

Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries: Thailand



Prepared by:

Sustainable Development Foundation



International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF)
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Front Cover

The family works together after a catch, making it ready for the market

Front Inside

A female fisher involved in her craft

Back Inside

A female fish vendor cleans the catch

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Contents

List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Country Profile	3
1.2.1. Geography	3
1.2.2. Climate.....	3
1.2.3. Demography	4
1.2.4. Social and Economic Situation	4
1.3. Legislation and Policy	5
1.3.1. International Level.....	5
1.3.2. National Level	6
1.4. Research Methods	7
1.4.1. Research Objectives and Scope.....	7
1.4.2. Research Methods.....	7
1.4.3. National Workshops.....	8
2. Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries: The Case of Thailand	9
2.1. Poverty Eradication and Inequality Reduction	9
2.1.1. International Conventions and Agreements.....	9
2.1.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	9
2.2. Employment in the Fisheries Sector	12
2.2.1. International Conventions and Agreements.....	12
2.2.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	12
2.3. Decent Work in the Fisheries Sector.....	15
2.3.1. International Conventions and Agreements.....	15
2.3.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	15
2.4. Social Inclusion, Leaving No One Behind	14
2.4.1. International Conventions and Agreement	14
2.4.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	17
2.5. Health, Occupational Health and Safety, and Sexual and Reproductive Health.....	18

2.5.1.	International Conventions and Agreements.....	18
2.5.2.	Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	18
2.6.	Education and Learning	19
2.6.1.	International Conventions and Agreements.....	19
2.6.2.	Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	19
2.7.	Housing Issues in Thai Fishers' Communities	20
2.7.1.	International Conventions and Agreements.....	20
2.7.2.	Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	20
2.8.	Sanitation, Clean Drinking Water and Energy.....	21
2.8.1.	International Conventions and Agreements.....	21
2.8.2.	Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	22
2.9.	Climate Change	23
2.9.1.	International Conventions and Agreements.....	23
2.9.2.	Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	24
2.10.	Social Institutions	25
2.10.1.	International Conventions and Agreements.....	25
2.10.2.	Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	26
2.11.	Preventive Measures on Violence against Women and Children in Fishing Communities	27
2.11.1.	International Conventions and Agreements.....	27
2.11.2.	Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects	27
2.12.	Access to Justice	29
2.13.	Thailand's Response to Covid-19	30
3.	Conclusion and Recommendations	32
3.1.	Conclusion	32
3.2.	Recommendations	34
3.2.1.	Recommendations to Small-Scale Fishery Groups	34
3.2.2.	Recommendations to Government Agencies	34
4.	Bibliography	36
5.	Annexure: Legal instruments and mechanisms	42

List of tables

Table 1: Conventions and Protocols Ratified by Thailand	42
Table 2: Thai Government's Policy 2019	42
Table 3: Conventions that Thailand Ratified on Labour	43
Table 4: Local Fishing Community Organization	44

List of figures

Figure 1: Map of Thailand.....	3
Figure 2: Thailand’s 20-Year National Strategy (2018–2037).....	6
Figure 3: Poverty Line, Poverty Rates and Population of the Poor, 1988–2019	10
Figure 4: : Ao Udom Bay at present, surrounded by industrial piers	11
Figure 5: Number of Artisanal and Commercial Fishing Vessels, 2019.....	13

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was launched in 2015 to end poverty and set the world on a path of peace, prosperity and opportunity. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) demand nothing short of a transformation of the financial, economic and political systems that govern our societies today in order to guarantee the human rights of all. They require immense political will and ambitious action by all stakeholders. But, as Member States recognized at the SDG Summit held in September 2021, global efforts to date have been insufficient to deliver the change we need, jeopardizing the Agenda's promise to current and future generations (United Nations, 2020).

An analysis of the Global SDG Indicators Database reveals that for 4 of the 17 goals, less than half of 194 countries or areas have internationally comparable data. This lack of country-level data is particularly worrisome for gender equality (Goal 5), for which only about 4 in 10 countries have available data. Country-level data deficits are also significant in areas related to sustainable production and consumption (Goal 12) and climate action (Goal 13). What's more, even countries with available data have only a small number of observations over time, making it difficult for policymakers to monitor progress and identify trends (United Nations, 2020).

As the 2021 Global Gender Gap Report states, the average distance completed to parity is 68.6 percent, which is a further improvement since the last edition. There is still a 31.4 percent average gender gap globally, which remains to be closed. The positive increase in the average global score translates into several countries advancing towards gender parity (although often at a slow pace): 101 of the 149 countries covered both this year and last year have increased their scores (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Regarding the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources (Goal 14), oceans and fisheries continue to support the global population's economic, social and environmental needs. Despite the critical importance of conserving oceans, decades of irresponsible exploitation have led to an alarming level of degradation. Current efforts to protect key marine environments and small-scale fisheries, and to invest in ocean science, have not yet met the urgent need to safeguard this vast but fragile resource. The drastic reduction in human activity brought about by the Covid-19 crisis, while rooted in tragedy, is a chance for oceans to recuperate. It is also an opportunity to chart a sustainable recovery path that will ensure livelihoods for decades to come in harmony with the natural environment (United Nations, 2020).

It is important to keep in mind that these results are based on limited information (sufficient data is available for less than half of the SDG targets), and more data is required to show a full picture of progress on the 17 goals. For some goals, progress may be skewed by data for only a few targets, such as Goals 13 and 14 (life below water). In others, the availability of data is unbalanced across targets, so the results do not reflect the full picture of progress (United Nations, 2020).

Thailand has committed itself to reaching the SDGs, recognizing persisting social and economic inequalities as an impediment to the nation becoming a high-income country. Thailand specifically pledged to leave no one behind in its national development. With such commitment, the National Committee on Sustainable Development, chaired by the prime minister, was set up as the main institutional mechanism, comprising representatives of the concerned agencies, the private sector, academia and civil society, with the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) acting as the secretariat (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017) to realize the SDGs in Thailand.

In 2020, Thailand ranked 41st out of 166 countries surveyed on development progress relating to the SDGs, according to the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and Bertelsmann Stiftung. The SDSN's key findings of the report are that Thailand performs worst on Goal 3 (health and well-being) and Goal 10 (reducing inequality), and still faces significant challenges with Goals 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17; for Goals 4 and 8, challenges remain, and Thailand has only achieved Goal 1 (no poverty) (Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G., and Woelm, F., 2020).

In 2014, focusing on the social development of fishing communities, Thailand adopted the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) to strengthen the capacity and resilience of small-scale fishing communities, including access to resources and markets. This is the key objective of multiple projects being implemented in Thailand (FAO, 2015). Thus, many important events calling upon government agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) have been implemented in the country under the SSF Guidelines because these guidelines relate directly to the SDGs. Although the main support to small-scale fisheries is to be made at the national level, the broader context of the importance of small-scale fisheries will continue to be addressed at the regional and sub-regional levels (SEAFDEC, 2016).

The far-reaching negative impact of Covid-19 on most SDGs is severe. The world is facing the worst public health and economic crisis in a century. For Thailand, the 2020 Covid-19 Economic Impact Assessment suggested that unemployment among women would rise to 4.5 percent, while unemployment in the general population would hit 3.1 percent. Seasonal peaks were estimated to be higher, particularly among informal workers. The automotive and tourism sectors saw sharp downturns, while agricultural production already suffering from drought was further affected by the pandemic. Other sectors of the economy such as healthcare, consumer goods and financial services appear to be less affected, and Thailand's prompt stimulus measures offset some of the effects of the pandemic (UNICEF, 2020).

1.2. Country Profile

1.2.1. Geography

Thailand covers an area of 513,120 km² and is located in the southeastern region of Asia. Its immediate neighbors are Myanmar to the north and the northwest, Lao People's Democratic Republic to the northeast, Cambodia to the east and Malaysia to the south. The water bodies that skirt Thailand are the Mekong River in the east, which forms Thailand's natural boundary with Laos, the Gulf of Thailand to the southeast and the Indian Ocean and the Andaman Sea to the southwest (FAO, 2011) (Figure 1: Map of Thailand).

1.2.2. Climate

According to climate patterns and meteorological conditions, Thailand may be divided into 5 parts: northern, northeastern, central, eastern and southern. The topography of each part is different, but the climate is mainly governed by the alternation between the southwest monsoon, which brings heavy rainfalls (May–October), and the northeast monsoon, which is comparatively dry and cool (October–February). The transitional period (March–April) is characterized by heavy thunderstorms.

From a meteorological point of view, Thailand has three seasons. The rainy or southwest monsoon season is from mid-May to mid-October. The winter or northeast monsoon season, which starts in mid-October and ends in mid-February, is the mild period of the year. The temperature is quite low in December and January in upper Thailand, and there is a great amount of rainfall on southern Thailand's east coast, especially during October and November. The summer or pre-monsoon season is from mid-February to mid-May.

Figure 1: Map of Thailand

Source: Mapsland, 2020



Upper Thailand comprises the northern, northeastern, central and eastern parts. This region usually experiences a long period of warm weather because of its inland nature and tropical latitude zone. From March to May, the hottest period of the year, the maximum temperature usually reaches 40° C, except along coastal areas, where sea breezes will moderate afternoon temperatures. In the southern part, temperatures are generally mild throughout the year because of the maritime characteristic of this region.

Most areas of the country receive 1,200–1,600 mm of rainfall a year. Some areas on the windward side, particularly Trat province in the east and Ranong province on the southwestern coast, have more than 4,500 mm a year. Less than 1,200 mm of annual rainfall occurs in the leeward areas, which are found in the central valleys and the uppermost southern part (Meteorological Department, 2015).

1.2.3. Demography

The National Statistical Office of Thailand (NSO) reports an estimated population of 68.2 million. Bangkok is the capital and largest city, with approximately 12.97 million people. The central region excluding Bangkok has an estimated population of 29.51 million, the northern region 16.59 million, the northeastern region 27.16 million and the southern region 13.77 million. The highest population density is found in and around Bangkok, but there are also significant population clusters in the north, northeast and south of the country (NSO, 2020).

The size of the work force in Thailand was 38.05 million in August 2020, with much of the workforce under 35 years old. Each year about 800,000 people join this force. Many standard labour practices apply, including mandatory severance packages and overtime payments. The minimum wage in Thailand is currently 313 baht per day. While not the lowest-cost labour market in the region, Thailand's workforce is among the most cost-efficient in the world, as they have a reputation for diligence and adaptability (BOI, 2020).

1.2.4. Social and Economic Situation

Thailand has made remarkable social and economic progress. It became an upper-middle-income country in 2011 (ADB, 2019). Thailand has been widely cited as an example of development success, with impressive poverty reduction, particularly in the 1980s. However, average growth slowed to 3.76 percent between 2010 and 2019 (Woramongkol, 2019). Despite economic growth, income inequality and a lack of equal opportunities have persisted.

Agriculture is a very competitive and diverse subsector in Thailand, particularly due to the country's abundant natural resources, from diverse crops to farming and fisheries. The sector has many job opportunities, along with the services sector. However, the share of Thailand's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the agricultural sector was the smallest compared to other sectors; in 2017 agriculture's share of employment was high, at 32 percent of the workforce, but the sector contributed only 8 percent to the GDP (OECD, 2020). Though there has been some growth in recent years, productivity remains considerably lower in agriculture than in other sectors.

Thailand is one of the world's major exporters of shrimp, fish and fish products (DoF, 2018; USDA, 2018), generating about 20 percent of the country's total food product exports (USDA, 2018). Items accounting for over 70 percent of total fishery product exports include canned tuna and sardines, processed shrimp, prawns and squid. Raw material is sourced from both the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand (USDA, 2018). The sector employs more than 250,000 people and represents up to \$7 billion in exports annually (DoF, 2018).

Thailand also has small-scale or artisanal fisheries. These involve fishing households (as opposed to commercial companies) who use relatively small amounts of capital and energy. They make short fishing trips in small boats close to shore, mainly for local consumption. The number of boats involved in small-scale fisheries in Thailand is still unclear. However, based on a survey

of registered boats in 2015, it is currently estimated at 25,700 vessels—75 percent of all fishing boats (DoF, 2020). The growth of Thailand’s fisheries sector has presented many challenges that now need to be addressed. A severe degradation of marine fishery resources and ecosystems has taken place because of overfishing, lower catch rates and large quantities of low-valued fish catches.

