

Annotated Agenda

MAFAC Meeting – October 25-October 27, 2011

Washington, DC

1. Title of Discussion Marine Aquaculture Policy

2. Presenters: Dr. Michael Rubino, Director, Office of Aquaculture
Kris Sarri, Department of Commerce Policy Advisor

3. Objective/Purpose: [Informational] - Implementation of the NOAA/DOC Aquaculture Policies

- Status report on the new policies – How is NOAA setting priorities for implementing the new policies?
- Discuss next steps on implementing the National Shellfish Initiative, the Aquaculture Technology Transfer Initiative, and the Gulf of Mexico Aquaculture Fishery Management Plan
- Discussion on implementation of the DOC Aquaculture Policy
- Discuss upcoming work of the NMFS aquaculture regulatory working group

4. Background/Synopsis:

MAFAC had been regularly updated regarding the development of the NOAA and DOC Aquaculture Policies, and provided substantive comments in April 2011, during the public comment period on the draft policies.

On June 9, 2011, NOAA announced the release of NOAA's final marine Aquaculture Policy that supports sustainable marine aquaculture in the United States. The intent of the policy is to guide NOAA's actions and decisions on aquaculture and to provide a national approach for supporting sustainable aquaculture. The final policy includes many of the recommendations presented by MAFAC. To view the policy, go to: http://aquaculture.noaa.gov/us/aq_policies.html.

Priorities in the NOAA Policy include:

- Making timely management decisions based on the best scientific information available;
- Advancing sustainable aquaculture science;
- Ensuring aquaculture decisions protect wild species and healthy coastal and ocean ecosystems;
- Developing sustainable aquaculture in locations compatible with other uses;
- Working with partners domestically and internationally; and
- Promoting a level playing field for U.S. aquaculture businesses engaged in international trade.

At its May 2011 meeting, MAFAC provided additional recommendations to the Office of Aquaculture, three of which are currently being acted upon. NOAA has identified these three initiatives to start immediately:

- A 'National Shellfish Initiative' to increase shellfish farming and restoration;
- Implementing the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Plan for Aquaculture; and
- An agency 'Aquaculture Technology Transfer Initiative' to foster public-private partnerships on regional projects that showcase innovative sustainable practices, jump start private sector investments, and create employment opportunities in coastal communities.

As additional background information, see the summaries on [shellfish](#) and [tech-transfer](#) initiatives.

5. Options: N/A

6. Preferred Recommendation:

Record of Decision:

Decision, Next Step(s) and/or Action:

Assigned to:

Due Date: