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Diversifying aquaculture production 'critical' to tackle global food security and biodiversity risks, warns Planet Tracker

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

A \$55 billion investment in regenerative aquaculture is needed to address biodiversity risks and close the seafood supply gap: report

The aquaculture industry will fail to satisfy growing seafood demand on its current trajectory, leaving a supply gap as large as 50 million tons by 2050, according to a new report by Planet Tracker – a non-profit financial think tank producing analytics and reports to align capital markets with planetary boundaries.

The research shows that even in the most optimistic scenario of improving current aquaculture practices, a supply gap would still exist, a shortfall that not only threatens global food security but also poses significant risks to biodiversity.



New research reveals aquaculture industry will fail to meet consumer demands by 2050 and presents food security and biodiversity risks. Photo by [Gilberto Olimpio \(https://www.pexels.com/photo/fish-cage-above-the-sea-water-surface-7879363/\)](https://www.pexels.com/photo/fish-cage-above-the-sea-water-surface-7879363/).

“Unsustainable seafood production will not feed the world by 2050, but the good news is that an aquaculture industry that is resilient, productive and environmentally sustainable can be built,” said François Mosnier, head of the Oceans Program at Planet Tracker. “Planet Tracker found it will take at least (U.S.) \$55 billion in capital expenditure to finance this transition, which most aquaculture companies cannot afford. That’s why we’re calling on investors and lenders to assist with diversifying the aquaculture industry and closing the supply gap.”

Technological solutions, such as farming seafood offshore or on land or growing fish in labs, could contribute up to 5 million additional tons of seafood by 2050. But embracing regenerative aquaculture could produce an additional 45 million tons of seafood and meet growing demand, Planet Tracker finds. Regenerative aquaculture refers to the production of food from the sea such as many bivalves (e.g. oysters, mussels and clams) and seaweed species that provide benefits to the ecosystem – for instance water filtering or carbon sequestration.

A banner for the Responsible Seafood Summit 2023. On the left is a logo featuring a stylized eye with a fish inside, next to the text "Responsible Seafood SUMMIT". To the right, it says "SAINT JOHN NEW BRUNSWICK CANADA OCTOBER 2-5 2023". A red "REGISTER" button is in the center. The background is a dark teal map of the world with red airplane icons and a red maple leaf. The Global Seafood Alliance logo is in the top right corner.

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“A business-as-usual approach with concentrated fish monocultures leads to a variety of biodiversity risks, with impacts from nutrients pollution to native species displacement, resulting in financial losses to the industry,” wrote Planet Tracker in a [press release \(https://planet-tracker.org/aquaculture-industry-unable-to-meet-demand-by-2050-unless-it-becomes-regenerative/\)](https://planet-tracker.org/aquaculture-industry-unable-to-meet-demand-by-2050-unless-it-becomes-regenerative/). “The latest research finds an increasingly concentrated industry with the top ten seafood-producing countries accounting for 89 percent of the total – and over 75 percent of listed aquaculture companies farming salmon, shrimp or pangasius.”



‘We want change’: How a seafood database aims to influence seafood investment decisions

Planet Tracker’s seafood database evaluates seafood companies’ exposure to sustainability risks like overfishing and IUU fishing.



Global Seafood Alliance

To address this funding challenge, Planet Tracker calls on investors and lenders to support the diversification of the aquaculture industry and close the looming supply gap. The report outlines several key recommendations, including increased awareness of the risks associated with the industry’s current trajectory, demands for better disclosure and transparency from companies and support for mitigation strategies (such as species diversification and geographic distribution). Additionally, the report encourages investments in technology that enables environmentally sound alternatives like offshore aquaculture and recirculating aquaculture systems (RAS).

The call to action also includes support for regenerative aquaculture investments, with suggestions such as offering cheaper capital for sustainable expansion and exploring the use of sustainability-linked bonds. By providing the necessary financial backing for these transformative efforts, investors and lenders can play a pivotal role in driving the necessary changes in the aquaculture industry.

[Read the full report here \(https://planet-tracker.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Aquafailure-VF.pdf\)](https://planet-tracker.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Aquafailure-VF.pdf).

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Author



RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD ADVOCATE

editor@globalseafood.org (<mailto:editor@globalseafood.org>)

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