However, Covid-19 has interrupted this growth with a severe recession in 2020. Economic recovery will be slow, and achieving a high national income will require more policy reforms focused on productivity growth and human capital accumulation, together with environmental protection

1.3. Legislation and Policy

1.3.1. International Level

The FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) endorsed the SSF Guidelines in 2014. The SSF Guidelines are the first international instrument specifically designed for small-scale fishery sustainability. Through a human-rights based approach and several guiding principles, the SSF Guidelines call on stakeholders at all levels to contribute to their implementation. While the finalization and endorsement of the instrument itself were critical, the real challenge lies in its implementation. The SSF Guidelines are broad in scope, and their implementation must engage stakeholders along the entire chain of small-scale fisheries, from harvest to markets.

The Government of Thailand has committed to rebuilding fisheries through key measures set out in the Marine Fisheries Management Plan of Thailand (2020–2024). The national fisheries law framework has also been reformed to ensure emerging challenges are addressed and to align Thailand’s laws with international standards. This process offers a crucial opportunity to ensure sustainable management and good governance are enshrined within Thailand’s fishery laws and future policies.

The SSF Guidelines, an international soft-law instrument represent the current global consensus on the responsible governance of fisheries resources. The SSF Guidelines enshrine the principles of human rights and dignity, non-discrimination, respect for culture, gender equality and equity, transparency and accountability, sustainability, and holistic and integrated approaches to resource governance. They also provide guidance on inter-sectoral issues, such as social development, employment and decent working conditions, value chain, post-harvest and trade, gender equality, and disaster risks and climate change (FAO, 2015).

The Department of Fisheries (DoF) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives brought these values in line with the guiding principles set out in the Marine Fisheries Management Plan of Thailand, namely the equitable distribution of benefits; the use of the precautionary approach in management; participation, public accountability and transparency; the limitation of adverse environmental impacts; and an ecosystem approach to fisheries (DoF, 2020).

1.3.2. National Level

The nation’s long-term economic aspirations are laid out in Thailand’s 20-Year National Strategy (2018–2037), which says: ‘Thailand [is to become] a developed country with security, prosperity and sustainability in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy’ (NESDB, 2019) (Figure 2).

There are six key indicators of the National Strategy, which are:

- 1) Well-being of Thai people and society
- 2) National competitiveness, economic growth and income distribution
- 3) Development of human capital



Figure 2: Thailand's 20-Year National Strategy (2018–2037)

Source: Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019

- 4) Social equality and equity
- 5) Sustainability of national biodiversity, environmental quality and natural resources
- 6) Government efficiency and better access to public services

Since Thailand's 20-Year National Strategy has a long-term goal, it is necessary to set timelines for implementation. Currently the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESB) is the mechanism to move the National Strategy into short- and medium-term goals over five years.

The 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan 2017–2021 is considered a second-level plan devised to support the National Strategy. It emphasizes the use of physical infrastructure linkages to develop areas, economies and communities along transborder economic corridors.

Additionally, the 12th Plan provides guidelines by identifying the sectors of production and services that are the targets of development. These development targets will serve as action guidelines to develop provincial, regional and urban areas.

1.4. Research Methods

1.4.1. Research Objectives and Scope

1.4.1.1. Research Objectives

- 1) To review and analyze schemes, legislation and reports on the social development of fishing communities
- 2) To examine if the above review and analysis establish how social development can contribute to the effective conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal, freshwater and brackish water biodiversity

1.4.1.2. Research Scope

The study focuses on the social development of fishing communities in Thailand.

1.4.2. Research Methods

1.4.2.1. Document Review and Analysis

The researcher employs the methods of content analysis and meta-analysis through the review of related literature on development, especially covering international and national legislation and reports on the social development of fishing communities, from books, journals, reports, papers, conference papers and articles.

1.4.2.2. Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups are used to generate information on collective views. They also provide a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs. For the discussion process to run smoothly and efficiently, the general outline of the questionnaire is important. This analysis covered the following 13 questions:

- 1) Are there poverty eradication policies and programmes in your country? Are there any such policies for marginalized marine and inland fishers and fishworkers, including indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, ethnic and other minorities, migrants, etc.? How effective are these policies in removing poverty among target groups? Are any of these being adapted to address the impact of Covid-19?
- 2) Is there an employment policy in your country? Are there employment generation projects and skill development programmes for fishing communities, marine and inland, within and outside fishing and fish-processing? Do these policies improve access to employment for indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, local communities, ethnic and other minorities, migrant fishworkers, youth and women? Are any of these policies being adapted to address the impact of Covid-19?
- 3) Is there any policy focusing on working conditions in fishing and fish-processing, marine and inland, to benefit all workers, including migrants? Do fishing communities as a result enjoy access to social security, social assistance and social insurance? Is there any decent work policy benefitting migrant fishers and fishworkers? Are any of these policies being adapted to address the impact of Covid-19?
- 4) Is there a social inclusion policy for men, women, children and youth, indigenous peoples and their communities, civil society, fishing communities and migrant fishers, and fishworkers? Is there as a result less discrimination? How is this policy preventing discrimination during Covid-19?
- 5) Is there a health policy to benefit all? Is there a policy on occupational health and safety and sexual and reproductive health? If so, do these policies improve access to health for fishing communities, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, local communities, migrant fishers, etc.? How are these policies working during Covid-19?
- 6) Is there a literacy and education policy? How does it benefit children and/or adults of fishing communities?
- 7) Is there a housing policy for fishing communities in particular?
- 8) Are there sanitation, drinking water and energy policies? Are they inclusive of fishing communities?
- 9) Is there a climate change policy? Does it look at the role of climate change and extreme weather events in aggravating poverty, reducing access to housing, increasing the risk of diseases and making life more vulnerable for marginalized people in marine and inland fisheries? How are these impacts being addressed?

- 10) Are there associations, cooperatives, trade unions, credit unions, etc. to promote participation in decision-making, to negotiate wages and social protection measures, and to protect access to resources and markets? Are these institutions improving the wellbeing of fishing communities? How is the institutional mechanism providing economic relief during Covid-19 and assisting fishing communities and fishworkers along the value chain?
- 11) Are there measures to provide awareness, protection and access to justice to women and girls in fishing communities who face violence, sexual abuse and harassment?
- 12) Are there legislations and programmes to provide safe and timely access to justice for fishers and fishworkers? Are there effective institutions to address the quality of their livelihood, health, housing, education, etc.?
- 13) Are the above policies, legislations and institutions contributing to better conservation and the sustainable use of freshwater, brackish water, and marine and coastal biodiversity, as well as sustainable small-scale fisheries?

1.4.3. National Workshops

The objectives of the workshop were to update and deepen the knowledge of professionals in the relevant sectors on the status of social development in Thailand and to identify how to improve social development among fishing communities in Thailand.

2. Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries: The Case of Thailand

Thailand is party to seven treaties that the United Nations consider as the main international human rights instruments, and five optional protocols (Table 1) (Office of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, 2015). In addition, the country has adopted a number of international guidelines related to social development in the fisheries sector, such as the SDGs, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF), the ILO Work in Fishing Convention No. 188 and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF).

This study focuses on international and domestic policy frameworks that are relevant to social development in the Thai fisheries sector, particularly small-scale fishers, artisanal fishers and vulnerable groups. The social development issues in focus include poverty, inequality, employment, decent work, social inclusion, occupational health and safety, education and learning, livelihood and well-being, sanitation, potable water and clean energy, climate change, domestic violence, and the family institution, as well as the existing social development institutions working in the fisheries sector. Thailand's response to Covid-19 will also be discussed.

2.1. Poverty Eradication and Inequality Reduction

2.1.1. International Conventions and Agreements

Thailand has adopted the SDGs as a key framework for domestic policymaking. For poverty eradication (SDG 1) and inequality reduction (SDG 10), the main guidelines are the development of appropriate policies at the national, regional and international levels that are pro-poor and gender-sensitive, and that promote and support economic development for poverty eradication.

As a member of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Thailand has adopted the FAO SSF Guidelines as guidance towards poverty eradication and inequality reduction.

2.1.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

The government's policy statement delivered on 25 July 2019 comprised 12 major policies and 12 urgent policies (Table 2). Poverty eradication and inequality reduction appeared as 'addressing the people's livelihood problems' in Urgent Policy no. 1. To implement this policy in the fisheries sector, it was determined that the goals would be to reduce the obstacles facing commercial and artisanal fishing practices and to provide assistance to artisanal fishers in accordance with international fisheries standards. Urgent Policy no. 2, 'improving welfare systems and the quality of life of the people', involves the improvement of the state welfare card and living allowance systems, which target, for example, the elderly, people with disabilities, the poor and disadvantaged, the reduction of disparities in the quality of each system's services (Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019: 30).

In the long-term, the government included the main policies for poverty eradication and inequality reduction in Major Policy no. 5: Development of Thailand's economy and competitiveness. In the agricultural sector, which includes fisheries, the guideline is to 'revive and support the fishing occupation so that it is sustainable'. This is through employing correct fishing methods among both commercial and artisanal fishers, access to finances, a decrease in occupational obstacles, the promotion of coastal and artisanal fishers' organizations for livelihood security and local conservation, and the speedy development of mariculture, as well as by making use of technology

and local wisdom-based innovations to add value to marine products (the Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019: 10).

This policy is clearly stated in the 20-Year National Strategy (a level one plan), under ‘the enhancement of social opportunities and equity’. The corresponding (level two) Master Plans include Foreign Affairs, Social Empowerment, Local Economy, Equity and Social Security, and Integrated Water Management. The other relevant National Strategy is national competitiveness enhancement and the corresponding Master Plans include Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Modern Entrepreneurs and SMEs, Human Capability for All Age of Life, Eco-Friendly Growth, and Research and Innovation (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019).

The 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (a level two plan) is a five-year plan that links the National Strategy and Master Plans with integrated development programmes, complete with targeted outcomes for the period 2017–2021. The relevant strategies in this 12th plan include Creating a Just Society and Reducing Inequality and Strengthening the Economy and Underpinning Sustainable Competitiveness, with a focus on building links in the value chains among the agriculture, industry, service, and trade and investment sectors.

The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, took the National Strategy, the Master Plans and the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan into consideration when it drafted the Marine Fisheries Management Plan 2020–2024. This plan contains key policies regarding the demarcation of marine and coastal areas for the protection of marine resources, application of strict fisheries measures, prohibition of fishing for small-size catches, control of illegal fishing gear, and protection of artisanal fishers. It prioritizes the resolution of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and promotes sustainable fisheries and aquaculture (Department of Fisheries, 2019).

The 2019 Poverty and Inequality Report of the NESDC shows that the poverty rate has decreased from 9.85 percent in 2018 to 6.24 percent in 2019. The population of the poor has gone down from 6.7 million to 4.3 million respectively. The poverty trend has been in continuous decline for

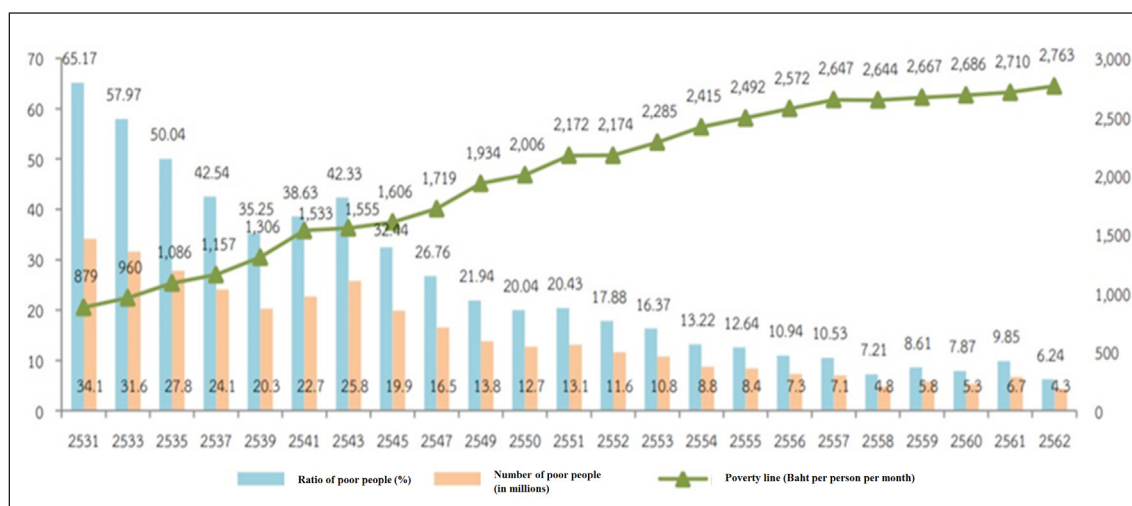


Figure 3: Poverty Line, Poverty Rates and Population of the Poor, 1988–2019

Source: Data from the Household Socio-economic Survey, National Statistics Office, compiled by Social Data-based and Indicator Development Office, National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019

the past three decades, from 25.8 million (38.63 percent) in 1998 to 11.6 million (17.88 percent) in 2009 and to 4.3 million (6.24 percent) in 2019 (Figure 3: Poverty Line, Poverty Rates and Population of the Poor, 1988–2019) (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019).

