

Giving workers a voice in Thailand's fishing industry

BANGKOK, Thailand, Jan. 10, 2018 -- When small fishing boats in South East Asia set out to sea, it can be hard to know what happens after they disappear over the horizon. Communication between ship and shore is very limited, so workers may face a long wait before they can easily connect with family or friends.

However, new technology may now provide a solution. Thai Union Group PCL, Mars Petcare and Inmarsat have launched an innovative digital traceability pilot program in Thailand that helps to give workers a voice when they're at sea. The project is highlighted in a new video, launched today.

The pilot scheme installed satellite broadband devices (Inmarsat's Fleet One terminal) on a number of Thai fishing vessels. This gives boat owners access to information on weather, updates charts and can track voyages so that catches can be monitored. In addition, individual workers can now keep in touch with people onshore through a phone app, helping to promote transparency.

This new connectivity has the potential to improve traceability and transparency throughout Thai waters, as well as the greater global fishing industry. Traceability is the ability to track a product in granular detail from its place of origin all the way to the consumer. It is a key component to ensuring safe and legal labor that benefits workers, producers and consumers by bringing transparency to the entire system.

In recent years, reports of human rights challenges on board fishing vessels, particularly among migrant workers, have been regularly surfacing across South East Asia. One of the benefits of the new system is that it allows individual crew members to stay in constant contact with friends and family on land.

"As part of our commitment to sustainability, we believe we can, and should, play a role in increasing opportunity for people to thrive in the workplaces and communities we touch," says Isabelle Aelvoet, Mars Petcare's global sustainability director. "We are honored to partner with Thai Union. This initiative has the potential to set a new standard from an environmental and social perspective for the seafood supply chain."

Traceability doesn't just help protect human rights. Marine stocks across the globe are under pressure. By keeping fishing vessels in constant contact with the shore, data on fishing catches can be easily logged and monitored. That provides companies like Mars visibility into whether its suppliers adhere to sustainable practices.

[The video is accessible on Thai Union's official YouTube channel](#)
[Read more about our policies on human rights in the Thai fishing supply chain](#)

About Mars Petcare

Mars Petcare is a growing segment of approximately 50 brands, made up of about 70,000 Associates in more than 55 countries who serve the nutrition and health needs of dogs, cats, horses, fish and birds every day. Mars Petcare has been in operation for more than 75 years and now includes 3 of the top 5 pet food brands in the world - PEDIGREE®, WHISKAS® and ROYAL CANIN®. Mars Petcare is also home to the brands NUTRO®, GREENIES®, SHEBA®, CESAR®, BANFIELD® Pet Hospitals, IAMS® AND EUKANUBA®. In the last several years, Mars Petcare has further expanded into veterinary health with the acquisitions of Blue Pearl, Pet Partners, and VCA – making Mars the largest veterinary operation in the U.S.

For more information about Mars Petcare, please visit www.mars.com/global/brands/petcare.

About Thai Union Group PCL

Thai Union Group PCL is the world's seafood leader bringing high quality, healthy, tasty and innovative seafood products to customers across the world for almost 40 years.

Today, Thai Union is regarded as the world's largest producer of shelf-stable tuna products with annual sales exceeding THB 125 billion (US\$ 3.7 billion) and a global workforce of over 46,000 people who are dedicated to pioneering sustainable, innovative seafood products.

The company's global brand portfolio includes market-leading international brands such as Chicken of the Sea, John West, Petit Navire, Parmentier, Mareblu, King Oscar, and Rügen Fisch and Thai-leading brands SEAELECT, Fisho, Bellotta and Marvo.

As a company committed to innovation and globally responsible behavior, Thai Union is proud to be a member of the United Nations Global Compact, and a founding member of the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). In 2015, Thai Union introduced its [SeaChange®](#) sustainability strategy. Thai Union's on-going work on sustainability issues was recognized by its inclusion in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index Emerging Markets (DJSI) in 2014. In 2017, Thai Union was named to the DJSI for the fourth consecutive year. Thai Union has also been included in the FTSE4Good Emerging Index.

About Mars, Incorporated

Mars is a family-owned business with more than a century of history making diverse products and offering services for people and the pets people love. With almost \$35 billion in sales, the company is a global business that produces some of the world's best-loved brands: M&M'S®, SNICKERS®, TWIX®, MILKY WAY®, DOVE®, PEDIGREE®, ROYAL CANIN®, WHISKAS®, EXTRA®, ORBIT®, 5™, SKITTLES®, UNCLE BEN'S®, MARS DRINKS and COCOAVIA®. Mars also provides veterinary health services that include BANFIELD® Pet Hospitals, Blue Pearl®, VCA® and Pet Partners™. Headquartered in McLean, VA, Mars operates in more than 80 countries. The Mars Five Principles — Quality, Responsibility, Mutuality, Efficiency and Freedom — inspire its more than 100,000 Associates to create value for all its partners and deliver growth they are proud of every day.

For more information about Mars, please visit www.mars.com. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).