Warmwater Shrimp social risk profile

Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor risks

Mexico, Aquaculture and Processing

Contents

About the Seafood Social Risk Tool

The Seafood Social Risk Tool (SSRT) is a risk assessment tool that assesses the risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor associated with a seafood product and producing country. The tool includes more than 80 risk indicators that assess evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in seafood supply chains and the underlying drivers of risk associated with these abuses. This information is used to create risk profiles to help businesses and other interested stakeholders to better understand the risk of human rights abuses in seafood supply chains and to focus businesses' due diligence efforts to improve conditions for seafood workers.

To learn more about the SSRT and access the full list of available risk profiles, visit https://www.seafoodwatch.org/our-projects/seafood-social-risk-tool.

Disclaimer

The Seafood Social Risk Tool has been prepared for information purposes only, and is not intended to constitute business, legal, market, financial or investment advice. The Seafood Social Risk Tool is designed to serve as an informational resource and does not override legislation or internal policies or procedures. It is recommended that all users of the Seafood Social Risk Tool seek independent legal advice. The Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation shall not be responsible to any party related to its use or interpretation of the information contained in the Seafood Social Risk Tool.

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Overview

Mexico holds a significant position in the world's production of farmed shrimp, ranking as the second largest producer of farmed shrimp in Latin America[i] and the seventh largest producer globally in aquaculture production for crustaceans.[ii] Mexico produces whiteleg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*).[iii] Over the past decade, farming of whiteleg shrimp in Mexico has shown consistent growth. The production of 180,025 tons of shrimp in 2021 marked a remarkable 81.53% increase compared to 2012.[iv] Shrimp farming is a critical resource for the country, being the main aquaculture species produced by volume and the most economically significant.[v] The primary markets for shrimp exports include the United States, China, and Japan.[vi]

Base risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country in general

Various interrelated factors contribute to heightened risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor across industries in Mexico. These factors include economic disparities, insufficient regulatory oversight due to corruption, organized crime networks, discrimination and marginalization of vulnerable groups, and the country´s location that puts it in the middle of a major corridor for legal and illegal migration.

Economic disparities and widespread poverty create a vulnerable population susceptible to exploitative labor practices. Although Mexico has made slight progress in reducing income inequality in the past two decades, as shown in the consistent reduction of its Gini index (2020: 45.4 vs 2000: 52.6), it remains one of the countries with higher inequality levels in the region.[vii] Between 2010 and 2020, the richest 10% in Mexico had a share of 63.82% of the national income, while the 50% located at the bottom of the income distribution only had 5.92%.[viii]

Insufficient regulatory oversight and enforcement in Mexico, often stemming from corruption or inadequate resources, further exacerbate risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor. Traffickers exploit Mexican adults and children in forced labor in both the formal and informal economies in Mexico and the United States. Many workers are promised decent wages and a good standard of living, but become victim to forced labor as a result of debt bondage, threats of violence, and non-payment of wages.[ix] Allegations suggest that corrupt government officials have played a role in facilitating or engaging in human trafficking crimes, contributing to high levels of impunity for these crimes.[x]

Mexico harbors some of the largest and most violent organized criminal groups in the hemisphere. It holds the third highest criminality score globally and the second highest in the Americas, according to the Global Organized Crime Index.[xi] Organized crime networks, encompassing drug cartels and human trafficking rings, take advantage of weak governance structures to exploit individuals, leading to human trafficking for both labor and sexual exploitation. These criminal organizations profit significantly from sex trafficking and coerce both Mexican and foreign adults and children into participating in illicit activities such as assassinations, surveillance, drug production, transportation, and sales.[xii] Reports indicate complicity of certain government agents

with international criminal gangs, underscoring the urgent need to improve prosecution and conviction rates for such abuses.[xiii]

The discrimination and marginalization faced by specific demographics, such as Indigenous communities and migrants, exacerbate their vulnerabilities and make them more susceptible to abusive labor practices. Enhanced procedures are needed to detect trafficking indicators within these vulnerable populations and to subsequently refer potential victims to appropriate service providers.[xiv]

Furthermore, Mexico's geographical proximity to the United States, a significant destination for both legal and illegal migration, heightens the risk of trafficking and forced labor. The press, along with international organizations and NGOs, has reported incidents of criminal groups targeting and victimizing migrants and asylum seekers. Alarmingly, in certain instances, even police, immigration officers, and customs officials have been involved in these victimizations, particularly at land borders and airports.[xv] Addressing these systemic challenges demands a multifaceted approach, involving improved regulation, strengthened law enforcement, enhanced social support systems, and international collaboration.

Adjusted risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country's seafood supply chain

No direct links have been made from Mexico's seafood industry, or more specifically, warmwater shrimp aquaculture and processing to forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor. Although forced labor and child labor appear to be widespread in Mexico, including in agriculture and food processing, there is only limited evidence of forced labor risks in seafood processing.

Nevertheless, the factors driving the risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor within Mexico's seafood industry are reflective of the general environment in which it operates. The high prevalence of informality in the aquaculture sector, and the reported links between corrupt government officials and organized crime in Mexico raise further concerns given the correlation between corruption, informality, and human trafficking. Risks relating to organized crime are demonstrated by the assassination of Minerva Pérez Castro, the president of the National Chamber of Fishing and Aquaculture Industries (Cámara Nacional de las Industrias Pesquera y Acuícola, CANAINPESCA) on 8 July 2024 in Baja California, northwestern Mexico.[xvi,xvii] Pérez Castro was killed hours after speaking publicly about organized crime groups that allegedly extort the seafood industry and engage in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities in the region.[xviii,xix] The attack prompted calls from government and industry for action on combatting crime affecting the seafood industry.[xx,xxi]

Evidence for seafood processing is indicative of excessive overtime caused by noncompliance with rest days and limits of working hours and overtime.[xxii] Without additional indicators of forced labor, this evidence cannot be used to conclude forced labor and instead is considered a forced labour risk. There is some evidence of poor working conditions in Mexico's shrimp processing industry, specifically, an anecdotal report of long working hours and physically challenging

working conditions,[xxiii] and of children engaged in work in shrimp packing, but the evidence is insufficient to indicate either forced labor or hazardous child labor. However, a lack of information on worker characteristics and employment practices in warmwater shrimp aquaculture and processing in Mexico increases risks and means that businesses should employ rigorous due diligence procedures to assess their own supply chain.

Summary of evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain

Country-level indicators
- There is evidence of human trafficking, forced labor, and child labor in a range of sectors in Mexico. Men, women, and children are subjected to human trafficking and forced labor in agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and food processing, among other sectors.   - Goods specifically identified as produced by child labor and / or forced labor include coffee, fruit and vegetables, and tobacco.   - Traffickers also exploit vulnerable migrants in forced labor, including internal migrant workers and Central American migrants transiting through or seeking refuge in Mexico.
Seafood industry-level Indicators
Some evidence was reported of audit findings of excessive overtime in Mexico's seafood processing industry, which is an indicator of forced labor risk.
Aquaculture indicators
No evidence was found of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in relation to Mexico's shrimp aquaculture sector.
Processing indicators
Some evidence was found of physically challenging working conditions in Mexico's shrimp processing industry and of children engaged in work in shrimp packing, but the evidence is insufficient to indicate either forced labor or hazardous child labor.

Summary of factors that affect the likelihood of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain

Factors that increase the likelihood

Country-level indicators
The percentage of the population living below the national poverty line increased between 2018 and 2020.

- Systemic corruption and organized crime, including the alleged involvement of corrupt officials in facilitating human trafficking.
- The presence of vulnerable asylum seekers and migrants from Central American countries.
- Weak enforcement of labor laws prohibiting human trafficking, forced labor, and child labor.
- Suppression of workers' rights to access unions, with Mexico rated more poorly than the regional average for the Americas in the 2024 Global Rights Index.
- Mexico has not ratified ILO Convention 188 on Work in Fishing or the Port State Measures Agreement.