The World Bank report 'Taking the Pulse of Poverty and Inequality in Thailand' (World Bank, 2019: 4) noted that while Thailand's poverty rate decreased rapidly in the past, figures from the past few years show that there are many people who are still trapped in chronic poverty. They would need specifically targeted poverty-reduction policies. A recent analysis of poor households shows that one in three are economically inactive, have a high number of dependent children and elderly family members, and have an average education level of primary education or lower. Most of the poor in employment are in the agriculture sector, which is a low-income sector.

Despite the development agenda including economic and social development along with environmental conservation, in practice there are gaps and overlapping priorities at the local level when the focus is on economic development. The government has been promoting investment for economic growth based on marine and coastal resources, such as the construction of sea ports, tourism promotion, etc. These projects have restricted artisanal fishers' access to the resources they rely on for a living, depriving them of their livelihoods and driving them into poverty. The Eastern Seaboard Development Plan has clearly demonstrated this effect on artisanal fishers in the area.

One example is the case of Ao Udom communities, located in the Laem Chabang Economic Zone. During the periods of the Fifth and Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plans, 1982–86 and 1987–91 respectively, the area underwent development into a coastal port city and commercial centre for the export industry. A deep sea port was constructed and industrial estates established. After the completion of the first phase of the project in 1987 and the second phase in 2000, Ao Udom was transformed from a coastal community of artisanal fishers and farmers into an industrial area. It now has seven ports operated by six companies, which occupy 80 percent

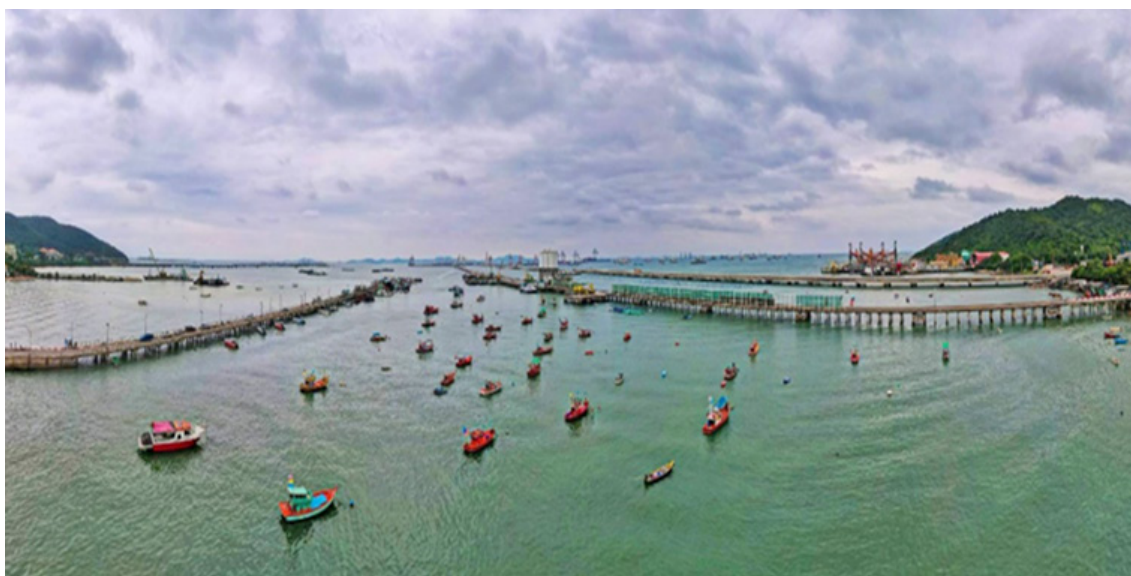


Figure 4: : Ao Udom Bay at present, surrounded by industrial piers

Source: Sustainable Development Foundation, 2020

of the coastal land area as well as a large mooring space and navigation channels in the sea for cargo ships. As a result, the artisanal fishers have less than 20 percent of the fishing area for themselves (Figure 4: : Ao Udom Bay at present, surrounded by industrial piers).

In addition, the sea has provided a large, convenient dumping ground for construction materials and cargo ship and household wastes, which has degraded the coastal ecosystem and increased environmental pollution. The situation is bound to get worse, as Ao Udom is currently slated as one of the target areas for the vast Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) Project, designed to upscale industrial development infrastructure for the expansion of investment in the eastern region of the country. Part of this scheme is the expansion of the deep seaport for international cargo ships

into Phases Three and Four, with rail and road links to the country's transport system (Triyada Trimankha and Lamita Khetkhan, 2020).

The case of Ao Udom demonstrates how changes in the use of coastal and marine areas adversely affect ecosystems and artisanal fishers' livelihoods, and thereby the economy of their households and communities. While the government has policies and plans to reduce poverty and inequality, the lack of fair access to the natural resource base for those who rely on them for their livelihoods, such as the artisanal fishers, will generate further problems in social development. Since government agencies mainly operate in silos, without coordination among each other and without good governance in resource usage, the poor are left to fend for themselves.

Even though the poverty rate in Thailand declined in 2019, whether the trend can be maintained is another matter. Apart from the above-mentioned contributing factors, the eruption of Covid-19 in 2020 has had a widespread impact on the national economy and people's employment, including the fisheries sector. It is uncertain how long the situation will last, so poverty reduction will be a more difficult endeavour and the fishery sector may face even harder times ahead.

2.2. Employment in the Fisheries Sector

2.2.1. International Conventions and Agreements

Thailand has demonstrated its commitment to look after the living and working conditions of fisheries sector workers by ratifying 19 International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions (Table 3). Convention No. 188 on Work in Fishing imposes obligations for improved working conditions at sea and on land with respect to safety, health and medical care, as well as written work agreements and social security coverage for the fishers. It has created progress towards the protection of small-scale fishers from various risks (ICSF, 2007).

The move was in line with SDG 8 ('promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all'), specifically Target 8.7 ('taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms') and Target 8.8 ('protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment').

2.2.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

The Thai government has issued urgent policy guidelines to upgrade workers' capacity in both the formal and informal sectors, which are aimed at protecting their safety, health and welfare, and ensure that they receive benefits appropriate for a decent living, particularly workers in the fisheries sector (the Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019: 24). Originally, Thailand had a Labour Protection Act that regulated general working conditions and various welfare benefits for workers without specifying any particular occupations. It became apparent that working conditions in the fisheries sector differ from other sectors and that workers face the additional risks of being on board fishing vessels for long hours and for long periods, mostly fully exposed to the elements. This was partly due to Thailand being given a 'yellow card', or a warning, by the European Commission on the need to tackle the problems of IUU fishing. This forced the government to scrutinize the industry more closely and urgently. The outcomes are the ratification of ILO Convention No. 188 and the enactment of the Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act in 2019.

The Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act of 2019 protects the rights of fisheries sector workers in accordance with international standards. It is specifically applicable to fishing vessels of the size specified by the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and exempts subsistent, freshwater and recreational fishing. The key provisions are for the vessels' owners to comply with the minimum standards of on board working hours, accommodation, food, safety, and health and sanitation.

These provisions are also to ensure workers receive appropriate welfare protection in accordance with seven related laws, such as the fisheries law, the workers compensation law, the labour relations law, as well as the Ministry of Labour's Notifications. The act authorizes officials from the Department of Fisheries, the Marine Department and the Ministry of Labour to board vessels or enter premises belonging to vessel owners to inspect compliance.

Prior to the enactment of the 2019 Act, other laws and regulations concerning fisheries were passed since 2015:

- Emergency Decree on Fisheries, B.E. 2558 (2015), 2017 Amendment
- Ministerial Regulation on the Protection of Labour in Sea Fisheries, B.E. 2557 (2014)
- Anti-Human Trafficking Act, B.E. 2551 (2008), 2015, 2017, and 2019 Amendments
- Procedures for Human Trafficking Cases Act, B.E. 2559 (2016)
- Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act, B.E. 2562 (2019)

Several additional laws, regulations and guidelines have also been issued to prevent human trafficking for labour exploitation, including:

- Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree, B.E. 2560 (2017) and Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree (No. 2), B.E. 2561 (2018)
- Ministerial Regulation on the Protection of Labour in Fisheries (No. 2), B.E. 2561 (2018)
- Department of Labour Protection and Welfare Regulation on Labour Inspection and Criminal Prosecution Pursuant to Ministerial Regulation on the Protection of Labour in Sea Fisheries, 2018

In the past, the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare, Ministry of Labour, collaborated with the International Labour Organization to implement the Ship to Shore Rights Project, which aimed at improving the measures to rectify and prevent unjust labour exploitation practices in the fisheries and related sectors. The project received financial support from the European Union and was implemented in close coordination with all other partners in the government sector, industrial sector and labour organizations, as well as consumers. It covered 22 coastal provinces of the country. The project outcome is notable in the improvement of the operation of large-scale or commercial fisheries in line with international standards.

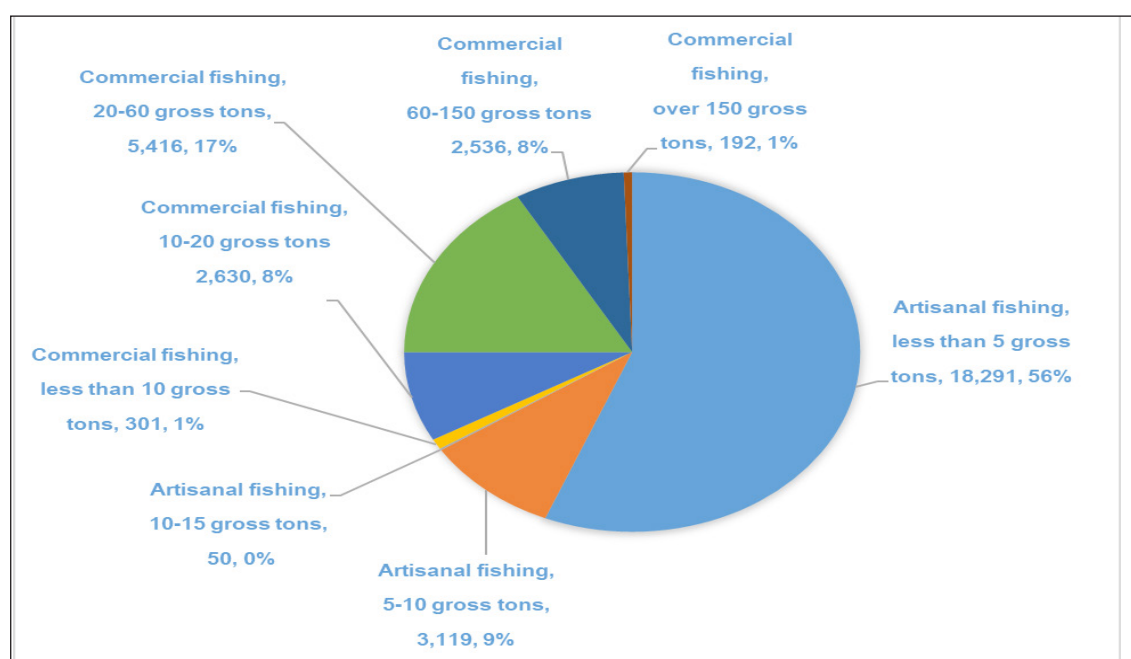


Figure 5: Number of Artisanal and Commercial Fishing Vessels, 2019

Source: Department of Fisheries, 2019 (as of 1 April 2019)

A survey of sea fisheries operators in 2000 found that 93,512 households were engaged in coastal fisheries (National Statistics Office, 2000), but there were no statistics on artisanal fishers. In 2019, however, the statistics for Thai fishing vessels compiled from registration records and categorized by gross tonnage show a total of 21,460 artisanal fishing vessels. Of these, 85 percent are no larger than 5 gross tons, in comparison to 10,760 commercial fishing vessels that range from 10 to over 150 gross tons (Figure 5: Number of Artisanal and Commercial Fishing Vessels, 2019).

Even though there are workers employed on board artisanal fishing vessels, they are considered informal workers and are not covered by labour protection laws like those on board large vessels. An important factor is that artisanal fishers and their employees are bound by their restricted access to marine resources, as Article 34 of the Emergency Decree on Fisheries of 2017 stipulates that 'artisanal fisheries license holders are prohibited from fishing beyond the coastal zones'. In reality, Thai artisanal fishers have traditionally been fishing within the 6–12 miles of sea along the coastline. The 2017 Decree in effect restricted their fishing grounds to 3–6.48 miles from land. This has impacted the income of artisanal fishers. The imposed restriction did not take into consideration the fact that artisanal fishers' gear is not highly efficient and is made for specific types of marine animals and according to the season. During the rainy season in particular, fish move farther out into the sea. Even though the Department of Fisheries has announced leniency for artisanal fishers, in practice they have found themselves at risk of having their gear damaged by commercial fishing gear. The provisions in the law, therefore, do not contribute to the fishers' occupational and employment security. Instead, they restrict their work activities and represent the unequal distribution of access to natural resources (Waranthon Kaewthankham, 2020).

