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Forced labor fallout: Human rights groups urge Canada to sanction seven Chinese seafood companies

The group has asked the government to add the entities to a special sanctions list.

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By [Rachel Sapin](#) 

On Thursday, the Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project (URAP) and Human Rights Action Group formally submitted a request to the Canadian government, asking it to impose sanctions on seven Chinese companies connected to Canadian importers that the groups say use Uyghur forced labor in China to produce seafood.

The groups are asking for Yantai Sanko Fisheries, Yantai Longwin Food, The Chishan Group, Shandong Meijia Group, Qingdao Tianyuan Aquatic Products, The Rongesense Group and the Xinjiang Zhongtai Zhihui Modern Service Co. Ltd., to be sanctioned for "participation in gross and systematic human rights violations against Uyghurs in China."

The activists made the request based on an investigation from the nonprofit Outlaw Ocean Project published earlier this year in *The New Yorker* magazine, which revealed evidence of forced labor of Uyghurs workers transferred from Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to seafood processing factories in the Shandong province of China that have supplied US companies as well as the US government.

In October, leading Canada-based seafood supplier High Liner Foods cut ties with Yantai Sanko Fisheries, citing the investigation.

The investigation has US and European seafood buyers and retailers re-examining their supply chains. The companies investigated include 26 Chinese processors, 98 importers and 241 grocery stores, with retail powerhouses such as Walmart and Costco implicated.

The groups asked the government to include the entities in a sanctions list under the Special Economic Measures (People's Republic of China) Regulations.

Outlaw Ocean also recently released [what it said is extensive visual evidence](#) of forced labor being tied to China-based Chishan Group and its associated ships and plants. The company processes 30 percent of all Chinese squid and 17 percent of squid exported to the United States, according to Outlaw Ocean.

Several brands, including Wee!, PAFCO, and Lund's Fisheries, have already cut ties to these plants following the investigation, Outlaw Ocean said.

In October lawmakers with the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, sent a letter to the Department of Homeland Security asking for the agency to issue Withhold Release Orders (WROs) for all seafood processing facilities in Shandong and Liaoning province. (Copyright)

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