Seafood industry-level indicators

- Evidence that the correlated risk of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing is prevalent.
- Links between fishing and organized crime and drug trafficking in Mexico, as well as impacts of organized crime upon the seafood industry.
- Inadequate implementation and enforcement of industry-specific regulations; fishing-related institutions are under resourced and susceptible to corruption, and there is poor coordination with Mexican law enforcement agencies.
- Limited application of fishing vessel monitoring systems.

Aquaculture indicators

- Evidence of variable levels of isolation of shrimp farms, measured as distance from the nearest community with health services.
- Elevated levels of informality in the aquaculture sector (23.2%), with the highest rates found in states near borders (Oaxaca: 100%; Tabasco: 66.7%).
- A paucity of information on the shrimp aquaculture workforce, recruitment, contracts, and compensation.

Processing indicators

- Long working hours, with examples of shifts that can last up to 15 hours.
- Potentially risky working conditions, adding to the long shifts that the work is done standing and in temperatures below zero degrees Celsius.
- A paucity of information on the shrimp processing workforce, recruitment, contracts, and compensation.

Factors that decrease the likelihood

Country-level indicators

- Mexico's Human Development Index value is above the average for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Primary and secondary education and literacy levels in Mexico are good.

- Mexico has ratified all eight of the fundamental ILO conventions relating to work and recently ratified the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention in June 2023.
- Mexico has legislation in place to protect the rights of migrant workers and their families.

Seafood industry-level indicators

- The Mexican seafood industry participates in voluntary schemes to improve environmental and social sustainability, including fishery improvement projects and certification to Fair Trade, Aquaculture Stewardship Council, and Best Aquaculture Practices.
- Trade Unions are active in the Mexican seafood sector, including in fishing.
- One hundred percent fisheries observer coverage is required for some vessel types. It should be noted, however, that the fisheries observers are not monitoring labor conditions as part of their assignment.

Aquaculture indicators

- Unlike the agricultural sector, there is no information to suggest that the use of vulnerable migrant labor and informal recruitment agents is common in shrimp aquaculture, however, this could be attributed to an overall lack of transparency about work in shrimp aquaculture.

Processing indicators

- Anecdotal evidence states that shrimp processing is no longer an appealing employer for young workers (aged 15 to 18 years).

Aquaculture

Shrimp represents the most important seafood produce in Mexico in terms of economic value.[xxiv] Mexico is the seventh largest producer of farmed shrimp in the world, and the second largest producer in Latin America.[xxv] In 2021, Mexico produced 2.48% of the world's production of farmed shrimp and 13.67% of Latin America and the Caribbean region, accounting for the second largest production by volume behind Ecuador.[xxvi] Shrimp farming accounted for 72.8% of Mexico's total shrimp production and 73.72% of Mexico's total aquaculture production in 2021, with a total production of 182,025 tons.[xxvii] Growth in Mexico's aquaculture industry is projected to decline by -1.8% from 290 thousand metric tons in 2022 to 284 thousand metric tons in 2032.[xxviii]

Mexico's shrimp farming industry produces whiteleg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*).[xxix] Shrimp production is mainly situated in the north-western states of Sinaloa, Sonora, and Nayarit, with a small amount of production also occurring in states along the Gulf coastline.[xxx] The regions of Sonora, Sinaloa, and Nayarit contribute a substantial 93.74% to the total national live shrimp aquaculture production by volume, with Sonora accounting for 44.60% (81,184 tons), Sinaloa 42.47% (77,302 tons), and Nayarit 6.67% (12,138 tons) in 2021.[xxxi]

The cultivation of whiteleg shrimp predominantly occurs in semi-intensive pond systems.[xxxii] The reported number of shrimp farms varies from around 1,100 farms, covering approximately 70,000 hectares of pond area reported in 2018,[xxxiii] to around 900 farms reported in 2021.[xxxiv] Shrimp farms typically range in size from four to 1,200 hectares.[xxxv] Domestic hatcheries produce juvenile shrimp, known as post-larvae (PL), using broodstock raised in hatcheries.[xxxvi] The PLs are then transferred to nurseries or ponds for the growout phase.[xxxvii] The number of shrimp production cycles per year is dependent upon the local climate, with farmers generally aiming for one to two production cycles per year.[xxxviii] Production yields per crop typically range from 500 to 2,000 kg per hectare.[xxxix]

Processing and Trade

The shrimp industry processed over 428,000 tons of shrimp raw material in 2021 (assumed to encompass wild-caught and farmed shrimp product).[xl] The north-western state of Sinaloa is responsible for 40.65% of national shrimp processing by volume.[xli] Other key producing areas include the neighboring states of Sonora and Nayarit, which account for 38.76% and 7.51% of national shrimp processing respectively.[xlii]

Mexico was a net exporter of fish and seafood in 2021 with exports of fish and seafood valued at US$ 1.3 billion, compared to imports of US$ 975.9 million.[xliii] In 2021, the value of shrimp exports represented more than US$ 314 million. The main market for shrimp from Mexico is the United States, with exports to the United States being ten times greater in volume and economic value compared to the next most important markets China and Japan.[xliv]

Shrimp product from Mexico is available in several forms including frozen, previously frozen, cooked and raw, head-on, head-off, peeled, and peeled and de-veined, as well as in value-added good such as breaded shrimp.[xlv] Shrimp is mostly exported in frozen form, accounting for more than 60% of shrimp exports by volume and value in 2021, followed by fresh product accounting for more than 30%, and processed product, accounting for just one percent.[xlvi] The United States is the main market for processed shrimp from Mexico, with a share of 81.54%.[xlvii]

Meanwhile, warmwater shrimp and prawns were among the top three seafood products imported by Mexico in 2021.[xlviii] Imports included frozen, and prepared or preserved shrimp and prawns from China, the United States, Ecuador, Honduras and Nicaragua.[xlix]

Due Diligence for Shrimp in Mexico

Important Country-Specific Considerations

- Mexico is the second most important producer of shrimp in Latin America after Ecuador, and one of the world's top seven farmed shrimp producing countries, with significant exports going to the United States, China, and Japan.
- Labor abuses occur in multiple sectors including agriculture and food processing and are especially prevalent in the informal sector where labor inspectors have limited oversight.
- The high prevalence of informality in the aquaculture sector, and the reported links between corrupt government officials and organized crime in Mexico raise concerns given the correlation between corruption, informality, and human trafficking.

Suggested Due Diligence Priorities & Questions

Workers Demographics
There is little to no information on the workforce in shrimp farming and processing in Mexico.
1. What proportion of shrimp workers are foreign or domestic migrants and where do they originate from? 2. What proportion of shrimp workers are Indigenous or ethnic minorities? 3. What is the proportion of temporary and contract workers to permanent workers? 4. What is the proportion of young workers (15-18 years old) in the workforce? What protocols are in place to protect young workers from workplace hazards?

Grievance Mechanisms
Mechanisms for workers to address grievances appear limited. There is not enough information on the presence or role of trade unions in Mexico's aquaculture industry.
1. Do workers in your operation/supply chain have access to third party monitors such as trade union representatives? 2. Do workers in your operation/supply chain have access to a complaint mechanism? 3. Are there procedures to document, track, and resolve workplace complaints?

Recruitment and contracts

There is a lack of basic information on recruitment and employment contracts in shrimp farming and processing in Mexico. In Mexico's agriculture industry, workers hired by recruitment agencies are sometimes deceived about contract terms or charged unlawful recruitment fees.

1. Are workers hired directly and/or through recruitment agents? What procedures are in place to manage recruitment agents?
2. Does the recruitment process include a procedure for verifying that workers are not charged fees and a mechanism for workers to report violations?
3. Are workers employed using a formal contract written in a language that they understand?
4. Do workers have documented legal work permits? If so, who manages these permits?

Working hours and compensation

There is a lack of basic information on working hours and compensation in shrimp farming and processing in Mexico, with some evidence of seafood processing workers being subjected to excessive overtime.

1. How are working hours, overtime, and rest periods monitored for all workers, including temporary, seasonal, and contract workers?
2. Is overtime voluntary and compensated?
3. What payment structure is used to compensate workers (e.g., piece rate or fixed salary)?