Freshwater fisheries are run by another group of artisanal fishers, which may have started out mainly as a supplementary occupation to procure food for home consumption. These include raising fish in rivers, canals and lakes. As the population grows and there is more market demand for fish, some of the fishers living near bodies of freshwater have become increasingly engaged in commercial freshwater fisheries as an occupation.

Rivers, however, have other intensive uses apart from fishing, such as farming, tourism and hydro dams. Dams have been the most destructive to freshwater fisheries as they block the flow of natural nutrients as well as the migration of fish up and down the stream (Department of Fisheries, n.d.). A study of the life of fishers around the confluence of the Loei River and the Mekong River, in Chiang Khan subdistrict, Loei province, found that the various Mekong River development projects, including the construction of a weir on the Loei River, have led to the decrease of aquatic animals. The damming of the Upper Mekong by China has caused abnormal ebbs and flows in the river, affecting the migration patterns of the fish, causing a phenomenon known locally as 'lost fish syndrome'. This has resulted in the majority of fishers being forced to abandon their occupation; there are now fewer than 50 of a total 400 fishers operating in the area. The local traditional way of life that was closely intertwined with the Loei and Mekong rivers, plus accumulated learning and experiences, are disappearing with them (Channarong Wongla et al., 2012).

The sea gypsies are another vulnerable group facing livelihood and employment problems. There are three of these ethnic groups in Thailand—Moken, Moklen and Urak Lawoi—with a total population of around 12,000. They have been living on the islands on the coast of the Andaman Sea for a long time and now reside in the provinces of Ranong, Phang Nga, Phuket and Krabi. The rapid development of the tourism industry, the privatization of the commons and nature conservation measures imposed without local participation have caused problems for traditional communities such as these. Many have been accused of trespassing on private property and evicted from their settlements on the coast (the Secretariat of the House of Representatives, 2016). The Moklen people, for example, face serious hardship due to dwindling natural resources, the enclosure of national park areas and a lack of alternative livelihoods. They currently take on odd jobs in town (Indigenous Peoples' Foundation for Education and Environment (IPF), n.d.). The key factor here is the restriction of access to and utilization of natural resources imposed on these indigenous peoples who are dependent on fisheries.

As natural resources decline, the Department of Fisheries has been promoting both aquaculture and mariculture. Initially, this was meant to be a supplementary occupation, but technological innovations have been introduced to mainstream fisheries. These can be used to improve aquaculture and mariculture systems to produce quality, safe products that meet the demands of the market. They also ensure occupational security for the business operators (Department of Fisheries, 2017). This had the effect of transferring the use of the sea from artisanal fishers to entrepreneurial groups with higher investment capacity, because no financial and marketing support for the fishers was provided. Conflict regarding access to sea spaces between local fishers and large mariculture businesses ensued, such as in the case of Surat Thani province (Triyada Trimankha, 2020).

The above-mentioned developments show that the policies on work and employment in the fisheries sector have two approaches. Workers in the fisheries sector are given rights protection by domestic laws in accordance with international treaties adopted by the government. Artisanal fishers, small-scale aquaculture and mariculture fishers, and ethnic minority fishers are encouraged to engage in more productive employment, but without concrete consideration to their rights in the management of marine resources that form the basis of their occupation. If they cannot access both the use and the management of these natural resources, their way of life would be in crisis.

2.3. Decent Work in the Fisheries Sector

2.3.1. International Conventions and Agreements

The Thai government has ratified two important international instruments in 2018 and 2019: the 2014 Protocol to the 1930 Forced Labour Convention (PO29) and Convention No. 188 on Work in Fishing, 2007 (C188).

The 2014 Protocol to the 1930 Forced Labour Convention aims at the prevention, protection and remedy of forced labour to ensure its effective and sustainable abolishment. The Thai government has stated that the ratification of the Protocol means an upgrade of labour protection efforts, which will present Thailand positively to the world as well as benefit Thai exports (Office of the Prime Minister, 2018). Convention No. 188 on Work in Fishing, 2007 is about ensuring decent work for all workers on board fishing vessels by establishing minimum standards for working and living conditions, health and safety, medical care, social security, etc.

Therefore, Thailand has shown commitment to promoting labour rights protection and raising the standard of living of all its workers, especially in the fisheries industry and related seafood industries. The nation is also keen on promoting Thai industries in international trade. Recent efforts include the 2019 amendment of the Anti-Human Trafficking Act, the enactment of the Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act in 2019, as well as the establishment of multi-disciplinary teams for labour inspection and enforcement of the law (International Labour Organization, 2020).

At the same time, the Thai government is also focused on achieving the SDGs by 2030. Several of these are related to decent work, especially Goal 8 on sustainable and inclusive economic growth with full and productive employment and decent work for all. The United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF) Thailand, 2017–2021, places a great deal of importance on the issue of decent work (International Labour Organization, 2018).

2.3.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

Thailand's development direction has been laid out in the 20-Year National Strategy (2018–2037) and the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017–2021). The long-term goal is for the country to achieve the status of a developed country through widespread reforms for economic security, human capital development, equal economic opportunities, environmental sustainability, competitiveness and efficient bureaucracy. The short-term 5-Year Master Plan on Thai Labour Development (2017–2021) Revised Version of 2019 contains the following strategies.

- 1) Capacity-building of workers and business operators to improve economic strength and competitiveness
- 2) Protection and strengthening of work security and quality of life
- 3) International labour management
- 4) Development of mechanisms for a balanced labour market for sustainability in the labour sector
- 5) Organization and personnel management based on good governance and participation
- 6) Information technology development for modern and stable information integration

These six strategies are in line with the National Strategy and economic and social development plan mentioned above, and closely follow the SDGs.

In addition, Thailand was engaged in intensive consultations with the International Labour Organization and its partners in 2018 to develop the Thailand Decent Work Country Program 2019–2021, which identifies priorities and outcomes of work to be implemented jointly by government agencies, workers and employers' organizations with the support of the ILO. The tripartite programme aims at promoting labour rights protection through integrated technical, financial and human resource collaborations. It contains three key issues.

- 1) Promote an enabling environment for the growth of decent and productive employment
- 2) Strengthen labour protection, especially among vulnerable workers
- 3) Strengthen labour market governance in line with international labour standards

While the 2020 policy of the Ministry of Labour included 'Promotion of decent work for every group of people of all ages' (Ministry of Labour, 2020), neither the Decent Work Country Program 2019–2021 nor the Ministry's policies include small-scale fishers as a target group, instead focusing on workers in commercial fisheries and related industries.

In the past few years, the Thai government has undertaken reforms in the management of the fisheries sector to reduce unacceptable practices, including forced labour. The reform, however, focused only on 5,000 commercial fishing vessels larger than 30 gross tons and 60,000–70,000 workers on board these vessels. Reform of the seafood processing industry has been undertaken for longer, and it is estimated that over 300,000 workers, two-thirds of them migrants from other countries and two-thirds women, now enjoy better working and living conditions, and their work is less dangerous than work in fishing (International Labour Organization, 2020).

As artisanal fishers, ethnic fishers and women fishers have not been included in any standardized systems, they have not benefited from the efforts to promote decent work in fisheries. This means that the current effort has not been inclusive, and decent work for all is unlikely to become a reality. Even though the Department of Fisheries has established a sub-committee on revitalizing and building the capacity of artisanal fishery for the sustainable development of Thai fisheries (Matichon On-line, 2019), there has been no progress until now, not even clarity regarding the direction the sub-committee will take. These groups have no assurance of their rights to work, of the opportunity to earn an income, of the recognition of their identities and of opportunities for self-development.

2.4. Social Inclusion, Leaving No One Behind

2.4.1. International Conventions and Agreement

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are based on five basic principles: 1) Universality, 2) Leaving no one behind, 3) Interconnectedness and indivisibility, 4) Inclusiveness, and 5) Multi-

stakeholder partnerships (United Nations System Staff College, 2015). Inclusiveness is about ensuring that poor, vulnerable and marginalized people benefit from development, have access to economic, social and political opportunities, and to public services, natural resources and ecosystem services, and are protected from natural and climate change disasters. It also calls on rich and developed countries to take part in providing assistance to the abovementioned groups (Gupta & Vegelin, 2016).

2.4.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

The Policy Statement of the Government gives importance to social inclusion by including it in the major policy of developing social strength from the base, involving community empowerment and networking, and development of public health and social security systems, which cover suitable education, health and employment for all. There are urgent policies to solve livelihoods problems, improve welfare systems and quality of life, and develop public service delivery systems (the Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019).

Such policies are in line with the 20-Year National Strategy on Enhancing Social Opportunities and Equity, with related Master Plans on Foreign Affairs, Social Empowerment, Local Economy, Equity and Social Security, whole-system Integrated Water Management, and with the National Strategy on Developing and Strengthening Human Capital and related Master Plans on Security, Foreign Affairs, Social Empowerment, Equity and Social Security, Anti-Corruption, Laws and Justice, Innovations Research and Development.

The 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan also includes strategies related to social inclusion. One is the development and strengthening of human capital strategy, which contains related guidelines on strengthening society's participation in national development, such as implementing measures to look after vulnerable families, and on promoting educational institutions as accessible technical knowledge sources. Another is the strategy of enhancing social justice and reducing social disparity, with guidelines on increasing opportunities for the 40 percent that makes the lowest income groups of the population to gain access to quality public services and higher income occupations. This is through attaining higher levels of education, appropriate social protection and welfare support, and skills development.

It is evident that Thailand has endorsed the SDGs and adopted the concepts of social justice and social inclusion, in which every group has a role in contributing to society, and there must be no groups left behind. The problem, however, is that artisanal fishers, ethnic fishers and women fishers are left out of any decisions that determine the direction of national and social development. This is due to the fact that the majority of them are not included in the database of the government and are consequently unable to exert their identities in public. State agencies also do not have mechanisms, measures or plans to promote their continuous participation. This shows that even though there is an effort to specify social inclusion in policy statements, the policies cannot be implemented in practice if no specific target groups are clearly identified.

According to the Strengthening Evidence-based Advocacy for Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Justice in Small-scale Fisheries and Coastal Aquaculture in South and Southeast Asia: Thailand Case Study, the role and status of women in artisanal fishery tend to be either overlooked or not included in the definition of artisanal fishers, as theirs is considered a supplementary role in the occupation. Women fishers lack opportunities to access news and information, to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Thereby they miss out on having their rights and opportunities taken into consideration in the development of policies on capacity-building in the fisheries sector. In effect, women fishers are marginalized in the fisheries sector and have no status to participate in any decision-making regarding the management of the fisheries sector, social development and self-development in order to defend their rights to social security (Sustainable Development Foundation, 2020).

The Federation of Thai Fisherfolk Association, the Association of Southern Women Fisherfolk and their member organizations, in collaboration with NGOs working on marine and coastal

resources, such as the Raks Talay Thai Association, the Andaman Foundation and the Sustainable Development Foundation, have mobilized on the issues of recognition and social inclusion of artisanal fishers. Due to this, the Department of Fisheries now pays more attention to these issues. It has established various sub-committees with seats for artisanal fishers to take part in to formulate relevant policies as either members or resource persons. Even though only one seat is allocated to artisanal fishers in each subcommittee, which is disproportionate in comparison to large-scale or commercial fisheries, it does mean that the Department of Fisheries is paying attention to this sector. The issue of women fishers' participation, however, has not yet been addressed with gender balance representation.

2.5. Health, Occupational Health and Safety, and Sexual and Reproductive Health

2.5.1. International Conventions and Agreements

Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, occupational health and safety and sexual and reproductive health are addressed under Goal 3: to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. A focus specifically on the labour sector is included in Goal 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, as one of the targets: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers. The Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Labour have adopted these goals and targets in their work.

2.5.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

Major Policy No. 9 in the Government's Policy Statement of 25 July 2019 is to develop public health and social security systems by upscaling health security coverage. This would include workers in the informal sector, promoting health and sanitation measures so that people of all ages become healthy (the Secretariat of the Prime Minister, 2019).

The 20-Year National Strategy includes the issue of enhancing well-being by promoting public participation in health and well-being activities. The related Master Plan contains the following sub-plans.

