

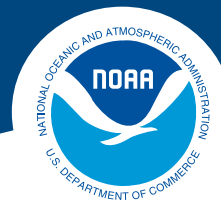
# 2007 Business Report



NOAA

## NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE

*Science, Service, Stewardship*





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“As a major growth engine, aquaculture can help preserve the historic ties that fishing communities have to the oceans and create a new and vibrant means for job creation.”

— U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez  
at NOAA's National Marine Aquaculture Summit,  
June 2007

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A national aquaculture summit, the introduction of the National Offshore Aquaculture Act of 2007, a new 10-Year Plan for Marine Aquaculture, and an alternative feeds initiative were among the highlights for NOAA Fisheries Service in 2007.

Convened by U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez in June 2007, the National Marine Aquaculture Summit attracted over 200 seafood and other industry leaders, investors, policy experts, government officials, researchers, and representatives of non-government organizations from across the nation. Energized by eight panel discussions over two days, participants identified opportunities and challenges for U.S. marine aquaculture and focused on what the federal government could do to help enable a more robust U.S. aquaculture industry. Topics included legislation,

research and development, economic incentives, investment programs, and scientific research.

At the heart of discussions was the pending National Offshore Aquaculture Act of 2007. Transmitted to Congress in March and subsequently introduced in the House (H.R. 2010) and the Senate (S. 1609), the bill received a hearing in the House and is awaiting further action by Congress. If enacted, the bill would give NOAA the authority to permit and regulate aquaculture in federal waters, (from state waters to 200 miles off U.S. coasts). The bill would also establish a research program for all of marine aquaculture.

On balance, the summit panelists concluded that the United States is poised and ready to expand ecologically responsible marine aquaculture. They also concluded that legislation

should provide for the development of an environmentally responsible and sustainable aquaculture industry, while also providing the framework for regulatory certainty that will aid development and growth of new business.

The summit also highlighted some of the other important economic drivers that prompted the Administration to develop and propose the marine aquaculture legislation, including a desire to increase domestic production to close the \$9 billion seafood trade deficit and to give American seafood farmers and investors greater opportunity to participate in the \$70 billion global aquaculture industry. Domestic aquaculture accounts for only about 1.5 percent of global aquaculture production. Experts agree that with seafood consumption continuing to rise in the United States and without legislative action to spur domestic aquaculture, the country will see a major shortfall in seafood supply in the next 25 years.

In October, NOAA Fisheries Service finalized and adopted the 10-Year Plan for Marine Aquaculture as an agency-wide policy document. The plan is intended to guide the agency as it works toward establishing marine aquaculture as an integral part of the U.S. seafood industry and as a viable technology for replenishing important commercial and recreational fisheries. The plan provides specific goals for NOAA Fisheries Service's Aquaculture Program and an assessment of the challenges the agency will face in its effort to reach its goals.



The goals in the 10-Year Plan are:

- A comprehensive regulatory program for environmentally sustainable marine aquaculture;
- Development of commercial marine aquaculture and replenishment of wild stocks;
- Public understanding of marine aquaculture; and
- Increased collaboration and cooperation with international partners.

The plan was prepared by NOAA Fisheries Service at the request of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, which advises the Secretary of Commerce on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department.

In November, NOAA Fisheries Service, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, initiated a long-term effort focused on accelerating the development of alternative feeds for aquaculture. The purpose of the initiative will be to identify alternative dietary ingredients

for aquaculture that will reduce the amount of fishmeal and fish oil contained in aquaculture feeds while maintaining the important human health benefits of farmed seafood.

The program also played an integral part in the completion of the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan which has been submitted for administrative review by federal agencies involved in aquaculture. This plan provides a framework and guidance for the federal agencies responsible for managing aquatic health in the United States.

The agency's primary aquaculture research program, the National Marine Aquaculture Initiative, attracted over 240 proposals seeking \$85 million in research funding in 2007. Grant recipients will be announced in 2008.