Mexico: Country-level indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Poverty levels in a country	Human Development Index HDI Value (2022): 0.781 HDI Rank (2022): 77 Mexico's HDI value for 2022 places it in the 'high human development' category and positions it 77th out of 193 countries and territories. Mexico's HDI value is above the average of 0.764 for countries in the high human development group and above the average of 0.763 for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Between 1990 and 2022, Mexico's HDI value increased from 0.650 to 0.781, although with a large drop after the 2020 pandemic. Mexico shows progress against each of the HDI indicators for income, health, and education from 1990 to 2022. However, when Mexico's HDI value is discounted for inequality, it falls to 0.641, a loss of 17.9% due to inequality in the distribution of the HDI dimension indices. The average loss due to inequality for high HDI countries is 17.8% and for Latin America and the Caribbean is 20.7%.	UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) UNDP Global Human Development Indicators Country Profile: Mexico
	Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population): 36.3% in 2022, showing a decrease from 43.9% in 2020. The poverty headcount ratio in Mexico is better than that for neighboring country Guatemala. Data on this indicator are not available for the United States or Belize. ● Guatemala: 59.3% (2014) ● Belize: no data ● United States: no data	World Bank
	Global Hunger Index (2023): Mexico ranks 28th out of 125 countries in the 2023 Global Hunger Index. With a score of 6.0 out of 100, Mexico suffers from a 'low' level of hunger.	Global Hunger Index (GHI)

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Mexico scores better than neighboring country Guatemala. There is no data available for neighboring countries Belize and the United States. • Guatemala: 19.1 • Belize: no data • United States: no data Note: GHI is scored on a 100-point GHI Severity Scale, where 0 is the best score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst (where ≥ 50 is 'extremely alarming').	
Country's position in the regional economic power system	Comparing HDI ranking to other countries in the region Mexico's HDI value for 2022 is above the average of 0.763 for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Mexico is indexed higher on the UN HDI ranking compared to neighboring countries Guatemala and Belize, but the United States scores far higher than Mexico, placing it in the 'very high human development' category. **Mexico** HDI value (2022): 0.781 HDI rank (2022): 77 Neighboring countries: **Guatemala** HDI value (2022): 0.629 HDI rank (2022): 136 **Belize** HDI value (2022): 0.700 HDI rank (2022): 118 **United States** HDI value (2022): 0.927 HDI rank (2022): 20	UNDP Human Development Index (HDI)
	Comparing its recent economic growth to the general economic growth rates in the region	World Bank Databank figures on

Indicator	Description	Sources
	The GDP growth rate of Mexico has followed closely to the regional average for Latin America and Caribbean (-6.307% 2020), fluctuating above or near to that of its neighboring countries. Like its neighbors, Mexico's annual GDP growth decreased significantly in 2020 when the country was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. **Mexico** GDP Growth (annual %): 4.8 (2021) Neighboring countries: **Guatemala** GDP Growth (annual %): 7.5 (2021) **Belize** GDP Growth (annual %): 9.8 (2021) **United States** GDP Growth (annual %): 5.7 (2021)	annual economic growth
	Migration data Net migration rate (immigrants minus emigrants per 1,000 population): -0.4 (2021)	IOM Migration Data Portal
	Regional migration trends and patterns Mexico is a source and transit country for migration to the United States and increasingly a destination country for migrants from Central America and other countries. Mexico continues to be a source country for migrants travelling to the United States. Though since 2008, the dominant migration flow between Mexico and the United States has reversed with more Mexican migrants returning to Mexico, including those returning voluntarily and those who were deported. In addition, migrants from Central American countries, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, transit through Mexico to the United States. Previously, those migrant flows consisted mostly of men but now include a growing proportion of families and unaccompanied minors. Difficulties for asylum	Migration Policy Institute, 7 March 2019, 'Protection and Reintegration: Mexico Reforms Migration Agenda in an Increasingly Complex Era' Migration Policy Institute, 20 May 2021, 'Mexico's Search for Disappeared Migrants Has Evolved, but Challenges Remain'

Indicator	Description	Sources
	seekers trying to enter the United States mean that Mexico itself has increasingly become a refuge and a destination country for Central American migrants, with migrants taking up temporary visas. Migration Policy Institute, 7 March 2019 An estimated 400,000 migrants enter Mexico irregularly through the country's southern border each year. Migration Policy Institute, 20 May 2021 To a lesser extent, Mexico is also a source country for migrants into Canada, with most Mexican migrants travelling to Canada as temporary foreign workers, particularly for work in the agricultural sector. Around 24,000 temporary Mexican laborers are employed in Canada's agricultural sector each year. Migration Policy Institute, 20 March 2019	Migration Policy Institute, 20 March 2019, 'Mexican Migration to Canada: Temporary Worker Programs, Visa Imposition, and NAFTA Shape Flows'
	Known human trafficking routes Mexico is a country of origin, transit, and destination for human trafficking. Trafficking occurs internally within Mexico, and from Central and South American countries, including increasing numbers of Venezuelan migrants, to Mexico and the United States. In addition, Mexico is a transit and destination country for forced labor and trafficking victims from the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. US Department of State, 2024 Although now outdated, a 2011 UN report on organized crime in the fishing industry remarks on the use of fishing vessels to smuggle people from and via Mexico to the United States. However, the involvement of the fishing industry is described as 'not widely recognized', although a link cannot be ruled out. UNODC, 2011 News reports have indicated that these practices still occur on both coasts of Mexico. The use of this route by human trafficking networks has been increasing in the last decade, mainly for the transport of migrants of Guatemalan origin. InSight Crime, 20 December 2022	US Department of State, 2024, 2024 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report UNODC, 2011, Transnational Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry InSight Crime, 20 December 2022, Traficantes de personas se lanzan a las olas a lo largo de la costa Pacífica de México

Indicator	Description	Sources
Governance practices and systems in a country (measured through indexes)	WGI (2022) Percentile rank: • Voice and Accountability: 42.03 • Political Stability and Absence of Violence: 21.70 • Government Effectiveness: 42.45 • Regulatory Quality: 46.70 • Rule of Law: 20.75 • Control of Corruption: 17.45 Mexico ranks in the lower percentiles for all indicators except it is worth noting the large uncertainly bars on all indicators. Mexico ranks closely to the regional average for Latin America and the Caribbean except for 'Political Stability and Absence of Violence', 'Rule of Law', and 'Control of Corruption' in which Mexico ranks considerably lower than the regional average. Note: Percentile rank among all countries ranges from 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest) rank, where the higher the percentiles, the better the governance.	[Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)](#)
	Corruption Perception Index (2023): Score: 31/100 Rank: 126/180 countries and territories More than two-thirds of countries score below 50 on this year's CPI, with an average score of 43. Mexico's score of 31 places it below averages and positions it 126th out of 180 countries and territories. Mexico's score is close to neighboring Guatemala at 23, with the United States receiving a significantly higher score of 69. No data is available for Belize for this indicator. Note: Scores based on a scale from 0 = Highly Corrupt to 100 = Very Clean.	[Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI)](#)
	Basel Anti-Money Laundering Index (2023) Rank: 73/152 countries Overall score: 5.21/10	[Basel Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Index](#)

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Mexico scores in the mid-range of the risk scale for the Basel AML Index. Neighboring country Guatemala scores similarly (5.38). The United States receives a lower risk score (4.30). Belize is not assessed in the Basel AML. Note: Ranking is out of 152 countries; top possible score is 0 (low risk,), lowest score is 10 (high risk).	
	Global Rights Index (2024): Rating: 4 (Systematic violations of rights) The ITUC Global Rights Index downgraded Mexico's rating from 3 in 2023 to 4 in 2024, resulting in Mexico holding a worse rating than the regional average of 3.56 for the Americas. Neighboring countries: ● Guatemala: 5 ● Belize: 3 ● United States: 4 Note: Countries are ranked from 1 to 5+, where five plus corresponds to "no guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the law" and 1 corresponds to "sporadic violations of rights".	Global Rights Index (GRI)
Education and general literacy levels in a country	Adult literacy rates, among the population aged 15 years and older: 95% (World Bank, 2020). Adult literacy rates, among the population aged 15 years and older, national and by major shrimp producing regions (INEGI, 2021): ● National: 95.3% ● Sinaloa: 96.3% ● Sonora: 97.8% ● Nayarit: 95.4% Adult female literacy rate (World Bank, 2020): 94% Adult male literacy rate (World Bank, 2020): 96% Comparison to adult literacy rates in neighboring countries (World Bank, 2020):	World Bank Open Data INEGI, 2021, Banco de Indicadores