- 1) Promoting knowledge on well-being and the prevention and control of health risks
- 2) Encouraging communities to create enabling environments for well-being
- 3) Developing modern health service systems in support of well-being
- 4) Distributing quality public health services to all areas
- 5) Developing response systems for newly emerging and re-emerging diseases due to climate change

Thailand has been organizing inclusive systems of basic social protection and health security. It has developed cost-effective social security regarding health coverage (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019). The Thai health security system comprises three types: social security-based coverage, medical cost coverage for government officials and health security for all (Somporn et al. 2016). The health security for all scheme enables artisanal fishers to receive medical care at any government hospital.

In the Report on National Social Development 2018, the Ministry of Public Health implemented a project to build the capacity of self-help health care at the family level, so that all families receive the transfer of knowledge and healthcare on an on-going basis. One family member acts as a health volunteer who performs basic care and coordinates with village health volunteers who are key managers of community healthcare (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2018: 27–28).

In the labour sector, the Ministry of Public Health has placed importance on occupational health and decent work for all in accordance with the policy of the International Labour Organization and SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth. This includes the target of promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants and those in precarious employment, and with the frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries by sex and migrant status as indicators. The Ministry explains that since all workers are valuable resources of the country, promoting suitable and healthy work environments for workers in all occupations can help reduce the risk of occupational diseases, injuries and deaths, especially in dangerous work. This will reduce economic loss, medical costs and scarcity of workers due to disability and death (Office of the Permanent Secretary of Public Health, 2020).

The survey and assessment of existing economic, social and legal measures found that Thailand has comprehensive measures but is still lacking robustness in their enforcement. Moreover, the issue of sustainable good health and safety is related to other issues, such as poverty, agriculture, water, soil, and chemicals, which impact people's health. To address the people's health and safety problems requires cooperation from other related agencies (Nitaya Phromkantha et al., 2019).

2.6. Education and Learning

2.6.1. International Conventions and Agreements

Education upgrades people's quality of life, which leads to social development. Thailand has focused on the promotion of education in line with SDG 4, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

In addition, the SSF Guidelines stipulate that 'states should provide and enable access to schools and education facilities that meet the needs of small-scale fishing communities and that facilitate gainful and decent employment of youth, respecting their career choices and providing equal opportunities for all boys and girls and young men and women'.

2.6.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

According to the Government's Policy Statement of 25 July 2019, Major Policy No. 8 on learning process reform and capacity development includes:

- 1) Developing the capacity of educational personnel and pre-school child carers to organize quality education
- 2) Adjusting the teaching and learning models to develop occupational skills in all age groups
- 3) Modernizing the educational curricula
- 4) Reducing educational disparity by integrating their work of education organizing units with that of the Equitable Education Fund, focusing on disadvantaged children and out-of-school children (the Secretariat of the Prime Minister, 2019)

These are in line with the 20-Year National Strategy on Developing and Strengthening Human Capital and building opportunities based on social equity and equality, and also in line with the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan.

In addition, the Ministry of Education has a key mobilization mechanism in the form of the Steering Committee for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal on Education and has prepared a roadmap containing short-term (2017), medium-term (2018–2021) and long-term (2021–2030) measures, plans and projects. These are aimed at addressing key challenges regarding the achievement of the goal and targets in 2030, such as the disparity in educational opportunity, the lack of self-knowledge, the lack of motivation for learning, etc. (Ministry of Education, 2019).

Currently, the Ministry of Education is operating under the 12th Education Development Plan (2018–2021), which contains six key strategies:

- 1) To develop curricula, learning and teaching, and measurement and assessment processes for Thai people to be moral and ethical
- 2) To train and develop teachers and educational personnel who meet the needs of all levels
- 3) To produce research personnel, including research work, responsive to the country's development needs
- 4) To expand opportunities to access educational services and life-long learning for those of all ages at a level suitable to their context and locality
- 5) To develop management and administration systems and to promote participation by all sectors in education organization

The Thai education system has been diversified in the attempt to respond to the different socio-economic and cultural conditions of the population. The National Education Act (No. 4) B.E. 2562 (2019) specifies three types of education organization: formal education, non-formal education and the notable addition of 'life-long education'. This is defined as 'education based on the integration of formal, non-formal and informal education for the purpose of continuous development of the quality of life throughout one's life'.

In fisher or coastal communities in Thailand, all children can access basic education up to grade 9, although the quality of their education may differ. This quality disparity remains despite including the issuance of various policies to assist children who have so far been left behind (Ministry of Education, 2019). From national legislation and strategies to ministerial plans and measures, it can be seen that education development is not limited to formal schooling but encompasses the expansion of access to educational and learning services for all age groups according to their conditions and context. The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, has joined this effort by preparing a Curriculum of School for Thai Fishers, aiming at developing the quality of life of fishers through income generation, while learning to become responsible fishers employing more sustainable fishing methods. It is believed that this outcome will contribute towards Thai fishers' competitiveness and help build confidence in the world market for Thai fishery products so that they can compete without trade-related restrictions. The curriculum is currently in the process of data gathering and consultation with relevant government agencies, community organizations and non-government development organizations (Department of Fisheries, 2019).

2.7. Housing Issues in Thai Fishers' Communities

2.7.1. International Conventions and Agreements

Housing security is included in SDG 11, making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable, which encompasses access to housing and basic services. In addition, it is in line with the New Urban Agenda (NUA) that came out of the UN conference on Housing and Sustainable Development, HABITAT III, in 2016. This focuses on sustainable urban development in which local administration, the private sector and civil society cooperate in the planning, design, implementation and maintenance of urban housing and public services in compliance with the SDG obligations, the World Health Organization healthy city concept and national policies on housing development and management (United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2020).

The abovementioned principles are in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) and are referred to in the FAO SSF Guidelines—fishery communities should have support for housing security and risks reduction from natural disasters and climate change.

2.7.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

Major Policy No. 7 of the Government's Policy Statement of 25 July 2019 to develop and strengthen the country's foundations includes solving housing and agricultural land problems, building livable and active communities and a comfortable and convenient society with safety of life. Major Policy No. 10 on natural resource rehabilitation and environmental conservation for sustainable growth includes land management improvement and reduction of inequality in land tenure through the allocation of agriculture and homestead land to poor people and farmers. This is in accordance with the principles of the National Land Policy Committee on the distribution of land tenure to non-trespassers who have been living on the land with measures to prevent the transfer of the land to those who are not poor and are not farmers (the Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019).

So far, the government has solved the lack of housing and lack of title problems by transforming the 10-Year Strategic Plan for Housing Development of 2016–2025 into the 20-Year Master Plan for Housing Development (2017–2036). This syncs it with the 20-Year National Strategy (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2017). National Strategy No. 4 on building social opportunities and equity and reducing inequality corresponds with Strategy No. 2 of the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan on enhancing social justice and reducing inequality. That focuses on reducing income inequality among different socio-economic groups, solving the problem of poverty, increasing access to basic public social services, increasing community capacity and strengthening local economies for community self-reliance. The key guidelines are as follows:

- 1) Increase of opportunities for the lowest income group to access quality public services, such as housing and utilities, to solve the problem of urban slums, and support for communities to provide necessary services for the elderly
- 2) Distribution of quality public services to all areas inclusively with expansion of the coverage to include welfare housing for low-income populations that is accessible in all areas.

Statistics from the National Housing Information Centre, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, show that in December 2019 there were 26,775,579 houses in the whole country (which has a total population of 66,558,935). The percentage of the households that own their own land and house is declining, while that of households that rent houses is on a steady increase. More importantly, the percentage of low-income households that do not own the houses they are living in is also increasing steadily (National Housing Authority, 2019).

Therefore, to comply with the Master Plan for Housing Development, the National Housing Authority will continue to develop houses for rent and sale to the public, while the Community Organization Development Institute (CODI), a public organization, will work on solving the housing problem for the low-income population. CODI is a key mobilizer of urban and rural housing security development through the direct participation of the people who face the problem themselves. Many urban and rural housing security projects (Baan Mankong) and Centres for Quality of Life Development of the Homeless have come up this way. A Progress Report as of 31 May 2019 on solving the housing problem shows that, from 2017–2019, CODI has approved 3,836 projects in 77 provinces for a total of 59,849 households. This was with a budget of 1,886.85 million baht (Community Organization Development Institute, Public Organization, 2019).

In its work with artisanal fishers living in mangroves on the water's edge, which are conserved areas for public benefit, CODI found that other agencies need to step in to cooperate in solving housing problems. For example, to solve the housing problem for fishers on the water's edge on public land that is under the supervision of the Marine Department, CODI's approach was to work with the Marine Department to set up rules for the inhabitants to report their residence to the Department and to request the continued use of the same pieces of land. The Marine Department would ask the respective municipalities to request the use of the remaining land as public paths. For communities living in the mangroves, CODI would work with the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources to request use of the land through the National Land Policy

Committee's provincial offices. The southern native fishing communities in Satun, Phuket, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Surat Thani, etc., have already received permission to remain in their home communities. Several communities have already submitted proposals to join the Baan Mankong Project in order to improve their houses (Community Organization Development Institute, 2019).

2.8. Sanitation, Clean Drinking Water and Energy

2.8.1. International Conventions and Agreements

The SDGs play an important role in determining the direction of Thailand's future development, particularly Goal 6 on availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, Goal 7 on access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production patterns, and Goal 13 on combating climate change and its impacts.

2.8.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

Sanitation, clean drinking water and energy are addressed in the government's Major Policy No. 5 on developing the economy and competitiveness under the guidelines on basic utilities development. This consists of strengthening energy security to be self-sufficient, improving energy business regulatory systems to ensure free and fair competition, improving waterworks management systems and employing modern technology in the production and administration of water supply systems to reduce waste. There is also Major Policy No. 10 on the rehabilitation of natural resources and preservation of the environment for sustainable growth. It promotes integrated water management of community water sources and the sea by linking with the country's 20-Year Water Management Plan, to ensure that rural communities can access clean water at affordable prices with proper community water management systems (the Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019: 30).

Sanitation and clean drinking water are also addressed in the 20-Year National Strategy in Strategy No. 5 on eco-friendly development and growth. This is in the guidelines on developing eco-friendly water, energy and agricultural security and on 'developing whole watershed-based water management systems to increase the country's water security' and 'enhancing productivity of an entire water system to promote water-use efficiency and generate value added for water consumption adequate with international standard'. The corresponding 20-Year Master Plan on Water Resource Management 2018–2037 comprises six areas (Office of the National Water Resources, 2019) as follows:

- 1) The management of water for consumption to provide water supply to every village, every household in urban communities and key tourism sites. It is to provide secondary water sources in dry areas, to develop standardized drinking water at a reasonable price and to conserve water by reducing water use in households, the service sector and the public sector.
- 2) The creation of water security in the production sector by developing new, fully efficient water retention and distribution systems
- 3) Flood management by increasing drainage efficiency, installing flood prevention systems in urban communities, water management in flooded areas and water flow retarding areas, including area-based systematic flood mitigation
- 4) Water quality and water resource conservation by increasing the efficiency of community wastewater collection and treatment systems, recycling wastewater, preventing and reducing wastewater at source, controlling water flow for ecosystem conservation and rehabilitating natural water sources in the whole country
- 5) Watershed forest rehabilitation and prevention and reduction of soil erosion on steep slopes
- 6) Efficient management through the establishment of water resource management organizations (National Water Resources Committee, Watershed Committees, etc.), law improvements, database systems development, and technology research and development

The 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan is the key mechanism to translate the National Strategy and the Master Plan into action plans, and its Strategy No. 4 on eco-friendly growth for sustainable development contains the following guidelines on water resource management:

- 1) Natural resources conservation and rehabilitation to create sustainable and fair balance between conservation and use
- 2) Increasing water resource management efficiency to enhance security, balance and sustainability
- 3) Disaster risk reduction management

Thailand has always paid attention to water resource management. A large budget has been allocated to solving water problems and providing additional water sources. The problems, however, could not be resolved in a sustainable manner earlier due to the lack of a central coordination agency, which is needed to maintain supervision over inter-agency integration of operations. A clear positive outcome has been the provision of water for consumption, while flood prevention management in risk areas, including water quality management and watershed forest rehabilitation, have not achieved the target (Office of the National Water Resources, 2019).

Energy is addressed in the 20-Year National Strategy in three areas. Strategy No. 1 on security includes developing preparedness systems for the protection of the natural resource base and the environment and national interests. Strategy No. 2 on competitiveness includes developing urban centres' efficiency in energy and resource use at a reasonable price, the diversification of fuel types and the promotion of renewable energy in accordance with local potentials. Strategy No. 3 on eco-friendly growth includes increasing energy efficiency and the promotion of clean energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Ministry of Energy has adopted these strategic guidelines in its 5-Year Operational Plan (2020–2022) with a key policy of 'Energy for All' that people at all levels can participate in to access energy for income generation and a better quality of life, and for the development of self-reliant economies. For example, renewable power plants at the community level are promoted, in which community members can co-invest and gain suitable returns, and communities can manage them themselves so that they earn income from the enterprise (Ministry of Energy, 2019).

An example of an energy project that the Ministry of Energy implemented in 2004 in collaboration with an artisanal fishing community is the installation of solar cells for electricity generation on Ko Chik Nok in Chanthaburi province. The one community on the island comprises 150 households, with a total population of 392 and a land area of 700 rai (112 hectares). The budget came from the Energy Policy and Planning Office. The result has been a reduction in household energy costs and better health among community members. This is due to the elimination of air and noise pollution caused by diesel generators (Suphang Chatuchinda, 2020).

In addition, there was a 'project to establish proto-type energy-saving artisanal fishing using LED light bulbs on fishing boats with falling nets'. It involved changing the light bulbs used to lure marine animals to the LED type. This increased energy efficiency, downsized dynamos to a suitable level and modified engines to increase efficiency. The fishers understood the behaviour of marine animals in response to light, leading to improved cost effectiveness in their operations. The target groups were artisanal fishers in Prachuap Khiri Khan province (Sirinan Chanrueang, 2017).

Thailand's energy policy implementation has a clear goal of benefits distribution to the community level, fishing communities included. Previously, there have been several projects implemented directly in fishing communities, especially the installation of renewable energy generation on islands. If government agencies continue actively on this path, it will certainly yield great benefits to these communities. 'Energy for all' will become a reality, simultaneously transitioning from fossil fuels to clean energy in the future.

2.9. Climate Change

2.9.1. International Conventions and Agreements

Climate change is a pressing challenge facing the world. Part of its cause is human activities that have emitted greenhouse gases. Something countries can do to prevent catastrophic consequences is ratify the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This commits them to the ultimate objective of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations ‘at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human-induced) interference with the climate system’, and that ‘such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner’. The Paris Agreement of 2015 is the latest agreement by the UNFCCC parties to strengthen the shared responsibilities in combating climate change by keeping the increase in average temperature to below 2° Celsius while trying to limit the increase to 1.5° C. All parties are obligated to set their own climate change mitigation targets. They plan and implement corresponding measures based on respect of human rights, the right to health and the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrant workers, children, people with disability and vulnerable groups, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, women’s empowerment and justice for future generations.

Both the Convention and the Agreement are in line with the SDG 13 on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization has been paying particular attention to the impact of climate change on agriculture and food and water security. The issue is included in the FAO SSF Guidelines.

2.9.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

Climate change issues have been integrated into Thailand’s national policies and plans. In the 2019 Government Policy Statement, they are Major Policy No. 10, to rehabilitate natural resources and conserve the environment for sustainable growth, including addressing the problems of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impact, and Urgent Policy No. 11 on preparing measures against drought and floods. These policies focus on greenhouse gas emission reduction, building a low-carbon society, improving the whole disaster management system to include prevention, response and recovery measures, and building people’s knowledge and understanding of climate change (the Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019: 26,33).

These policies correspond with the 20-Year National Strategy on Eco-Friendly Development and Growth and the related Master Plans on foreign affairs, sustainable growth, and whole watershed-based water management (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019). The same strategy is in the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, with guidelines on natural resource base conservation and rehabilitation, water security and efficient water management, increased effectiveness in greenhouse gas emission reduction and in adaptation and disaster risks reduction capacity (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2016: 13–14).

The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, has integrated climate change issues into the national-level policies and has prepared the Climate Change Master Plan, 2015–2050. This has led to the establishment of mechanisms for the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures with the following progress in three key areas:

- 1) Climate change adaptation. Data has been gathered and an assessment made on the potential impact of climate change and the level of Thailand’s vulnerability. This is to prepare the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), which covers six key areas: water management, agriculture and food security, tourism, public health, natural resource management and human settlements and security (Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, 2018).

- 2) Greenhouse gas reduction and low-carbon growth promotion. Activities carried out by ONEP include working with the Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization (Public Organization) to prepare the national-level inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. This is an assessment of the amount of emissions from anthropogenic sources using the universal standard method of calculation. The emissions inventories cover five sectors: energy, agriculture, industrial processing, use of forest products and land use, and waste. Preparation has also been made to implement greenhouse gas emission reduction under the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Roadmap (Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, 2019).
- 3) Capacity-building on climate change management. This was carried out in collaboration with other agencies, such as the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion, in strengthening society's responsiveness and resilience in dealing with climate change under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement obligations through public relations, information dissemination, capacity-building and learning empowerment of people's networks to build their preparedness in responding to climate change (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2019).

At the same time, the Sub-Committee on Climate Change Strategy in Agriculture under the Policy and Planning Committee on Agriculture and Cooperatives (2017) has prepared the Climate Change Strategy for Agriculture, 2017–2021, to compile and classify data on local knowledge and wisdom for climate change adaptation. This is for dissemination to the public and related sectors, and to conduct research on climate change impacts as well as models and systems for crop insurance against climate change risks. Related agencies in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives engaging in carrying out the policy and plans include the Office of Agricultural Economics, Rice Department, Department of Fisheries, Department of Livestock Development, Department of Land Development, Department of Agricultural Extension and Cooperative Promotion Department.

It was found, however, that the current focus of the domestic policies and projects of related state agencies, i.e., Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and the Marine and Coastal Resources Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, is on research and studies, knowledge and information dissemination. There are no clear measures to support fisheries sector operators, particularly small-scale fishers, in identifying potential adaptation measures or becoming part of the mitigation solutions. Artisanal and small-scale fishers still rely on their traditional knowledge without opportunities to develop their capacity to adapt to climate change situations. They remain under threat from climate change while facing increased risks, especially women fishers, due to the assumption that they already possess the necessary knowledge and understanding. In fact, women fishers pay little attention to the issue because their daily life is burdened by both household, reproductive and productive work. They lack time to allocate to self-development potentials, so do not have opportunities to prepare themselves for climate change.

Another issue is Thailand's segmented administrative systems, leading to segmented implementation of policies. There are no integrated measures to inform villagers on the whole issue of climate change and its impacts. State agencies lack coordination among each other, each one pursuing its own mission without sharing information. This is even though work on climate change must be ecosystem-based, in which soil, water, forests and the sea are interlinked.

At the same time, climate change is linked to coastal erosion, as the change in weather patterns affects the circular flows of sea water, the wind and waves. As artisanal fishing communities are located in coastal areas, their settlements are at risk.

2.10. Social Institutions

2.10.1. International Conventions and Agreements

For labour in fisheries and related industrial sectors, the ILO has set policies and guidelines for international labour standards. It has also followed up on countries' implementation of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the ILO conventions they have ratified, as well as monitored in-country labour and social conditions to ensure that all members consider social justice and respect workers' fundamental rights.

There has been a campaign to promote the implementation and practice of the widely accepted core labour standards. It covers the following issues:

- 1) The elimination of forced labour
- 2) The effective abolition of child labour
- 3) Respect for freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
- 4) The elimination of discrimination regarding employment and occupation

Respect and recognition of the right of workers to self-organization and collective bargaining are in ILO Convention No. 87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948, and Convention No. 98, Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949. However, Thailand has not ratified either of the conventions.

For small-scale fisheries, the FAO has specified in the FAO SSF Guidelines that States should eradicate forced labour, prevent debt-bondage of women, men and children, and adopt effective measures to protect fishers and fish workers.

2.10.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

Since Thailand has ratified neither ILO Conventions No. 87 nor 98, despite continuous advocacy and demand by labour networks and organizations (Soraya Phikunhom, 2020), workers and employers do not have the rights and freedom to organize and engage in collective bargaining.

Workers in the fisheries sector can make demands only through existing legal and regulatory mechanisms under the Labour Protection Act, B.E. 2562 (2019), which stipulates the rights and duties of employers and employees and the minimum standards of employment conditions and workers' remuneration. The objectives of the law are to ensure workers' safety, good health, reasonable remuneration and benefits, and good quality of life, as well as for employers to look after their workers correctly and appropriately, jointly contributing to a happy co-working society and bringing prosperity, growth and progress at the individual, organizational and national levels.

The Thai labour protection law is considered more progressive than many countries in the ASEAN region, some of which do not require employers to compensate workers or provide benefits when their contracts are terminated, as these benefits are not mandatory in the ILO Convention (No. 100) (Worapapha Mahasamran, 2020).

In the Labour Relations Act, B.E. 2518 (1975), 'labour relations' means the mutual connections and treatment between employers and employees in the work place. This includes the relationship between employers' organizations (employers' associations, employers' federations, employers' confederations) and employees' organizations (labour unions, labour federations, labour confederations/congresses) that are registered and have a role in accordance with the law, as well as the role of the government in maintaining good relationships between the two parties for harmony in the industrial sector.

It can be said that labour relations refer to the right to organize, the right to collective bargaining and the protection of these rights for workers in the formal industrial sector. Articles 86–111 of the

Act stipulate the role of labour unions as legal workers' organizations with the key objectives of seeking and protecting benefits relating to the conditions of their employment, and of promoting good relations between employees and employers.

However, though workers do have the right to organize and bargain collectively, some provisions in the law that have been enforced to regulate labour relations for more than 45 years are out of date, as economic, social and political conditions have greatly changed. Therefore, the law has not brought about better labour relations, instead causing unfair practices in violation of workers' rights and several labour disputes. In particular, it has failed to protect labour union organizers and their members. These problems negatively impact workers, the business sector and Thailand's economy as a whole (Butsayarat Kanchanadit, 2016).

Workers in the fisheries sector are covered by the Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act, B.E. 2562 (2019), which protects their rights and prevents forced labour in the sector. But the Act does not cover subsistent fishing, freshwater fishing or recreational fishing, and only applies to larger vessels as specified by the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives. There is also the Ministerial Regulation on Labour Protection in Marine Fisheries (No. 2), 2019, which mainly regulates employees' wage payment and their safety on board fishing vessels.

Workers in the fisheries sector are protected by laws and regulations, some of which have been updated in response to current situations. Others still need amendments in order to comply with international standards. For small-scale or artisanal fisheries, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives has been implementing the provisions in the Emergency Decree on Fisheries, B.E. 2558 (2015) to start a registration process of local fishing community organizations. This is to promote their participation and support them in their sustainable management, conservation, rehabilitation and use of aquatic and marine life resources within the freshwater and coastal fishing grounds, as well as to provide assistance to their related activities and projects (Department of Fisheries, 2018). According to the statistical report as of 30 October 2020, there are 2,181 organizations registered with a total of 83,512 members. They are divided into five categories: coastal fisheries, off coast fisheries, freshwater fisheries, aquaculture and processing (Department of Fisheries, 2020) (Table 4). The law is that all fishing practices must comply with the policies of the National Fisheries Policy Committee, but such policies are only concerned with ensuring that fisheries within Thai territorial waters carry out fishing proportionate to the existing resources. And the National Committee itself cannot issue policies regarding the promotion of local fishing communities in sustainable management, maintenance, conservation, rehabilitation and use of resources. The result is that there is no clear role for the registered organizations.

There is one outcome that has come out of the confusion described above: artisanal and small-scale fishers still face difficulties in accessing state assistance and support.

2.11. Preventive Measures on Violence against Women and Children in Fishing Communities

2.11.1. International Conventions and Agreements

Thailand is party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), whose objective is eliminating all forms of discrimination, as both men and women have the right to be treated equally by the State and especially by the law. Another international instrument that has been adopted is the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which stipulates that children have special rights to receive care, assistance and protection in the family environment and in society, based on local customs and cultural values. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) reflects the commitment of the world regarding gender equality, women's human rights and the role of women in economic and social development. The BPfA contains many interesting issues that were deemed obstacles to gender equality, i.e., poverty, education and training, health, the use of violence, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision-making, the use of human rights mechanisms, media and the environment.

The UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 includes this issue in SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. All these international commitments have made it necessary for Thailand to amend several domestic laws and regulations in the past few decades and to issues policies focusing on women.

2.11.2. Domestic Laws, Policies and Projects

The Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development has developed the Phase 1 Action Plan on Women's Development, 2020–2022 by revising the Women's Development Strategy 2017–2021 according to the format prescribed by the National Economic and Social Development Council. This was while maintaining the material that was approved by the Cabinet on 26 September 2017 as the main plan for women's development. The Department has made some additions and extended the plan period to 2022 to synchronize with National Strategy time frames. The Phase I Action Plan corresponds with the 20-Year National Strategies on Developing and Strengthening Human Capital, and on Enhancing Social Opportunities and Equity, and its corresponding Master Plans on social power, economic foundations, and social equity and security. It corresponds with Strategies No.1 and No. 2 of the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan on enhancing human capital potential and on enhancing social justice and reducing inequality in society respectively (Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, 2019).

