

# **National Aquaculture Association Policy on Non-Indigenous Aquatic Species**

## Background

Non-indigenous species are those that are present outside of their normal, native range. Introduced species are those non-indigenous species that have become established outside of their native range. Invasive species are non-indigenous species which once introduced have caused ecological and/or economic harm.

Aquaculture in the United States often relies on the production of non-indigenous species, those from foreign waters, and those cultured outside of their native ranges within this country. The success of aquaculture depends upon the continued, legal movement of non-indigenous species into, out of, and throughout our nation.

While it is a very small minority of non-indigenous species which have become introduced, and an even smaller percentage which have become invasive, the aquaculture community is aware of the need for vigilance and caution when dealing with non-indigenous species.

## Policy

The NAA:

1. Strongly supports the reasonable and unencumbered movement of beneficial aquatic species. Such movement is essential to the sustainability and growth of U.S. aquaculture industries.
2. Recognizes that the introduction of some aquatic organisms may have undesirable or damaging effects, in some instances, even on established aquaculture industries themselves.
3. Supports the design and implementation of any reasonable plan or effort to minimize the risk of introduction or dissemination of clearly undesirable aquatic species.
4. Demands that any measure or determination of desirability or beneficial value of an aquatic species be based on findings of fact and objective science and that any decisions be based on unbiased assessment of the real and proven risks relative to the potential value and benefits.
5. Demands that laws, regulations, or policies designed and implemented to prevent the introduction or dissemination of unknown and undesirable non-indigenous aquatic species neither supplant current laws and regulations which provide for the free and essential movement of aquaculture products nor be allowed to be used for the covert purpose of restricting or eliminating commercial aquaculture.

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6. Is opposed to any extension of non-indigenous species regulations that attempt to include pathogenic parasites, bacteria or viruses of aquatic animals. Laws, regulations and policies are already established and working on a regional, state, national and international level to address pathogens.