Indicator	Description	Sources
	- Belize (2001): 81% - Guatemala (2021): 83% - United States: No data	
	Primary school completion rates (2020): 103% Primary completion rates, female (% of relevant age group) (2020): 104% Primary completion rates, male (% of relevant age group) (2020): 102% Comparison to primary school completion rates in neighboring countries: - Belize (2021): 107% - Guatemala (2021): 87% - United States (2020): 101% Note: "There are many reasons why the primary completion rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of primary education as well as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of primary education."	[World Bank Open Data](#)
	Lower secondary education completion rates (2020): 90.5% Lower secondary completion rates, female (% of relevant age group) (2020): 92.6% Lower secondary completion rates, male (% of relevant age group) (2020): 88.5% Comparison to neighboring countries: - Belize (2021): 76.5% - Guatemala (2021): 54.6% - United States (2020): 103.8% Note: "There are many reasons why the rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of lower secondary education as well	[World Bank Open Data](#)

Indicator	Description	Sources
	as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of lower secondary education."	
	School enrolment, tertiary (2020): 45% gross School enrolment, tertiary, female (2020): 47% gross School enrolment, tertiary, male (2020): 43% gross Comparison to neighboring countries: • Belize (2021): 23% • Guatemala (2019): 22% • United States (2020): 88% Note: "There are many reasons why the rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of lower secondary education as well as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of lower secondary education."	World Bank Open Data
Attitudes towards migrant workers in a country's population	Migrant Acceptance Index (2017): 4.75/9 Mexico scores lower (indicating less accepting attitudes toward migrants) than the regional score for Latin America and the Caribbean of 5.89 in 2017. When compared to its neighboring countries' most recent scores, Mexico scores similarly to neighboring Guatemala, while the United States scores noticeably higher (more accepting). Belize is not scored. • Guatemala (2019): 3.05/9 • United States (2019): 7.95/9 • Belize: No data Note: Based on 138 countries surveyed in 2016; U.S. surveyed in 2017; and updated in 2019; top possible score is 9.0. The Index was updated in 2020, highlighting a global reduction in acceptance of migrants. However, the publicly accessible 2020 data do not include Mexico.	Gallup, 2017, Migrant Acceptance Index Gallup, 2020, World Grows Less Accepting of Migrants

Indicator	Description	Sources
Legislation and regulation to protect migrant workers	Coverage of legal provisions under the labor laws Article 1 of the Mexican Constitution establishes equal rights for all people to the human rights recognized in the Constitution and the protection of those rights. Mexico 1917 (rev. 2015) Mexico ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1999. The country's third report on its efforts to implement the regulations of the convention was submitted in May 2017 and the next report is now due in October 2024. UN Treaty Body Database In 2011, Mexico adopted the 'Ley de Migración' (Migration Law) to protect migrants and comply with the Convention noted above. Building upon the content of the Constitution, the provisions of the Migration Law are intended to regulate the movement of Mexican citizens and foreign migrants "within a framework of respect, protection, and safeguarding of human rights" [English translation]. Article 6 of the Migration Law states that the Mexican State shall guarantee to all foreign persons the rights and freedoms recognized in the Constitution. Migration Policy Institute, April 2013 , Migration Law of 2011, reformed 2021 In Mexico, foreigners are categorized as visitors, temporary residents, or permanent residents. Under temporary resident status, foreigners are entitled to work and receive compensation in Mexico if the National Institute of Migration (Instituto Nacional de Migración, INM) authorizes a request from a Mexican company or person. Families of temporary residents, including children and spouses or domestic partners, are entitled to enter the country and hold temporary resident status. Permanent residents are entitled to stay in Mexico indefinitely and to work and receive compensation. Family members may also be granted permanent residency. Migration Policy Institute, February 2021	Mexico 1917 (rev. 2015), (English translated, provided by Constitute) UN Treaty Body Database Migration Policy Institute, April 2013, Mexico: The New Migration Narrative Migration Law of 2011, reformed 2021 Migration Policy Institute, February 2021, Institutional and Legal Migratory Framework of the United States: A Working Paper

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Access to social protection, health, and education Article 8 of the Migration Law of 2011 states that all foreigners, regardless of their immigration status, can access public or private education and have the right to receive healthcare, including free and unrestricted urgent medical care. Migration Law of 2011 With some exceptions, both temporary and permanent residents can request a Unique Population Registration Code (Clave Única de Registro de Población, CURP) after receiving their residency card. The CURP provides access to education and health services. Migration Policy Institute, February 2021	Migration Law of 2011, reformed 2021 Migration Policy Institute, February 2021, Institutional and Legal Migratory Framework of the United States: A Working Paper
	Bilateral MOUs or other agreements specifically designed to protect migrant workers Mexico signed bilateral agreements on labor migration with Guatemala in 2014 and 2018. ILO, July 2019 Mexico also holds a 1974 bilateral agricultural worker agreement with Canada, which is supported by the 1994 North America Free Trade Agreement. Migration Policy Institute, 20 March 2019	ILO, July 2019, Fair Recruitment. Country Brief: Guatemala to Mexico Corridor Migration Policy Institute, 20 March 2019, 'Mexican Migration to Canada: Temporary Worker Programs, Visa Imposition, and NAFTA Shape Flows'
Ratification of relevant international conventions and domestication of conventions into a national legal framework (Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor)	Convention No. 29 - In Force	Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Convention No. 105 - In Force	Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
	Convention No. 138 - In Force	Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
	Convention No. 182 - In Force	Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
	Protocol 29 - Ratified. The Protocol entered into force for Mexico on 11 Jun 2024.	Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (P29)
	Palermo Protocol - Ratified	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the 'Palermo Protocol')
	Convention No. 188 - Not Ratified	ILO Convention 188 on Work in Fishing;
	PSMA - Not party to the PSMA.	The FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)
	Domestication into national legislation The minimum age for work is set at 15 years in Article 22 of the Federal Labor Law. Children under 16 years need authorization from their parents or guardians to work. The minimum age for hazardous work is 18 years. Hazardous occupations and activities are identified by Articles 175–176 of the Federal Labor	US Department of Labor, 2023, 2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Mexico Ley Federal del Trabajo, 1970 (Last

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Law. US Department of Labor, 2023 , Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970	reformed April 2024)
	Sex trafficking and labor trafficking is criminalized by the 2012 anti-trafficking law. Labor trafficking offenses can result in penalties of five to 20 years' imprisonment and fines. US Department of State, 2024	US Department of State, 2024, 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: Mexico
Regulation of recruitment	Country's government-sanctioned oversight mechanisms (regulations, accreditation schemes, inspection, etc.) of recruitment agents	Mexico 1917 (rev. 2015), (English translated, provided by Constitute)
	Recruitment agencies are regulated at the national level in the Constitution, the Federal Labor Law, and in specific recruitment regulations. Mexico 1917 (rev. 2015) , Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970 , Reglamento de agencias de colocación de trabajadores	Ley Federal del Trabajo, 1970 (Last reformed April 2024)
	Federal Labor Law Art 537 establishes that within the objectives of the National Employment Service is "to promote and design mechanisms for monitoring the recruitment of workers"; Articles 538 to 539, mentions the functions, objectives and characteristics of the service including (guide, authorize, register and monitor, no charges for workers, etc. among other powers)	Reglamento de agencias de colocación de trabajadores (SECRETARIA DEL TRABAJO Y PREVISION SOCIAL)
	Article 28-29, which establishes the conditions of Mexican workers hired in national territory. Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970	ILO Ratifications for Mexico
	Recruitment Agencies regulations	Library of Congress, 7 February 2019, Guatemala / Mexico: Agreement to Cooperate on Labor Matters Published
	By law, recruitment agencies are prohibited of charging a fee to the workers (Art. 5 and 10 of Recruitment agencies regulation). Regulations for recruitment agencies include registration, and control, no discrimination, transparency, etc. Reglamento de agencias de colocación de trabajadores	
	In June 2018, Mexico and Guatemala agreed to cooperate on labor matters between the two governments with the objective of sharing information related to temporary migrant workers to ensure safety and working conditions.	Inter Press Service, 29 March 2019, Los jornaleros, las mayores víctimas del trabajo esclavo en México