Along with this policy, the Thai government has processed legislation based on its international commitments concerning women and children. One is the Victims of Domestic Violence Protection Act, B.E.2550 (2007), which is intended to prevent and solve the problem of domestic violence, to protect victims and to maintain family relationships through procedures that differ from other criminal prosecutions. This allows for offenders to stop the violence and reform themselves, and provides state protection for family members against unfair treatment. The Family Development Promotion and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) was enacted on 20 August 2019 to replace the Victims of Domestic Violence Protection Act, to eliminate the existing discrepancies in terms of criminal prosecution procedures and strengthening victim protection and behaviour reform procedures. The key contents of the Act include:

- 1) A national-level committee to issue policies and strategies in promoting and protecting family development and safety
- 2) A central mechanism, which is the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, acting as a family promotion and protection centre in Bangkok. Along with this, provincial-level mechanisms headed by provincial social development and human security officials.
- 3) Local mechanisms in the form of community-level family development centres. The centres are tasked with implementing measures to prevent and resolve domestic violence, and providing advice and assistance (including conflict mediation) to families in trouble. In addition, problem-solving measures are prescribed and the responsibilities of the heads of centres and authorized officials are made clearer. The concept of Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS) is introduced for consideration to reduce sentences for women facing this syndrome (Court of Justice, 2019)

However, the time frame for the new Family Development Promotion and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) to come into force has been extended. This is because the authorized agencies are not prepared in terms of personnel and operating procedures to enforce the law without inadvertent adverse effects to society. Therefore, it was decided to continue with the 2007 Victims of Domestic Violence Protection Act for the time being (the Secretariat of the House of Representatives, 2020).

Another piece of legislation related to the issue of violence against women and children is the Gender Equality Act, B.E. 2558 (2015). It is aimed at protecting the dignity of men, women and gender diverse (LGBTI) groups, and allowing those who are victims of gender-based discrimination to access the justice process.

However, a study conducted by the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has found one shortcoming in the law: it does not address discrimination based on other factors and their intersectionality with gender-based discrimination. Since it was mainly external pressure from international organizations and civil society that propelled the passing of the law, its effective enforcement has been negatively impacted. At the same time, there are weaknesses in the content of the law itself that may hinder the enforcement (Chitraphon Wanasaphong and Piyawan Kaewsi, 2020).

As the United Nations has designated 25 November as International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Thai Cabinet has declared that November is annually 'the campaign month to end violence against women'. Thailand has passed several laws and measures to deal with violence against women and children. Though no particular groups, such as women fishers, are singled out in the existing law, a good foundation has been laid in the Thai justice system.

2.12. Access to Justice

Thailand has faced outdated and conflicting laws and ineffective law enforcement. That is why in the past five years there have been many law amendments and new laws passed that govern fisheries and the related industries covering employment, working conditions, safety at work, and social security and welfare.

A Justice Fund has also been established under the Justice Fund Act B.E. 2558 (2015), which promotes access to justice for all, especially poor and vulnerable people. Assistance provided by the Fund includes financial support for legal aid and access to lawyers, temporary release of defendants on bail, assistance to victims of human rights violations and dissemination of legal knowledge to the public (the Secretariat of the House of Representatives, 2016).

The 2017 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand stipulates that the courts of justice have the power to try and adjudicate all cases except those specified by the Constitution or the law to be within the jurisdiction of other courts. Therefore, these are the 'ordinary courts' that administer justice for the Thai people. At the same time, administrative courts have the power to try and adjudicate administrative cases arising from the exercise of administrative power provided by law or from the carrying out of an administrative act, as provided by law.

One of the cases that brought coastal communities before the courts of justice involves the protests against the government's Pak Bara deep sea port project in Satun province. In March 2017, a number of human rights defenders and leaders of artisanal fishers led a group of people to disrupt a public hearing on the project. This resulted in the organizers cancelling the event and filing a criminal case against the protesters for trespassing on government premises. The Community Resource Centre Foundation provided legal advice and defence lawyers for the nine defendants. The court finally ruled in December 2020 that the case be dismissed, since the protesters were peaceful and did not break through the closed door into the meeting hall. The court also noted that the Pak Bara area was a public place that belonged to everyone; to build a large infrastructure project there would change its natural attributes so completely that many adverse impacts would ensue. So comprehensive studies and public consultations had to be undertaken.

The labour courts are specialized courts under the courts of justice. It is considered a tripartite organization established by the Act on the Establishment of and Procedure for Labour Court, B.E. 2522 (1979). The courts adjudicate cases related to public peace and order, mainly involving conflicts between employees and employers.

Even though the labour courts are a state institutional mechanism with an important role of bringing labour disputes under the judicial framework, the court has acted as mediator with conclusive agreements on an increasing number of cases. However, it was found that the labour court mechanism has not been readily accessible to workers due to its complicated and costly procedures, and employers have taken advantage of this to bargain directly with disputing workers (Butsayarat Kanchanadit, 2016).

In addition to the courts of justice system, Thailand has several independent organizations stipulated in the 2017 Constitution. The National Human Rights Commission has the status of an independent organ in accordance with the constitution. It has the duties and power to examine and report the correct facts on violations of human rights in all cases without delay, and to suggest guidelines to prevent or redress human rights violations. This includes the provision of remedy to the person affected by the violation to the relevant State agencies or private sector (Office of the National Human Rights Commission, 2020). Another independent organ is the Office of the Ombudsmen, whose duties and power are to recommend the relevant State agencies to revise any law, rule, regulation or order, or any operative procedure that causes grievance or unfairness, and to conduct fact-finding (Office of the Ombudsmen, 2020). Complaints are consistently submitted to these organizations. For example, groups of cockle growers and artisanal fishers in Bang Tabun Bay, Phetchaburi province, were severely affected by wastewater release from pig farms upriver in Ratchaburi province. Through Samut Songkhram province, they filed a complaint to both the National Human Rights Commission and the Ombudsmen. After representatives of both organizations visited the area to establish the facts, reports were sent to the relevant agencies with requests for action (Kesinee Kwaenjaroen, 2019, Chaloeangkit Kraichit, Interview, 15 December 2020).

In addition, there are professional organizations, like the Lawyers Council under Royal Patronage, and non-government organizations, like the Community Resource Centre Foundation and the Internet Law Reform Dialogue (iLaw), that provide legal aid and legal education to communities in need. Therefore, small-scale fishers and many other groups have various channels available for access to justice.

2.13. Thailand's Response to Covid-19

Thailand's response to the Covid-19 pandemic so far can be divided into two phases:

- 1) The Outbreak Phase. The government consulted with public health administrators and academics and declared an emergency situation in accordance with the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations, B.E. 2548 (2005). It issued two regulations under Section 9 of the Emergency Decree. The first one was enforced in the whole country on 26 March 2020, and the second one came into force on 3 April 2020. Simultaneously, the Ministry of Public Health issued public health guidelines for the management of the spread of Covid-19 for agencies, individuals and the public to prevent infection. Arrangements were made for social distancing in public places, and the Department of Disease Control established a website for the public to access relevant information and subsequent announcements quickly in the everchanging situation (Ministry of Public Health, 2020).
- 2) Rehabilitation and Economic Stimulation Phase. The government issued an Emergency Decree Authorizing the Ministry of Finance to Raise Loans to Solve Problems, to Remedy and Restore the Economy and Society as Affected by the Coronavirus Disease Pandemic, B.E. 2563 (2020). The loans were for 1) projects with medical or public health objectives, under the Ministry of Public Health's responsibility; 2) projects with the objective of providing assistance and remedies to the people's sector, farmers and business operators affected by the pandemic, to be administered under the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance; and 3) projects with the objective of economic and social rehabilitation from the impact of the pandemic, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

In the rehabilitation phase, among many remedial measures taken by the government, the one that benefits the fisheries sector directly is the Project to Assist Farmers Affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic, 2019, of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, which aims to provide assistance and remedy to the people's sector, farmers and business operators affected by the pandemic. It involves a direct payment to farmers and their families of 5,000 baht per month, per household, for three months. This was from May–July 2020, with a target of no more than 10 million households

(not overlapping with the assistance under the Rao Mai Thing Kan Project)¹ (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2020), divided into 2 categories:

- 1) Farmers who were registered with the Department of Agricultural Extension (6.19 million), Department of Livestock Development (1.60 million) and the Department of Fisheries (0.24 million)
- 2) Farmers who are in the process of registration, no more than 1.57 million. Clear criteria and conditions have to be determined for this second group, and one criterion should be that the farmers who are allowed to register must be farming on legally acquired land.

During this time, the prime minister ordered the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, by means of the Department of Fisheries, to register fishers in the same way as rice growers, rubber growers, field crops growers and fruit orchard growers. This was to ensure that the government had more complete data for use in devising measures for their assistance. This is one channel for artisanal fishers to access government support more conveniently in the future, whether it involves post-disaster remedies, capital costs for operations, access to credit or the latest living allowances after the Covid-19 outbreak. The Department of Fisheries expedited the registration of artisanal fishers, comprising 48,551 fishers with their own fishing vessels and 19,806 fishers without their own vessels (workers on board artisanal fishing vessels). There remained about 4,000 fishers without vessels who were in the process of registration (the verification process was completed on 20 May 2020) so that they could also benefit. In the past, workers in the artisanal fishery sector had never been surveyed and never received any state assistance (the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit, 2020).

However, there were some artisanal fishers who could not access the benefits, in particular women fishers, who have an important role in the fishing occupation of their households but have not been accorded the status of fishers. As women fishers were not registered with the Department of Fisheries, they fell between the cracks among the target groups of government assistance. They had no guarantee of benefiting from other rehabilitation policies and measures (Sustainable Development Foundation, 2020). When the programme of assistance to the people's sector, farmers and business operators affected by the pandemic was rolled out through the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, the Department of Fisheries, along with non-government organizations working on marine and coastal resources, spread the information so that artisanal fishers groups and community organizations that had registered could seek financial support (Ravadee Prasertcharoensuk and Wichoksak Ronnarongpairee, Interview, 17 December 2020).

For workers in the fisheries sector, those who were laid off due to the impact of the pandemic could not access their rightful severance pay² according to Section 118 of the Labour Protection Act, B.E. 2541 (1998) because the corresponding Ministerial Regulation does not apply the law to fisheries (Migrant Working Group, 2020). The government, however, insisted that workers on board fishing vessels or in seafood processing factories can access social security benefits in accordance with the social security law. Migrant workers in particular face many obstacles in accessing these social security benefits because those who are dismissed during this time are still bound by the foreign workers management law. This law requires them to find new employers within 15 days and file a petition to receive the benefits. In reality, it is near impossible for any migrant worker to find a new employer and file a petition within the stipulated time frame. Moreover, it is difficult to file such petitions on-line because the on-line service is not available in their native languages (Thai Publica, 2020).

1 Rao Mai Thing Kan (literally translated as 'We never leave each other') was one of the remedial projects for the Covid-19 impact on workers, temporary employees and self-employed people. The project ended in June 2020, with 15.3 million direct beneficiaries.

2 Severance pay is the money an employer pays to an employee upon the termination of employment, in addition to other monies that the employer agrees to pay the employee.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

3.1. Conclusion

Thailand has clear policies and plans to promote social development. It is equipped with adequate personnel and budget to implement its plans among the population, including small-scale fishing groups and workers in the fisheries sector. Social development policies are based on human rights principles and that of leaving no one behind, which ensures equal opportunities to access social protection and basic services. The state also promotes effective and efficient economic growth based on fairness, equity and equality for all. The following are the significant implications of the study.

