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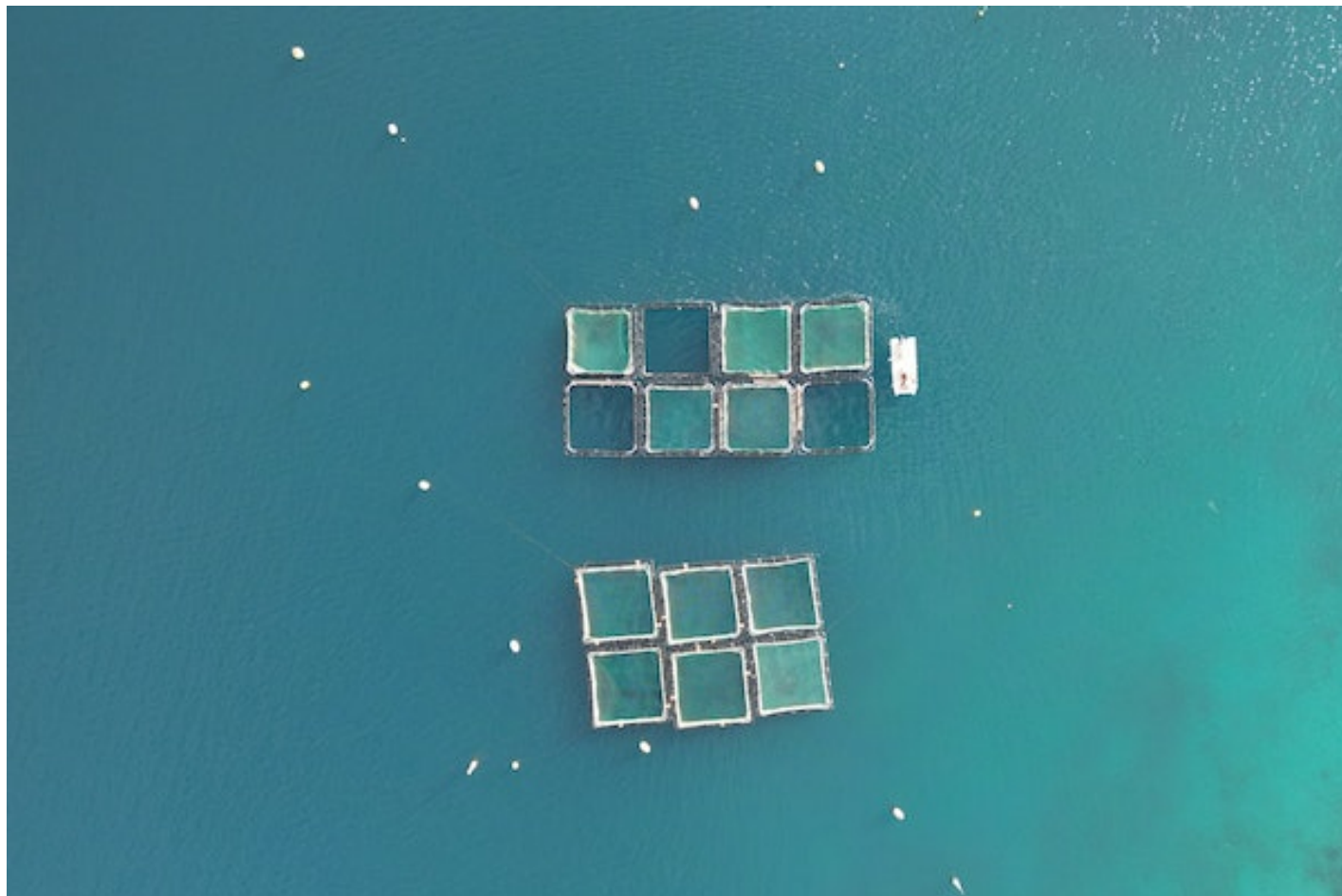
 Intelligence

## Study: Communicating positives about aquaculture can convert 'naysayers' into supporters

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

**Messaging about the possible positive impact of aquaculture on the environment persuaded survey respondents the most**



Researchers discover that messaging about the potential positive impact of aquaculture on the environment can persuade consumers. Photo by [DeLuca G](https://www.pexels.com/photo/an-aerial-shot-of-an-aquaculture-farm-14993421/) (<https://www.pexels.com/photo/an-aerial-shot-of-an-aquaculture-farm-14993421/>).

A new study reveals how perceptions of seafood and seaweed farming can change in respondents and who they saw as the most trusted sources to deliver those messages.

The study, which was published by the Aquarium of the Pacific and collaborators from the School for the Environment at the University of Massachusetts Boston, the University of Southern California Sea Grant Program and the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences at Santa Clara University, focused on people residing in the western and northeastern coastal states of the United States – specifically, stakeholders who would need to live with an expanded marine aquaculture industry.

“Our results suggest that sustainability themes, delivered by trusted sources, can convert naysayers regarding aquaculture into supporters,” said Dr. Peter Kareiva, who is an environmental scientist, an author on this study and Aquarium of the Pacific president.

Economic benefits and job creation were not the benefits that survey respondents found most persuasive. What changed minds was messages emphasizing the environmental benefits of seafood and seaweed farming. These benefits include having a stable and well-managed eco-friendly alternative to land-based foods and providing a sustainable alternative to wild fisheries. Altogether, this work suggests that communicating the potential environmental benefits of seafood farming expansion has the potential to shift public perceptions.



(<https://events.globalseafood.org/responsible-seafood-summit>).

Data also revealed that seafood farming received more favorable responses from surveyed individuals after watching [Ocean to Table](https://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aquariumofpacific.org%2Fseafoodfuture%2Focean_to_table%2F&sheet=53364004&newsitemid=2023032000513_US&anchor=Ocean+to+Table&index=1&md5=858e52557eb67f84a6e39addbd8c416a) ([https://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aquariumofpacific.org%2Fseafoodfuture%2Focean\\_to\\_table%2F&sheet=53364004&newsitemid=2023032000513\\_US&anchor=Ocean+to+Table&index=1&md5=858e52557eb67f84a6e39addbd8c416a](https://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.aquariumofpacific.org%2Fseafoodfuture%2Focean_to_table%2F&sheet=53364004&newsitemid=2023032000513_US&anchor=Ocean+to+Table&index=1&md5=858e52557eb67f84a6e39addbd8c416a)), a video series produced by the Aquarium of Pacific. This series highlights responsible U.S. marine aquaculture or ocean farming. More than half of the respondents who began with a negative opinion of seafood farming shifted to a favorable opinion after watching one of these videos.

This study also asked respondents about what sources they most trusted when it came to aquaculture. Scientists, seafood farmers and aquariums/museum ranked highest.

**Read the full study here** (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jwas.12956>).

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