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Library of Congress, 7 February 2019	Mondaq, 11 June 2021, Mexican outsourcing regulation: is your business ready?
	Despite the strong regulations, reports have shown that intermediates of agriculture work usually lie about salaries, working conditions, and trick migrant employees. Inter Press Service, 29 March 2019	
	Outsourcing regulation	
	In 2021, the Mexican Government published an 'outsourcing regulation', scheduled to come into force by August 2021, which is intended to provide workers previously hired as subcontractors with better working conditions. The regulation prohibits the subcontracting of personnel and the outsourcing of work for a company's core activities. Mondaq, 11 June 2021	
Enforcement of legislation for forced labor, human trafficking, hazardous child labor, migrant worker protections, recruitment and working conditions	TIP Report	US Department of State, 2024, 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: Mexico
	The US Department of State's 2024 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report assigns Mexico a Tier 2 TIP Ranking, stating "The Government of Mexico does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared with the previous reporting period; therefore Mexico remained on Tier 2. These efforts included prosecuting more suspects and convicting more traffickers; identifying and assisting more victims; and amending its labor law with more robust obligations for agricultural employers to protect employees." US Department of State, 2024	US Department of State, 2020, 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Mexico
		GAN Integrity, July 2020, Mexico Corruption Report, The Risk & Compliance Portal
	Key areas where the government fell short of meeting the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking were failing to allocate adequate funding to the new lead agency for human trafficking investigations; initiating fewer investigations; inadequate victim services, especially for men, forced labor victims, and victims in rural areas; and restrictions on the movement of victims residing in government shelters, and failing to hold recruitment and labor agents accountable for fraudulent recruitment practices. Meanwhile, corruption and	US Department of State, 2024, 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Mexico

Indicator	Description	Sources
	complicity of government officials in trafficking crimes continues to be a notable concern but the government did not prosecute or convict any complicit officials. The former governor of Puebla was arrested in 2021 for ordering the torture and arrest of a journalist who exposed their involvement in a sex trafficking ring, but the government has still not provided updates on the progression of the case. US Department of State, 2024 The 2020 TIP report describes the alleged involvement of officials from the National Migration Institute (INM) in facilitating the trafficking of migrants and a case where police officers from Tlaxcala allegedly forced a journalist investigating trafficking issues to leave the city. US Department of State, 2020 The latter case reflects a systemic problem of violence and harassment directed at journalists, with Mexico described as one of the world's most dangerous places for journalists by GAN Integrity's 2020 Mexico Corruption Report and is indicative of wider concerns about the ability of journalists to investigate and report on crime and corruption as noted by the US Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. GAN Integrity, July 2020 , US Department of State, 2024, 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Mexico An insufficient number of labor inspectors and requirements to provide 24-hours' notice before inspections hindered the ability of the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS) to enforce labor laws. In addition, labor inspectors had a limited mandate for assessing working conditions in informal employment and on farms, which employ most workers in Mexico. Protocols were in place for identifying suspected forced labor victims during labor inspections, but a lack of coordination with other secretariats impeded criminal investigations and victim assistance processes. Punishments for those convicted of sex trafficking and labor trafficking are sufficiently	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	stringent. But NGOs claimed that authorities lacked understanding of trafficking laws despite efforts by the government to implement training. Although the government maintained its law enforcement efforts, it initiated fewer investigations and did not provide complete statistics on exactly how many, prosecutions, and convictions were made for this reporting period. US Department of State, 2024	
	Child labor laws Gaps within the operations of Mexico's Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS), the lead organization for the enforcement of child labor laws, hinder effective enforcement. Labor inspectorate funding decreased substantially from over US$29.6 million in 2018 to just over US$1.6 million in 2022. The total number of labor inspectors was also reported to have decreased from 758 in 2018 to 529 in 2022 and is likely to be several times too small for the size of the workforce in Mexico. According to estimates based on the ILO's technical advice, Mexico should employ over 3,000 labor inspectors. US Department of Labor, 2020 , US Department of Labor, 2023 Enforcement within the informal sector, which accounts for 55.2% of employment in Mexico, is especially inadequate. Although the federal and state labor inspectorates have the authority to carry out unannounced inspections in the informal sector, in practice they only conduct labor inspections in response to a complaint. The US Department of Labor notes concern regarding Mexico's lack of enforcement of laws governing the minimum age for work in rural areas or at small and medium enterprises, particularly in the agricultural sector. US Department of Labor, 2023	US Department of Labor, 2023, 2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor US Department of Labor, 2020, 2019 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Mexico
	Global Slavery Index (2023): Est. no. of people living in modern slavery: 850,000 Prevalence: 6.6 per 1,000 people Vulnerability to Modern Slavery: 58/100 Government Response Rating: 55/100	Global Slavery Index 2023 Country Data for Mexico Global Slavery Index 2023 Methodology

Indicator	Description	Sources
	The 2023 Global Slavery Index (GSI) rates the Mexican Government's response to Modern Slavery with a 55%. The GSI methodology to assess Government Response Rating is based on tracking government progress towards the achievement of five milestones: "1. Survivors of slavery are identified and supported to exit and remain out of modern slavery; 2. Criminal justice mechanisms function effectively to prevent modern slavery; 3. Coordination occurs at the national and regional level and across borders, and governments are held to account for their response; 4. Risk factors, such as attitudes, social systems, and institutions that enable modern slavery are addressed; 5. Government and business stop sourcing goods and services produced by forced labor." Note: The GSI government response rating is presented as a percentage. A higher percentage reflects more action being taken and is assumed to mean lower risk by the SSRT.	
	Documentation from national labor inspection and other law enforcement agencies Protections for migrant workers, especially women, are undermined. Difficulties for migrants in understanding bureaucratic processes and manipulative practices by some exploitative employers prevent migrant workers from registering. "In addition to visas and permits for migrants, Mexico's Migration Law aims to protect migrants' rights to freedom of movement, health, and equality and non-discrimination, as well as access to education, identity, family unity, justice, and immigration documents. For example, migrants are provided the right to medical attention regardless of their legal status and migrant workers and their children have the right to education. Children of migrants born in Mexico are granted jus soli citizenship, regardless of the parents' documentation status.	Fleury, A., 2016, 'The Overlooked: Migrant Women Working in Mexico'

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Still, despite Mexico's policies and programs, migrants face obstacles in accessing services and their rights. Migrants struggle with understanding the process, completing the required paperwork, paying the fees, and navigating the lack of consistent information on work permits and services. They may be denied access to resources, such as healthcare, legal protection, and education, to which they are entitled. Denial or complications with services often result from lack of information or discriminatory practices by low-level or mid-level officials in charge of providing resources and protection to migrants. Repeated denial of services or convoluted and arbitrary rules may also make migrants less willing to attempt accessing services. Others don't access services fearing risk of deportation or prefer invisibility to protect themselves from feeling "othered" by locals."	
	ILO Comments adopted by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) in 2019 highlight the need for the Mexican government to strengthen the capacity of institutions working to combat trafficking in persons and to improve coordination and collaboration between those institutions, as well as cooperation with neighboring countries. Furthermore, the Committee urges the Government to take measures to strengthen the capacities of the police, the labor inspectorate and public prosecution authorities to improve the identification of trafficking victims. The Committee notes the efforts by Mexico to tackle complicity and participation by law enforcement officers in human trafficking but highlights concern from several UN Treaty Bodies about the reported complicity between state agents and international organized crime gangs and trafficking networks, and requests that the Government continue to provide	Observation (CEACR) - adopted 2019, published 109th ILC session (2021): Forced Labor Convention Observation (CEACR) - adopted 2019, published 109th ILC session (2021): Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention No. 182