- 1) The Thai government has stated the direction of social development implementation in the country's highest level reform agenda, as can be seen from the 20-Year National Strategy and the National Economic and Social Development Plans. All government agencies are required to translate the policies and strategies into action plans at the ministerial, departmental and issue-based levels. The main ministries involved in social development are Social Development and Human Security, Labour, Public Health, Natural Resources and Environment, Agriculture and Cooperatives, Education, Interior, Foreign Affairs and Justice, as well as independent organs established by the Constitution, such as the National Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Ombudsmen.
- 2) Education and public health are clearly inclusive of all. The key policy on education is enshrined in the 2007 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand. This stipulates that it is the duty of the state to provide quality education to all citizens for 12 years, from pre-school to the completion of compulsory education, free of charge. The Ministry of Education is the main implementing agency. Thai education is divided into three categories: formal education, non-formal education and informal education. All of them are accessible to fishing communities throughout the country, including children without Thai nationality and children of registered migrant workers in the fisheries industry. The issue involves children of migrant fishers who are not registered and, therefore, have no legal status in the country. Regarding public health, Thailand has provided health and medical services for all citizens inclusively, and has established extensive public health infrastructure covering the whole country, down to the subdistrict level. There is a good community-level healthcare system based on primary healthcare services provided by trained community health volunteers. They are supported by community doctors. All fishing communities and registered migrant fishers can access these services. Registered migrant workers can also access labour protection under the country's labour laws.
- 3) The study found that the implementation of social development and protection plans has been carried out separately by each responsible state agency. Therefore, there is a lack of integration and comprehensiveness. This is seen in the promotion and protection of small-scale fisheries, in which not all small-scale fishers could access state services because they have not been certified. The existing database identifies only artisanal fishers with a vessel size of below 10 gross tons, while there are many artisanal fishers who have not registered with the authorities, including those who do not own vessels and women fishers who process and market the catch. These latter groups are not included in the current database system. The lack of complete information on the part of state agencies has resulted in these groups being denied access to the social protection benefits provided by the state. There have been and continue to be state plans and projects that adversely affect artisanal fishing communities. Ethnic fishers, due to a lack of official certification of their nationalities, cannot access any education or health services, or even space for housing.
- 4) The policies on fisheries and natural resources and environmental management have been developed separately, without linkages to social development policies. Government fisheries

policies are directed towards the efficient management of fisheries for economic growth, while policies on marine and coastal resources focus on the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources and the environment. Both sides have neglected the need to provide security for small-scale fishers' livelihoods and occupations. The main focus of the government has been on generating economic growth from the natural resource base, both marine and coastal resources as well as watersheds, through the development of fisheries, aquaculture and mariculture. This growth has also come from the off-shore petroleum and mining industry, sea ports, industrial estates and the tourism service industry. These projects have led to inevitable conflict with artisanal and small-scale fisher groups, ethnic minority groups and freshwater fisher groups. Therefore, a fundamental reform of the concept of development is needed, based on the principles of shared national benefits and balanced conservation.

- 5) Separated and segmented development work and a lack of integration are long-standing structural problems in Thailand. The government has introduced an area-based approach for the national development agenda because it will help government agencies see the interconnectedness of their work among themselves and between the work of provincial and central administrative agencies. This relationship is also between the government and people's organizations, civil society organizations and the private business sector, as well as the vertical relationship between the central and provincial administrations and the local level. However, work integration is still lacking both horizontally and vertically because most agencies continue to administer their work according to their own mandate and the policies determined by the departments they work for.
- 6) The policies and practices concerning labour in fishing, especially relating to migrant workers, have recently been greatly improved. With the government addressing the problems of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) raised by the European Union, and the problem of human trafficking raised by the Trafficking In Persons (TIP) Report of the US State Department, a number of laws and regulations have been amended and enacted. These ensure that workers in the formal fisheries sector have almost all their basic rights. External pressure has, therefore, made a difference. However, there remain some gaps in comparison to international labour standards, notably the right to freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining. Even though labour unions are recognized by law in the Labour Relations Act, B.E. 2518 (1975) and labour in fishing is protected by the more recent Labour Protection in Fishing Work Act, B.E. 2562 (2519), the laws are still inadequate in tackling some complex labour issues because they either are outdated or do not cover migrant fishers.
- 7) In terms of social development policies for artisanal fishers, small-scale fishers, ethnic fishers and freshwater fishers, it was found that the two implementing agencies—the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment—focus more on increasing fishery yields and maintaining, rehabilitating and conserving the resource base rather than the groups of people who use the resource base. Social development issues, therefore, have not been manifested in their plans. Despite the efforts of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, their work focuses on social welfare assistance to vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, the elderly, women, etc., so their role in human development is unclear. At the same time, the lack of clear data on artisanal fisher groups has caused them to be overlooked, so no specific plans have been made that involve them. A clear example is seen in the plans to provide emergency remedies for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which automatically omitted many of them in the first phase because they had not registered with the Department of Fisheries. Many fishers, however, were able to register individually to receive assistance in this case.
- 8) Social development policies on women in Thailand benefited from the country's ratification of key international human rights instruments. The government has enacted the Gender Equality Act and amended several laws in line with its obligations, including the protection of women's

access to justice. Women in the fisheries sector, however, do not have full access to social development. They lack access to occupational promotion services provided by government agencies, particularly in effective skills and capacity building. In addition, it was found that most government agencies do not recognize different gender-specific needs and conditions, so women have not benefited fully from the services. Women fishers also lack opportunities to participate and voice their opinions in decision-making, as government agencies have not facilitated this. The national-level committees and subcommittees on fisheries comprise few women, far less than half of the number of men.

- 9) The government has to work on timely and effective communication and information dissemination to the public. It was found that small-scale fishers, artisanal fishers, fishery workers, ethnic fishers and women fishers have limited access to government information. This prevents them from influencing the direction of development that affects them. For example, these groups have little knowledge and understanding of the country's policy on climate change that relates to marine and coastal resources, even though their livelihood security will be directly affected. If the relevant government agencies do not have a clear plan to work with these groups, there will be social risks that could lead to the exacerbation of inequality in society

3.2. Recommendations

For social development policies and an area-based development approach to meet the needs of every citizen, as well as to contribute towards the country's development goals of justice for all, the study recommends the following:

3.2.1. Recommendations to Small-Scale Fishery Groups

- 1) Asserting the identity of artisanal and small-scale fishers. This involves: clarifying their space and role, especially their rights as small-scale fishers, and their importance in contributing to food and economic security at the national and international levels; mobilizing to participate in improving, rectifying and developing policies regarding social and economic development; and taking action to protect and rehabilitate ecosystems and to conserve the diversity of natural resources.
- 2) Paying attention to upgrading their knowledge and capacity to develop their own role and that of their families, communities and small-scale fisher networks. This is to integrate local traditional knowledge with modern knowledge to respond to the current situation and to be prepared to deal with future changes in a sustainable manner.
- 3) Creating concrete models of collaborative work and cooperating with related sectors to ensure that sustainable fisheries management is implemented to maintain the abundance of natural resources.

3.2.2. Recommendations to Government Agencies

- 1) Improving agency policies to reflect how their operations are linked to social development, specifically human development that integrates socio-economic dimensions with natural resource management, and to have specific policies on working with small-scale fisher groups.
- 2) Developing mechanisms to integrate the work among government agencies and to work in a participatory manner with related sectors, using them as key guidelines for work in social and economic development and natural resource and environmental management.
- 3) Developing mechanisms to support collaboration and integration among the central, provincial and local administrative bodies. This includes developing Marine Spatial Planning as a tool for the management of multiple users of resources as well as the resource base itself.

- 4) Improving the database system with gender-disaggregated data, developing a population database that covers the whole population and updating it in a timely manner. For example, the Department of Fisheries must be able to rely on the database to assist them in their analyses, leading to appropriate planning and communication, developing learning processes and providing welfare assistance and support.
- 5) Improving work plans and preparing measures for the ecosystem-based management of fisheries, natural resources and the environment through an area-based approach. This ensures that the design and implementation of development work correspond with the local context and the needs of the local people, reducing economic inequality. The most important aspects are defining boundaries, analyzing stakeholders and the joint determination of goals and methods among stakeholders. For example, ecosystem-based fishery resource management gives importance to three main components: abundance of the marine and coastal ecosystem, well-being of the stakeholders and good governance in resource management. It is about building a symbiotic relationship between the ecosystem and the social system on the basis of participation, transparency and accountability.
- 6) Developing a new management tool of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to assist in policy making and project planning at the area level for sustainable development. For sustainable development, there must be reform of the organizational structure for clarity in power relations, as well as reform of inter-agency linkages.
- 7) Gender mainstreaming in development, leading to security and sustainability. Opportunities must be open for marginalized groups and women to participate in self-determination, from the household level to policy-level decision-making. Importance must be placed on building learning processes together with occupational, social and communication skills. This gender mainstreaming approach is needed because the current policies and plans lack gender perspectives as well as ethnic group perspectives, so they have not addressed the problems and needs facing these marginalized groups.
- 8) Resource management with good governance. This means collaboration among all sectors in striving towards justice, integrity, efficiency and effectiveness. The way to achieve good governance is to ensure that the working process is transparent, responsible, accountable and participatory. If such working process are adopted, there will be cooperation between the government and communities in decentralizing management decision-making and synergizing the power to protect the rights of all small-scale, artisanal and freshwater fisheries and fishers, contributing to building a democratic society.

Social development policies aim to create benefits for people in response to their needs. If these policies can lead to actual practices that correspond with the needs of all people, no one will be left behind while the country strives towards sustainable development.

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5. Annexure: Legal instruments and mechanisms

Table 1: Conventions and Protocols Ratified by Thailand

Core International Human Rights Treaties	
1.	Convention on the Rights of the Child – CRC
2.	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women – CEDAW
3.	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – ICCPR
4.	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights – ICESCR
5.	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination – CERD
6.	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment – CAT
7.	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – CRPD
Optional Protocols	
1.	Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
2.	Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflicts
3.	Optional Protocol to the CRC on a communications procedure

Source: Office of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand, 2020

Table 2: Thai Government's Policy 2019

Major policies	
1.	Protection of the monarchy
2.	Enhancement of national security, peace and order
3.	Promotion of religions, arts and cultures
4.	Promotion of Thailand's role in the international arena
5.	Development of national economy and competitiveness
6.	Development of economic zones and distribution of prosperity to the countryside
7.	Development from the ground up
8.	Reform of the learning process and capacity development for all Thais
9.	Development of the health system and social security
10.	Rehabilitation of natural resources and sustainable conservation of the environment
11.	Reform of the government sector
12.	Prevention and suppression of corruption and of abuses of the judicial procedure
Emergency policies	
13.	Addressing the basic problems of the people
14.	Improving the welfare system and the quality of life of the people
15.	Rolling out measures to cushion impacts from global economic volatility

16.	Provision of help to farmers and development of innovations
17.	Upgrading of skills
18.	Setting the groundwork for the country's future economy
19.	Preparing Thai people for the 21st century
20.	Addressing corruption in political and bureaucratic circles
21.	Tackling illegal narcotics and unrest in the Deep South
22.	Improving public services
23.	Addressing drought and flooding problems for the future
24.	Supporting studies and public hearings regarding amendment of the constitution of the king of Thailand

Source: The Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019

Table 3: Conventions that Thailand Ratified on Labour

Fundamental Conventions	
1.	C029 – Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
2.	P029 – Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
3.	C100 – Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
4.	C105 – Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
5.	C111 – Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
6.	C138 – Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
7.	C182 – Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
Governance Conventions	
8.	C122 – Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)
Technical Conventions	
9.	C014 – Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)
10.	C019 – Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No. 19)
11.	C080 – Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946 (No. 80)
12.	C088 – Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88)
13.	C104 – Abolition of Penal Sanctions (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1955 (No. 104)
14.	C116 – Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961 (No. 116)
15.	C123 – Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 123)
16.	C127 – Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127)
17.	C159 – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)
18.	MLC, 2006 – Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006)
19.	C187 – Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)
20.	C188 – Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188)

Source: Office of Permanent Secretary by the Ministry of Labor, 2020

Table 4: Local Fishing Community Organization

Category	Number of Organizations	Members (people) in Organization
Coastal fishing	665	28,626
Offshore sea fishing	65	3,817
Inland fishing	470	16,919
Aquaculture processing	277	6,808
Aquaculture	704	27,342
Total	2,181	83,512

Source: Department of Fisheries by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, 2020



Social Development and Sustainable Fisheries: Thailand

Prepared by:

Sustainable Development Foundation

The study is a part of a series of original research on social development and sustainable fisheries undertaken by ICSF in eight countries. The study documented the status of social development and decent work programmes, schemes, policies, legislation and institutional support (including community-based initiatives) to demonstrate how they strengthen the environmental pillar of sustainable development. With a detailed review and analysis of schemes, legislation and reports for the protection of human rights in small-scale fisheries, the study demonstrates the contextual reality on social development of small-scale fishing communities in the country context and stresses on the need for concerted effort to improve social development indicators to ensure sustainable development.



ICSF (www.icsf.net) is an international NGO working on issues that concern fishworkers the world over. It is in status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is on ILO's special list of Non-Governmental Organizations. It also has Liaison status with the FAO. ICSF works towards the establishment of equitable, gender-just, self-reliant and sustainable fisheries, particularly in the small-scale, artisanal sector.

ICSF draws its mandate from the historic International Conference of Fishworkers and their Supporters (ICFWS), held in Rome in 1984, parallel to the World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). As a global network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists, ICSF's activities encompass monitoring and research, exchange and training, campaigns and action, as well as communications.