

# Shrimp Welfare Project

*Improving the Lives of Billions of Shrimps*

***Emerging Frontiers in Animal Advocacy***

**Animal Law Conference. October 22, 2023**

Andrés Jiménez Zorrilla - CEO



# Presentation Outline

Shrimp Welfare Concerns

Scale, Neglectedness & Tractability

SWP's Activities and Achievements

SWP's Challenges

How you can get involved

# Shrimp Welfare Concerns



# Are Shrimps Sentient?

What is  
Sentience?

## Definition

Sentience is the **capacity to experience feelings**, such as pleasure or pain.

## Question

"Does it **feel** like **something** to be this individual?"

Scientific  
Conclusions

## EU's EFSA (2005)

"The **scientific evidence clearly indicates** that those groups of animals are able to **experience pain and distress**."

## LSE Report (2021)

"We recommend that all cephalopod molluscs and decapod crustaceans **be regarded as sentient**."

Sentience in  
Legislation

## UK Legislation

### Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022

The Act recognised the sentience of cephalopod molluscs and decapod crustaceans (including shrimps).

## European Legislation

**Austria** - Animal Welfare Act 2004

**Switzerland** - Animal Welfare Ordinance Act 2008

**Norway** - Animal Welfare Act 2010

# Welfare Concerns: **Water Quality**



Dissolved oxygen and ammonia levels, temperature, salinity and pH are key to the welfare of all aquatic animals, including shrimps.

Poor water quality can lead to compromised immune systems in shrimps (and in extreme cases, to death by suffocation or poisoning).



# Welfare Concerns: **Stocking Density**

There is strong experimental evidence to suggest that **reductions in stocking density** indirectly improve welfare by **improving water quality, reducing disease and stress, and increasing survival**

Inability to express natural behaviours



# Welfare Concerns: **Stunning and Slaughter**

Shrimps are typically slaughtered by either **asphyxiation (suffocation)**, **crushing** or **ice slurry (chilling)**.

**In practice**, many shrimps are simply placed into a crate and weighed, before having a layer of ice placed on top.





# Welfare Concerns: **Eyestalk Ablation**

Some hatcheries still practice **cutting off the eyestalk of female shrimps**, to induce rapid maturation and spawning

This causes **prolonged pain, stress**, and **high mortality levels**

Shrimps have **adverse reactions** to ablation, such as tail flicking





# Scale, Neglectedness & Tractability



# Scale

## 2020 numbers - *Rethink Priorities*

Around **230 billion shrimps** are living on farms at any moment resulting in a total of **440 billion** farmed shrimps being slaughtered for human consumption every year

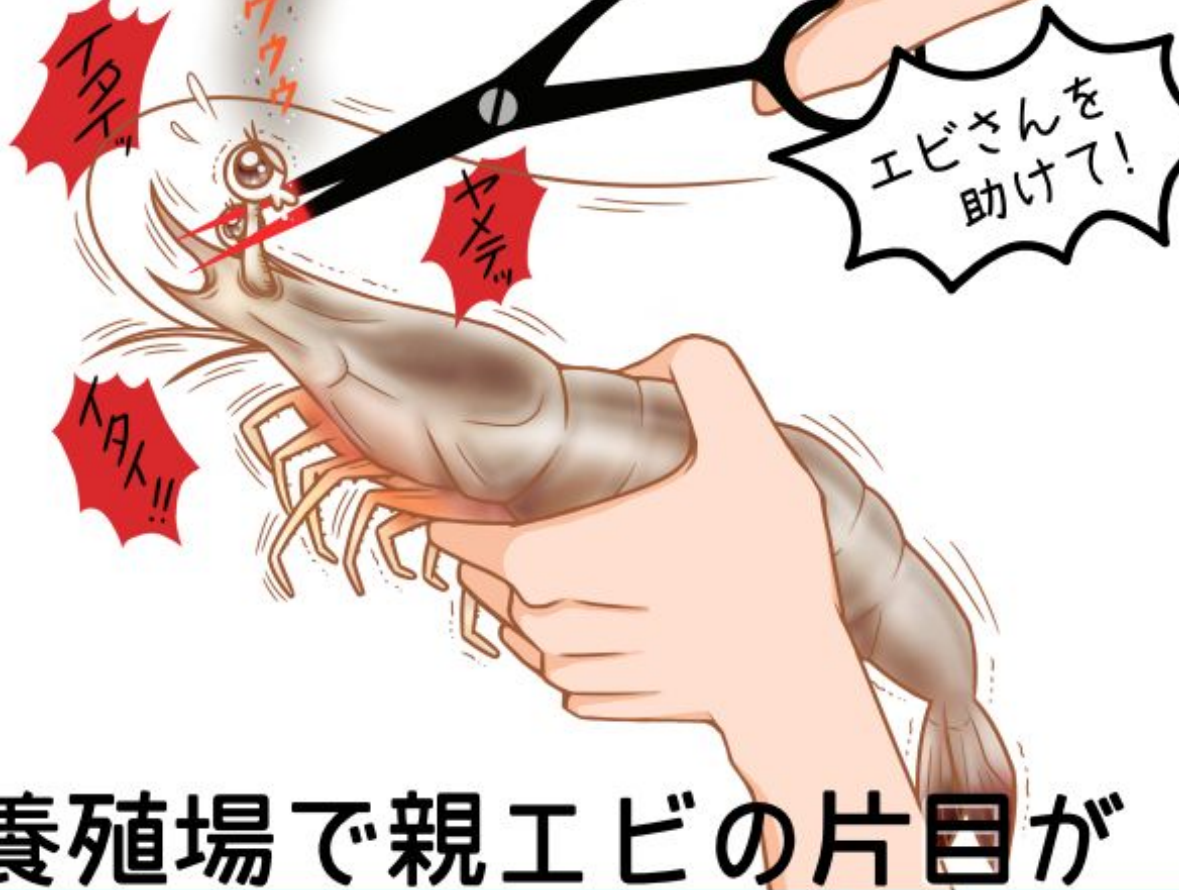
When we include wild-caught shrimp, around **26 trillion shrimps** are slaughtered for human consumption annually