Indicator	Description	Sources
	information on the number of cases identified involving complicit law enforcement officers. Regarding hazardous child labor, the Committee welcomes the fall in the percentage of children engaged in hazardous work in Mexico from 26.6% to 18.2% between 2007 and 2017. The Committee requests that the Government provide detailed gender and age disaggregated information on the number of hazardous child labor violations detected and the penalties imposed.	
Evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country	General evidence from other sectors Mexican men, women, and children are subject to sex trafficking and forced labor in several sectors in Mexico and the United States including, among others, agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and food processing. Day laborers and their children are especially vulnerable to forced labor in Mexico's agricultural sector. Traffickers also exploit foreign victims who are mainly from Central and South America, in sex trafficking and forced labor in Mexico. Organized crime groups exploit Mexican and foreign victims in illegal activities including drug production and online scam operations. US Department of State, 2024 Goods produced by child labor and/or forced labor in Mexico include fruits and vegetables, coffee, tobacco, pornography, cattle, garments, leather, and poppy flowers for opium used to produce illegal drugs. US Department of Labor, 2022	US Department of State, 2024, 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report US Department of Labor, 2022, 2022 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor

Table 1: Mexico - Country-level indicators

Mexico: Seafood industry-level indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	No direct evidence was found of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in Mexico's seafood industry.	
ILO indicators of forced labor and ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor	No indicators of hazardous child labor in Mexico's seafood industry were found. However, evidence was reported of audit findings of excessive overtime in Mexico's seafood processing industry, which is an indicator of forced labor risk. Specifically, evidence relayed to the SSRT describes a finding from Fair Trade USA audits at seafood processing plants of noncompliance with rest days and limits of working hours and overtime. Anonymous, April 2024	Anonymous, April 2024, External Reviewer feedback [Email] (Personal Communication, 8 April 2024)

Fishing, aquaculture and processing regulations and policies	Labor-related fishing legislation
	
	The ILO NATLEX database lists one law and two regulations relating to fishers. ILO NATLEX Database
	
	The 2018 Global Slavery Index (GSI) for fishing:
	
	● National Fisheries Policy (catch outside EEZ, distant water fishing, and subsidies)
	    o Medium Risk
	● Wealth and Institutional Capacity (GDP per capita, value landed per fisher, and unreported landings)
	    o Medium Risk
	
	In an assessment by the GSI of the top 20 fishing countries, categorized according to risk of modern slavery in their fishing industry, Mexico is categorized as 'Medium Risk', Regarding the 9 countries within the medium risk group, the GSI states that they "tend to be countries that fish at home and have low levels of harmful subsidies but also have low value catches, low GDP and high levels of unreported catch. These characteristics, in some cases, make them vulnerable to having forced labor in their own national fishing
		ILO NATLEX Database
		
		Global Slavery Index (GSI) 2018 - Fishing
		
		FAO, National Aquaculture Legislation Overview Mexico
		
		Ley General de Pesca y Acuacultura Sustentables (The Fisheries Law, DOF 2007)
		
		NORMA Oficial Mexicana NOM-001-SAG/PESC-2013
		
		US Department of Labor, 2023, 2022 Findings on the

Indicator	Description	Sources
	industries and also to be a source for fishers who become victims of modern slavery aboard foreign-flagged vessels that fish in their waters." Global Slavery Index (GSI) 2018 - Fishing	Worst Forms of Child Labor
	The main authority responsible for administering fisheries legislation in Mexico is the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER, formerly known as the Secretaría de Agricultura, Ganadería, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentación, SAGARPA). The Secretariat is a unit of the Federal Executive Branch of the Government of Mexico responsible for administering fisheries and aquaculture legislation in Mexico.	Ley Federal del Trabajo, 1970 (Last reformed April 2024)
	The National Commission on Aquaculture and Fisheries (CONAPESCA), a decentralized body of SAGARPA, makes and implements decisions related to permitting, harvest controls, and closures, and is supported by recommendations from the research entity, the National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INAPESCA). FAO, National Aquaculture Legislation Overview Mexico	
	Related laws, regulations, and polices include:	
	● Ley General de Pesca y Acuacultura Sustentables (2007, reformed 2015), which provides general guidelines to regulate fisheries and aquaculture resources.	
	● Regulations to the Fisheries Law (Reglamento de la Ley de Pesca, not yet published), such as	
	○ NOM-047-SAG/PESC-2014, for the identification of the origin of cultured shrimp, from marine waters and from estuaries, marshes and bays.	
	○ NOM-074-SAG/PESC-2014, to regulate the use of aquatic fauna exclusion systems (SEFA) in aquaculture production units for shrimp farming in the State of Sinaloa.	
	● Regulations from other offices:	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	o NOM-014-STPS-2000, occupational exposure to abnormal environmental pressures - safety and hygiene conditions	
	o NOM-001-SAGARPA/SCFI-2016, Commercial practices - Specifications on the storage, safekeeping, conservation, handling and control of goods or merchandise under the custody of general warehouses. Including agricultural and fishing products.	
	o NOM-128-SSA1-1994, goods and services. That establishes the application of a system of risk analysis and control of critical points in the industrial plant processing fishing products.	
	o NOM-242-SSA1-2009, Products and services. Fresh fishery products, chilled, frozen and processed. Health specifications and test methods	
	o NOM-001-SEMARNAT-1996, maximum permissible limits of contaminants in wastewater discharges into national waters and assets. (Clarification D.O.F. April 30, 1997).	
	● Fisheries Chart (Carta Nacional de Pesca)	
	● Ley General del Equilibrio Ecológico y la Protección al Ambiente (LGEEPA)	
	● Ley General de Bienes Nacionales	
	● Ley de Aguas Nacionales	
	● Ley Federal del Mar	
	Artículo 27 de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos	
	Mexico has incorporated child labor prohibition in the employment law, which prohibits children under 18 years from undertaking hazardous occupations and activities, as identified in Articles 175–176 of the	

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Indicator	Description	Sources
	Federal Labor Law, including fishing. US Department of Labor, 2023 , Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970	
	The Federal Labor Law, also includes statements about the conditions of workers at sea - Chapter III (*e.g.,* clean and comfortable accommodation, food etc.) Art 204, payment, working hours, etc.). Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970	
Enforcement and implementation of industry-specific regulations and policies	Fishery monitoring and surveillance systems are in place. However, evidence of significant illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in Mexico indicates that implementation and enforcement of industry-specific regulations is inadequate and is hindered by organized criminal activity. Mexico has a long coastline and a fishing fleet of over 100,000 small vessels, making fishery enforcement difficult. Mexico's fishing-related institutions are described as under resourced and susceptible to corruption. Meanwhile, poor coordination between these institutions and with Mexican law enforcement agencies further exacerbate problems with enforcement. The Brookings Institution, 14 September 2020 In addition, the seafood industry is susceptible to illegal activity driven by organized crime groups, including alleged involvement in IUU fishing, protection racketeering, and extortion. The president of the Cámara Nacional de las Industrias Pesquera y Acuícola (Canainpesca), Minerva Pérez Castro, said "The products of illegal fishing reach the same markets that legal product reaches but without all the production costs related to a legally constituted company,". In addition, according to media sources Pérez Castro previously described instances where trucks carrying seafood have been stopped by members of organized crime groups to demand money in exchange for safe passage. El Pais, 10 July 2024 , Seafood Source, 9 July 2024 Although Mexico operates a fishing vessel satellite monitoring system, this is not used by 97% of the country's registered, mostly small-scale fishing vessels, leaving a large amount of fishing activity	The Brookings Institution, 14 September 2020, 'Illegal fishing in Mexico and policy responses' El Pais, 10 July 2024, 'Asesinada la presidenta de la Cámara Nacional de la Industria Pesquera en Baja California tras denunciar a las mafias de la pesca illegal' Seafood Source, 9 July 2024, 'Minerva Pérez Castro, Mexican seafood industry trade president, shot dead after calling out illegal fishing' Global Fishing Watch, 23 November 2020, 'Predictive Analytics to Forecast Illegal Fishing Risk in Mexico' RFMO Best Practices Snapshot

