



NOAA AQUACULTURE PROGRAM



NOAA fosters sustainable aquaculture that will create employment and business opportunities in coastal communities; provide safe, sustainable seafood; and complement NOAA's comprehensive strategy for maintaining healthy and productive marine populations, species, and ecosystems and vibrant coastal communities.

For more information on the draft policy, go to our website:

<http://Aquaculture.noaa.gov>

Overview of NOAA's Draft Aquaculture Policy

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is seeking public comment on a draft policy that will enable the development of sustainable marine aquaculture within the context of NOAA's stewardship missions and broader social and economic goals.

The intent of the draft policy is to guide NOAA's actions and decisions on aquaculture and to provide a national approach for supporting sustainable commercial production, expanding restoration aquaculture, and researching and developing new technologies. The draft policy is part of NOAA's national approach to sustainable seafood, encompassing both aquaculture and capture fisheries.

The draft NOAA policy provides overarching guidance and context for domestic aquaculture to contribute to the U.S. seafood supply, promote job creation, support coastal communities and important commercial and recreational fisheries, and help restore habitat and endangered species. The draft policy features:

- A reaffirmation of the importance of aquaculture
- A 9-point overarching policy statement to guide agency actions
- A set of updated agency priorities to implement the policy through initiatives in four areas:
 - Science and research
 - Regulation
 - Innovation, partnerships and outreach and
 - International cooperation
- Detailed principles for aquaculture in federal waters.

The draft policy is intended to be broad enough to encompass the full range of issues that need to be addressed by NOAA, yet specific enough to provide guidance for agency decisions and actions on these issues. For example, once finalized, the policy will guide NOAA's activities relating to investments in scientific research, consultations with federal agencies on permits in state waters, stock and habitat restoration, requests for permitting of aquaculture facilities in federal waters, and international activities.

The draft policy responds to public input submitted to NOAA during 2010 by emphasizing the protection of wild species, acknowledging the importance of sound science, and taking other suggestions into account. It also affirms that sustainable U.S. marine aquaculture is vital to the U.S. seafood supply, the economic vitality of coastal communities, and the maintenance of working waterfronts.

The draft policy also reflects the priorities of NOAA's *Next Generation Strategic Plan* and of the Administration's *National Ocean Policy* and *National Goals for Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning*. To view the policy, go to: <http://aquaculture.noaa.gov>.