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Government Accountability Office Report on Offshore Aquaculture

On May 9, 2008, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its report on offshore aquaculture titled, [Offshore Marine Aquaculture: Multiple Administrative and Environmental Issues Need to Be Addressed in Establishing a U.S. Regulatory Framework](#) (GAO-08-594). The report, which was developed at the request of the Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources, highlights program administration, permitting and site selection, environmental management, and research as the four key areas to consider in developing an effective regulatory framework for U.S. offshore aquaculture. In conducting its assessment, GAO administered a questionnaire to a wide variety of key aquaculture stakeholders; analyzed laws, regulations, and key studies; and visited states that regulate nearshore aquaculture industries. The GAO did not make any recommendations in its final report, however it emphasized the need to carefully consider a wide array of key issues as a regulatory framework for offshore aquaculture is developed. Many of the findings in the report were consistent with recommendations from the [2007 National Marine Aquaculture Summit](#) and the priorities identified in [NOAA's 10-Year Plan for Marine Aquaculture](#).

The full report, an overview, and related information is available for viewing or download via the links listed below.

[The GAO report on Offshore Aquaculture](#) (pdf, 1.2 mb)

[Brief Overview of the GAO Report on Offshore Aquaculture](#) (pdf, 198 kb)

[The Department of Commerce's Comments on the Statement of Facts](#) (pdf, 314 kb)

[Statement on the GAO report by the Director of NOAA Fisheries Service](#) (pdf, 33kb)

More information on [offshore aquaculture](#) and the [National Offshore Aquaculture Act of 2007](#) is available on the [NOAA Aquaculture Program website](#).

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