Indicator	Description	Sources
	unmonitored. Global Fishing Watch, 23 November 2020 In the IATTC, where Mexico's tropical tuna fisheries operate, 100% observer coverage is required for large-scale purse seines (>363MT) and a minimum of 5% observer coverage is required for large-scale longline vessels. In the ICCAT, a minimum of 5% observer coverage is required for purse seine and 100% observer coverage is required for purse seine targeting tropical tuna. Observer qualifications and minimum standards for the Observer Program Management are in force. RFMO Best Practices Snapshot - 2021: Observer Requirements	- 2021: Observer Requirements
Access to workplaces for third-party monitors (trade union representatives, on-board observers, etc.)	Trade unions are present and active in the seafood industry (see Access to join a trade union) but it is unclear to what extent trade union representatives have access to workplaces. Meanwhile, onboard observers are required on some fishing vessels, for example, on large-scale tuna purse seine fishing (See 'Monterey Bay Aquarium. 2022. "Tropical tuna Social Risk Profile: Ecuador, Fishing and Processing"). However, the purpose of these observers is to collect biological and fisheries-related data and they are not tasked to monitor labor conditions.	
Worker access to a functional grievance mechanism	Llaos Acuacultura, a shrimp farming company based in the state of Sonora, describes in its public Code of Business Ethics a complaints system to report illegal practices or inappropriate conduct. These complaints are made to the Human Development area, who have the obligation to maintain confidentiality.	Llaos Acuacultura: Código de ética empresarial
Access to join a trade union	There are several unions in the fishing industry (none of the below appeared to be affiliates of the ITF). ● Confederation of Mexican Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM)) is the largest labor union in Mexico. ● Sindicato Dem. Trabajadores Pesc. Sagarpia ● Sindicato De Trabajadores Del Empaque De Productos Del Mar Y La Industria Pesquera, Conexos Y Similares De La República Mexicana	Registry of unions Federación de Sindicatos de Trabajadores al Servicio Del Estado Ley Federal del Trabajo, 1970 (Last reformed April 2024) ITUC, Mexico

Indicator	Description	Sources
	• Sindicato De Trabajadores De Productos Pesqueros De Matancitas, C.T.M. • Sindicato Único De Trabajadores De Oficios Varios De Productos Pesqueros De Alvarado, Veracruz • Sindicato De Trabajadores Al Servicio De La Empresa Productos Pesqueros De Mazatlan, S.A. De C.V. • Sindicato Nacional De Trabajadores De Productos Pesqueros Mexicanos, Similares Y Conexos De La República Mexicana • Sindicato de Unidad Nacional de los Trabajadores de Acuacultura y Pesca de la Sagarpa • Sindicato Democrático de Trabajadores de Pesca y Acuacultura, SIDTPA-SADER The Federal Labor Law specifies that the crew should be allowed to leave work to join union activities (Art. 204); however, there is no information on how this is enforced in the fishing industry. Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970 It is unclear to what extent seafood workers can access trade unions in practice. Nationally, Mexico has been recognized by the ITUC as having 'systematic violations of rights'. Anti-union practices and even murders of trade union members have been reported in the past five years. ITUC , ITUC Survey Note: There is no updated list of trade unions in Mexico.	ITUC Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights
Participation in voluntary schemes and implementation of comprehensive corporate policies and strategies to combat forced	Fishing The Pacific Alliance for Sustainable Tuna (PAST), an alliance of Mexico's largest yellowfin and skipjack tuna fishing companies operating in the Eastern Pacific Ocean under the remit of the IATTC, achieved MSC certification in 2017. The MSC covers basic social elements related to forced labor and child labor. At the time of certification, the certified fleet included 36 fishing vessels accounting for 90% of	MSC, 7 September 2017, 'Pacific Alliance for Sustainable Tuna earns MSC Certification', Press Release Pacific Alliance for Sustainable Tuna - Responsibility

Indicator	Description	Sources
labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	yellowfin and skipjack tuna caught by Mexican tuna fishers. MSC, 7 September 2017 In addition to tackling environmental sustainability, PAST also works toward ethical employment. Among other claims, the Alliance states that its members: "Follow high national and international labor standards for all of our operations, including adhering to the highest of safety and operating standards on all of our vessels." and "Provide high-paying jobs in the communities where we work. Our members have created and provide over 30,000 direct and indirect jobs across Mexico." Pacific Alliance for Sustainable Tuna - Responsibility Several Fair Trade USA partners are present in Mexico, including producers and processors for shrimp. Fair Trade USA's seafood certification program contains social criteria, including but not limited to forced labor and child labor and would indicate a significantly lower risk of forced labor and hazardous child labor. Fair Trade USA, 2024 Fair Trade USA certified seafood from Mexico includes wild-caught octopus and wild-caught shrimp. Fair Trade USA, 2022 Mexico has a notable number of Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) reporting on FisheryProgress, 31 projects in total including one completed FIP, two inactive FIPs, and two prospective FIPs at the time of writing. Under the new Human Rights and Social Responsibility Policy launched by FisheryProgress in May 2021, these FIPs will be required to complete a self-evaluation against FisheryProgress' criteria for increased risk of forced labor and human trafficking. FIPs that meet one or more of the criteria for increased risk will need to complete a risk assessment using the Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector (SRA) and create a workplan to address any high-risk areas. Three Mexican FIPs are among early adopters of the policy. FisheryProgress Aquaculture	Fair Trade USA, 2024, Fair Trade Partners - Mexico, Partner Directory Fair Trade USA, 2022, Fair Trade Certified Seafood Availability Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), 24 July 2024, Find an ASC certified farm Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP), 17 April 2024, BAP Certified Aquaculture Producers

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Indicator	Description	Sources
	As of July 2024, there are 11 ASC certificate holders in Mexico, mostly producing shrimp but also Seriola and cobia, tilapia, and bivalves. Among them are eight ASC certified farms producing whiteleg shrimp. ASC, 24 July 2024 As of April 2024, there are 12 BAP certified farms in Mexico producing bass, tilapia, totoaba, trout, shrimp, and snapper, and 10 BAP certified processors producing anchovy (wild), bass, crab (wild), tilapia, shrimp, and snapper. Among them are five BAP certified shrimp farms and five certified processors producing whiteleg shrimp in Mexico. BAP, 17 April 2024	

Table 2: Mexico - Seafood industry-level indicators

Mexico: Aquaculture Indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Direct evidence of Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	No direct evidence was found of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in Mexico's shrimp farming industry.	
ILO indicators of forced labor and [ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor](#)	No indicators of forced labor or hazardous child labor in Mexico's shrimp farming industry were found.	
Labor supply in the domestic market	Unknown. Information about the labor supply in shrimp farming is lacking. In one news article, an interviewed shrimp farm owner, Arturo Nieves, owner of the Aquacultores del Mar Azul, a Pacific White Leg shrimp farm in Sinaloa Mexico said in his interview his farm was family based, although he did not mention how many employees or where they were hired from. [The Fish Site, 1 August 2022](#)	[The Fish Site, 1 August 2022, Meet the farmer: Arturo Nieves, Enrique Guemez Sorhouet](#)
Aquaculture Characteristics	Isolation of the site Reports on the number of shrimp farms and related facilities varies. According to INAPESCA (2018), cited by Seafood Watch, there are around 1,100 whiteleg shrimp farms in Mexico covering approximately 70,000 hectares of pond area. [Seafood Watch, 1 March 2021](#) A more recent report states that Mexico has a total of around 900 shrimp farms, 45 hatcheries and 40 processing plants according to the National Commission of Aquaculture and Fisheries (Conapesca). [The Fish Site, 2021](#) Sonora, Sinaloa, and Nayarit are the main three states responsible for shrimp aquaculture. [CONAPESCA, 2021](#)	[Seafood Watch, 1 March 2021, Whiteleg Shrimp (Litopenaeus Vannamei), Mexico Ponds](#) [The Fish Site, 2021, Mexican shrimp sector set for 177,000 tonne year](#) [NASA Earth Observatory, Shrimp Farms Spread in Sinaloa, 2021](#) [CONAPESCA, 2021, Anuario Estadístico](#)

