



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
MARINE FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

December 1, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

FROM: Terri Lei Beideman 
Chair, Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee Letter and
Recommendations on Aquaculture

This memo transmits a letter from NOAA's Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee's (MAFAC) to Secretary Ross that highlights the need to substantially increase domestic aquaculture production and support for the development of an effective national aquaculture initiative at NOAA.

MAFAC believes this Administration has a unique opportunity to contribute to a thriving U.S. seafood industry and healthy ocean ecosystems through its support of the national aquaculture initiative. This initiative will reduce our seafood trade deficit while advancing the blue economy, generating thousands of jobs, and preserving working waterfront communities, in a way that complements the economic contributions of wild-capture producers.

This letter was approved by the Committee at our meeting this week in Silver Spring, Maryland, and we respectfully request that it be submitted to Secretary Ross for his consideration.

Attachment





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December 1, 2017

The Honorable Wilbur Ross, Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

The Marine Fisheries Advisory Council (MAFAC) is charged with advising you on matters related to fisheries. We understand from NOAA leadership that you have indicated a strong interest in reducing our national deficit in seafood and growing jobs through increasing domestic aquaculture production by supporting a national aquaculture initiative. Your bold leadership in this effort is welcomed and appreciated by MAFAC.

As you know, the latest trade figures show that imported fisheries products contribute over \$14.6 billion to our national trade imbalance. Over 90% of the seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported, of which over half of this is farmed. The World Bank and others have projected that world population growth and improving standards of living could double the global demand for seafood by 2050.

The MAFAC strongly believes that these trends highlight the need to substantially increase domestic aquaculture production. This would reduce our seafood trade deficit while advancing the blue economy, generating thousands of jobs, and preserving working waterfront communities, in a way that complements the economic contributions of wild-capture producers.

The development of an effective national aquaculture initiative will be greatly enhanced if NOAA draws on the expertise and experience of state managers and commercial producers to help the agency develop priorities and actions that would have the maximum impact. We should ensure that this process should not derail permit applications that are currently in the pipeline.

There are significant opportunities to streamline existing regulations, increase interagency cooperation and coordination, and create a comprehensive national initiative designed to stimulate significant and rapid growth in the domestic aquaculture sector. Key to these efforts will be effective economic development programs designed to help farmers manage risk, investment in applied research, and cooperative extramural programs designed to increase the cooperation between the public and private sectors as is done in the terrestrial farming sector.

MAFAC stands ready to advise you on this effort.

Respectfully,

Terri Lei Beideman
Chair

