Environmental Performance of Marine Net-Pen Aquaculture in the United States

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ABSTRACT: The United States has a small net-pen salmon industry dating back over 40 years and a nascent net-pen industry for other marine fish. The United States net-pen aquaculture sector has improved its resource efficiency in terms of the amount of fish meal and fish oil used in feeds and reduced its environmental impacts in terms of the mass loading and impact of nutrient discharge on the receiving ecosystem, the incidence and treatment of fish diseases, the use of antibiotics, and the number and impact of fish escapes, while increasing production. These changes can be attributed to a combination of advances in science and technology, rising cost of fish meal/ oil, improved management, and informed regulatory practices. Net-pen aquaculture has become an efficient food production system. Existing laws and regulations in the United States effectively address most of the potential adverse environmental effects of net-pen aquaculture.

Rust, Michael B. , Kevin H. Amos, April L. Bagwill, Walton W. Dickhoff, Lorenzo M. Juarez, Carol S. Price, James A. Morris, Jr., and Michael C. Rubino, 2014. Environmental Performance of Marine Net-Pen Aquaculture in the United States. Fisheries 39(11): 508-524.