

MAY 3, 2024

North Korea reportedly working to minimize consequences of Outlaw Ocean exposé on labor

 **Chris Chase** published in [Supply & Trade](#)



North Korea is reportedly trying to minimize the effects of an Outlaw Ocean exposé that alleged North Korean laborers are being sent to work in Chinese seafood-processing plants | Photo courtesy of the Outlaw Ocean Project

The government of North Korea is reportedly working on minimizing the economic impact of an Outlaw Ocean exposé that [revealed the alleged presence of North Korean laborers](#) in China’s seafood supply chain.

[Daily NK reports](#) that North Korean authorities are making plans to work with Chinese processors named in the Outlaw Ocean’s investigations to respond to the allegations and their consequences.

The Outlaw Ocean report named multiple Chinese processing companies as using North Korean labor: Dalian Haiqing Food, Dandong Galicia Seafood, Dandong Hailong Foodstuff, Dandong Omeca Food, Dandong Taifeng Foodstuff, Dandong Taihua Foodstuff, Dandong Yuanyi Refined Seafoods, Donggang Haimeng Foodstuff, Donggang Jinhui Foodstuff, and Donggang Luyuan Food. Most of the companies are located in Dandong, a region [which borders North Korea](#) and is connected to the country by the “Sino-Korean Friendship Bridge” – one of the few land links to North Korea.

In response to the report, multiple U.S. companies [suspended relationships with the companies named](#), costing those companies valuable contracts.

According to Daily NK, anonymous sources located in North Korea said the government is cooperating with Chinese companies to respond to the economic impact of the withdrawal and that the companies plan to focus on bolstering quality control above international standards. The companies are also working to market themselves as complying with standards while holding discussions with U.S. companies, maintaining claims that they have done nothing wrong.

If all else fails, the companies may target China’s domestic market by retooling their production lines, Daily NK reported.


As Chinese processors work to reestablish their reputation with overseas companies, North Korea is emphasizing that it is “impossible” to withdraw its workers from China, Daily NK reports.

“Even in the past, whenever one pathway was blocked, North Korea would closely cooperate with China to find another source of income,” the North Korean source told Daily NK. “Now, the cabinet and other organizations are competing to find Chinese traders with whom they can engage in workforce export projects and draw up related plans.”

The Outlaw Ocean report also outlined the general dynamic between the North Korean government and Chinese companies, wherein the government sends laborers to China in state-sanctioned groups. In return, North Korea receives some of those workers pay as compensation, helping fund the government.

According to the source, the government is using the widespread sanctions on the use of North Korean labor by the U.N. as political leverage.

“That is to say, they tell the people that [the ban on sending workers overseas] is a plot by the imperialists who want to stop us from living well while trying to find ways to send workers overseas in close cooperation with China,” the source told Daily NK.



About the Author

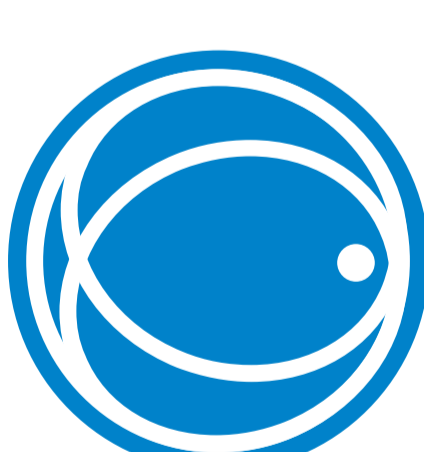
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