# Neglectedness

- Crustacean Compassion (UK)
- Compassion in World Farming (INT)
- Aquatic Life Institute (INT)
- Some campaigns
  - Animal Rights Centre (JPN)  
← #ShrimpsMatter
  - Animals Australia  
Stop cutting eyes off live prawns
  - Tambuyog Development Centre (PHL)  
Shrimp Welfare Project



## 養殖場で親エビの片目が 切除されるって知ってる？

繁殖用の親エビは、不自然な養殖場でも産卵するように目を切除される



もっと詳しい情報と  
動物の犠牲がないレシピ  
を見てみよう!



<http://arcj.org/shrimp1>

# Tractability

## Producers / Retailers

- CP Foods
  - Strict animal welfare standards on livestock and aquaculture value chains

## Shrimp Industry

- The Shrimp Blog →
  - A wake-up call to the Shrimp Industry
- Global Seafood Alliance
  - The right thing to do
- Global Shrimp Forum 2023
  - Session on Animal Welfare

## THE SHRIMP BLOG



## A WAKE-UP CALL TO THE SHRIMP INDUSTRY

07 Nov 2022

Whether you like it or not, consumer awareness surrounding sustainability as well as social and animal welfare issues in food supply chains is rising. Many of the sustainability issues are covered by third party certification programs such as Best



# Shrimp Welfare Project's Activities & Achievements



# India

- **Sustainable Shrimp Farmers of India (SSFI)**
  - Knowledge sharing network for farmers
  - Water quality checks, farm visits by technicians, online consultations for farmers
  - Directly helped 120,000 shrimps. Indirectly helped 900,000 shrimps through online consultations.
- **Pilot Study**
  - **Lower Stocking Densities** = lower risk, lower investment, stabilised profits





# Vietnam

- Outreach
  - Vietnam Shrimp Farmers Magazine
  - Conferences and seminars
- **Research:** Collaboration with Tra Vinh University (funded by UoS/OpenPhil)
- **Corporate Engagement:** MoU with Sofina (UK) and Taika (Sofina's producer in Vietnam): SWP to provide Taika with electrical stunner for humane slaughter (**4,000 metric tonnes** of L. Vannamei per year ~ **270 million shrimps** per year)



# Coordination



- Member of **Asia for Animals Coalition** and **Vietnam Farm Animal Coalition**
- Member of **Eurogroup for Animals**
  - **Aquatic Working Group**
  - Collaborating with and learning from other organisations, working on **improving the welfare of aquatic animals influenced by the EU**
  - Aiming to ultimately incorporate shrimp welfare standards into **EU legislation**



# Research

## Primary

- **Electrical Stunning** study, with University of Stirling
- **Low Stocking Density** study, with TNJFU university in India
- **Consumer Research** (400 surveyed)
  - *"They are sentient beings and deserve not to suffer"* - 37% to 66.5%
- Addressing aquatic animal welfare gap in Vietnamese education system

## Secondary

- Shrimp Welfare Report
- Shrimp Supply / Demand
- Farmer Incentives



## Shrimp Welfare Report

Factors Affecting Shrimp Welfare in Aquaculture



# Corporate Outreach

- Over 1 billion shrimp affected per annum
- Commitments from medium to large producers:
  - Agreement to us **electrical stunning**
- Facilitating **commitments by retailers** to improve shrimp welfare
- **Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) Welfare Standards:** Shrimp Technical Working Group



# Shrimp Welfare Project's Challenges





# Some challenges:

- Unsupportive legal frameworks
- Probability of enforcement
- Limited consumer awareness
- Varying production systems (intensiveness) and country
- Intensification
- Hard to intervene in major production countries that have few links to welfare-favourable import markets





# How you can get involved



[ShrimpWelfareProject.org/work-with-us](https://ShrimpWelfareProject.org/work-with-us)

[ShrimpWelfareProject.org/newsletter](https://ShrimpWelfareProject.org/newsletter)

[ShrimpWelfareProject.org/donate](https://ShrimpWelfareProject.org/donate)



## SWP scoping reports

Vietnam Scoping Report

India Scoping Report

## 80k After Hours Podcast

Andrés Jiménez Zorrilla on the  
Shrimp Welfare Project

## SWP Website Articles

Are Shrimps Sentient?

The Shrimp Supply Chain

Shrimp Welfare and Sustainability

## WeAnimalsMedia.org

stock.WeAnimalsMedia.org

Search "Shrimp"

## Shrimp Welfare Report

Or "What matters to shrimps? Factors  
affecting shrimp welfare in aquaculture"  
on the EA Forum

## Rethink Priorities

Shrimp: The animals most commonly used and killed for  
food production

Moral Weights Project (in particular, the Welfare Range  
Table and Welfare Range Estimates)

Invertebrate Sentience sequence (2019)

## The LSE sentience report

The independent report by the London School of  
Economics - "Review of the Evidence of Sentience in  
Cephalopod Molluscs and Decapod Crustaceans".



[www.shrimpwelfareproject.org](http://www.shrimpwelfareproject.org)

Supported by:



Andrés Jiménez Zorrilla - CEO  
[andres@shrimpwelfareproject.org](mailto:andres@shrimpwelfareproject.org)