

**NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE ADVISORY COUNCIL**

11 April 2011

Ms. T. 'Aulani Wilhelm
Reserve Superintendent, Northwestern Hawaiian Islands
Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve
6600 Kalaniana'ole Highway, Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96825

Dear Ms. Wilhelm:

NWHI CRERAC Ocean Aquaculture Committee's draft recommendations for a national aquaculture policy for NOAA:

- Support well regulated and self sustainable aquaculture projects in the coastal zone and in state waters that focus on feeding local communities;
- Limit coastal-zone aquaculture operations to the cultivation of native species that have not been genetically modified;
- Promote and assist the development of Native American and Hawaiian aquaculture that respects and supports indigenous communities, culture, knowledge and values;
- Establish a priority for the protection of wild native fish, marine habitats, healthy ecosystems, and coastal and fishing-dependent communities;
- Include strong environmental, socio-economic, public health, and liability standards to regulate facility locations, permitting, monitoring and enforcement, including an environmental impact statement for every project;
- Prevent significant environmental harm from aquaculture operations and avoid adversely impacting existing ocean uses, including wild capture fisheries;
- Avoid interactions with marine predators, particularly threatened or endangered species;
- Avoid the harvest of wild fish populations to supply grow-out operations;
- Minimize and if possible eliminate the use of wild forage fish as feed by cultivating species that are omnivores or herbivores;
- Ensure open ocean aquaculture pays a fair return to the public for the use of public trust resources, and hold owners of facilities liable to the public for damages to the marine environment from their operations, either intentional or unintentional;
- Be subject to a full, meaningful, balanced, and open public participation process; and
- Coordinate with relevant national and state laws and integrate into regional ocean planning and management efforts.

Sincerely,



Timothy E. Johns
Northwestern Hawaiian Islands
Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve
Advisory Council Chair