea and supplied directly to e-commerce platforms, as consumers prefer larger-sized individuals, creating an incentive for trap fishing. Currently, e-commerce accounts for 30–40% of the total crab supply, intensifying competition for raw materials among processing plants. In the past, crabs used for processing were typically over 100 grams, but this threshold has now dropped to over 80 grams. As a result, the export of crab meat from Dongshan has been significantly impacted, with total export volumes decreasing by at least 30% compared to previous levels. Despite this, Chinese crab meat still maintains a competitive edge over countries like India, especially as processing techniques continue to improve and gained recognition from international buyers. During a recent meeting convened by ZAPPMA, processing companies discussed export trends and pricing strategies.

The red swimming crab fishing ground, located in the Minnan-Taiwan Bank, includes critical marine habitats, such as seahorse habitats. The trawl-dominated practices of the past caused disturbances to these ecosystems. However, with the increasing share of trap fishing, this shift is viewed as a positive move toward more environmentally friendly and sustainable fisheries.

Finally, regarding the red swimming crab FIP, the Dongshan Fishery Association (DFA) and the ZAPPMA expressed their willingness to actively take on local responsibilities and obligations. They emphasized the need to further strengthen resource conservation efforts to promote the sustainable utilization of red swimming crab. At the same time, the associations highlighted the need to incentivize the industry and fishers to participate the project and support the resources conservation, and recommended offering subsidies to fishers and enterprises engaged in conservation work as encouragement. ZAPPMA and DFA leadership repeated expressed interest in securing more public, private and charity/civil society support from the RSC FIP and beyond to cover their activity costs affiliated with engaging member processors and fishers in the cause of sustainability.