



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE



**For Immediate Release
Office of the Director
January 8, 2007**

Statement from the Director

Subject: Woods Hole Marine Aquaculture Task Force Report

I would like to congratulate and thank the members of the Marine Aquaculture Task Force for their excellent work. This comprehensive report, and its timely recommendations, underscores the importance of a strong domestic aquaculture industry to our nation's future.

I am pleased that the Task Force highlights the critical need for a new, comprehensive regulatory framework for aquaculture in federal waters, which is one of NOAA's top priorities. NOAA agrees that the new framework should address environmental issues posed by aquaculture, guide and support the research necessary to resolve outstanding scientific issues, and continue to build on the excellent work already underway with industry to develop best management practices for aquaculture.

As reflected in the Task Force report, domestic aquaculture can be an effective option to reduce U.S. dependence on seafood imports, provide jobs for economically depressed coastal communities and reduce our nation's \$8 billion seafood trade deficit.

William T. Hogarth, Ph.D.

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