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Isolation of the sites is variable, and some farms can be around 2 hours away from the nearest hospital. PyMEs, 2023	de Acuacultura y Pesca Directorio de Empresas y PyMEs e Industrias Camaronicultura, 2023
	Child-adult ratio in aquaculture communities Unknown. The average age of Workers in Aquaculture Activities was 38.2 years. The workforce was distributed between 89.9% men and 10.1% women." Data Mexico, 2023	Data México, Trabajadores en Actividades de Acuacultura, 2023
Workforce Characteristics	The proportion of low-skilled migrant workers: Unknown.	
	Legal presence/regularity of migrant workers Unknown.	
Recruitment and Contracts	Use of recruitment agents Unknown. Recruitment agencies are used in the agricultural sector, especially for migrant workers. However, no information was found on the use of recruitment agencies in the shrimp farming sector.	
	Contract-and compensation- related regulations and practices Unknown. The Mexican Federal Labor Law requires that workers have signed, written contracts. However, there is no public information on how widespread the use of written contracts is in the Mexican shrimp farming industry. Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970 It is important to note the elevated level of informality in aquaculture in Mexico. While the national informality rate is 23.2%, states near the border with Guatemala show high informality rates (Oaxaca: 100%, Tabasco: 66.7%), which could	Ley Federal del Trabajo, 1970 (Last reformed April 2024) Data México, Trabajadores en Actividades de Acuacultura, 2023

Indicator	Description	Sources
	indicate a risk for migrant workers. Data Mexico, 2023 During the second quarter of 2023, the average salary of Aquaculture workers was $6.93k MX working around 51.8 hours per week. The average salary for men was $7.17k MX, and for women it was an average salary of $4.86k MX. The states with the best average salaries for Workers in Aquaculture Activities during second quarter of 2023 were Sinaloa ($9.2k MX), Baja California Sur ($8.88k MX) and Sonora ($6.61k MX). In the other hand, the states with the lowest average salaries were Tabasco ($5.19k MX), Colima ($4.47k MX) and Hidalgo ($2.92k MX). Data Mexico, 2023	

Table 4: Mexico – Aquaculture Indicators

Mexico: Processing indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	No direct evidence was found of forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor in Mexico's shrimp processing industry.	
ILO indicators of forced labor and ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor	Some evidence was found of poor working conditions in Mexico's shrimp processing industry and of children engaged in work in shrimp packing, but the evidence is insufficient to indicate either forced labor or hazardous child labor. A 2021 news article on the conditions of work in shrimp packing in Mazatlán, Sinaloa (the main shrimp processing state – See 'Processing and Trade') describes work shifts of up to 15 hours in physically challenging conditions. "…she remains standing all the time and in cold rooms with temperatures below zero." El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021 According to the US Department of Labor, children take part in the packing of shrimp in Mexico, though not enough information is given to infer whether it is hazardous child labor. The US Embassy-Mexico City is the evidence source. US Department of Labor, 2023 Anecdotal evidence from the 2021 news article cited above states that shrimp processing is no longer an appealing employer for young workers aged 15 to 18 years due to low earnings and demanding work. The average age of workers in the freezer plants is reported as 50 to 60 years. El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021 While a decrease in the presence of young workers in shrimp processing could indicate a lower risk of child labor, the potential for labor shortages as labor supply diminishes could increase the risk of vulnerable workers being exploited in the future.	El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021, "Ser empacadora de camaron, los estragos de un oficio extremo" US Department of Labor, 2023, 2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Mexico
Processing Characteristics	Processing stage Primary and secondary processing of shrimp occurs in Mexico.	Veterinaria Digital, Dr.Germán Bertsch, 2023

Monterey Bay Aquarium

	Shrimp is washed, beheaded, sorted, frozen and stored until shipping. Mexico produces fresh/frozen shrimp in the shell, brine-fried shrimp, cooked and peeled shrimp and dried shrimp. Veterinaria Digital, Dr.Germán Bertsch, 2023; CONAPESCA, 2021

Some processing companies in Mexico also produce value-added shrimp products. Seafood Source, 8 July 2022

Mexico also produces shrimp by-products such as organic fertilizer from the shell, chitosan which is an industrial absorbent, dried shrimp specifically as a condiment and shrimp head flour used for feeding aquatic animals. Veterinaria Digital, Dr.Germán Bertsch, 2023

Most processing occurs in the states of Sonora, followed by Sinaloa and Baja California. In 2021, an estimated 226 thousand tons of shrimp was processed in Mexico, from which ~99% was frozen shrimp. CONAPESCA, 2021 | Seafood Source, 8 July 2022, 'Ocean Garden CEO Celso Lopez: Farmed shrimp a great value'

CONAPESCA, Anuario Estadístico de Acuacultura y Pesca, 2021 |
| | Consolidation and vertical integration

Unknown. | |
| | Domestic versus export

The share of shrimp production in Mexico for domestic consumption versus export is unknown.

Overall, Mexico was a net exporter of fish and seafood in 2021 with exports of fish and seafood valued at US$ 1.3 billion, compared to imports of US$ 975.9 million. Government of Canada, 2022

Shrimp are sold as frozen and fresh, unfrozen. The main export market for the resource is the United States, with exports to this country being ten times greater in volume and economic value compared to the next most important markets (i.e., China and Japan). In 2021, shrimp exports represented a value greater than 276 million USD. CONAPESCA, 2021 | Government of Canada, 2022, Sector Trend Analysis – Fish and seafood trends in Mexico

CONAPESCA, 2021, Anuario Estadístico de Acuacultura y Pesca |
| Workforce Characteristics | Skilled versus low-skilled.

Unknown. | |
| | The proportion of women in the workforce | El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021, "Ser |

	Work in the processing plants in Mazatlán, Sinaloa (the main shrimp processing state – See 'Processing and Trade') is traditionally done by women. El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021	empacadora de camaron, los estragos de un oficio extremo"
	The proportion of migrant versus local workers Unknown.	
	The proportion of minority or Indigenous workers Unknown.	
	The proportion of temporary and contract versus permanent workers Unknown.	
	Workers' origins Unknown.	
	Migrant worker language (vs. dominant language in the industry) Unknown.	
	GDP per capita of processing country and main worker source country Mexico's GDP per capita (2022): $ 11,091.3 USD	WorldBank, 2022, GDP per capita (current US$) - Mexico
	Legal presence (regularity) of migrant workers Unknown.	
	The ability of migrant workers to change jobs Unknown.	
Recruitment and Contracts	Use of contractors and recruitment agents Unknown. Anecdotal evidence describes one worker being recruited informally by a neighbor working at the shrimp processing plant. El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021	El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021, "Ser empacadora de camaron, los estragos de un oficio extremo"
	Compensation method Information about compensation in shrimp processing is lacking. A 2021 news article on the conditions of work in shrimp packing in Mazatlán, Sinaloa (the main shrimp processing state – See 'Processing and Trade') cites	El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021, "Ser empacadora de camaron, los estragos de un oficio extremo"

	one shrimp processing worker, who says that the plant where he works is one of a few places where workers receive all the benefits required by law. *"At the plant where I work during the season, they give us Social Security and a salary for up to 8 months, and not all of them do. We pack there and once the boats are moored, we peel and devein shrimp for a few more months, until everything stops."* [English translation]. El Sol de Mazatlan, 2021 The Mexican Federal Labor Law requires that workers have signed, written contracts. However, there is no public information on how widespread the use of written contracts is in the Mexican shrimp farming industry. Ley Federal Del Trabajo, 1970	Ley Federal del Trabajo, 1970 (Last reformed April 2024)

Table 5: Mexico - Processing indicators

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