

Department of Marine Ecosystems and Society Seminar Series

Aquaculture by Design: The Nature Conservancy's Global Aquaculture Program

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Abstract: The Nature Conservancy has expanded its organizational strategy from a focus on environmental protection to one that also focuses on addressing the biggest challenges facing nature and people. As the fastest growing form of food production with vast potential to expand, aquaculture has emerged as a key strategy contributing to The Nature Conservancy's objective to "Provide Food Sustainably" for future generations. We view aquaculture as part of the solution to planetary health and human wellbeing, rather than solely part of the problem. As such, our program is focused on ensuring the trajectory of the global aquaculture grows to meet these objectives.

This presentation will overview the key initiatives undertaken by the Nature Conservancy and its partners to: 1) Develop ecologically "restorative" aquaculture of bivalves and seaweeds 2) and advancing smart growth of finfish aquaculture through improve governance and impact investment We will provide evidence and perspectives from our ongoing aquaculture field projects in seven countries including Indonesia, Palau, and Belize on how the Nature Conservancy is designing aquaculture projects to contribute to social-economic and environmental outcomes.

Bio: Robert Jones is the Global Lead for The Nature Conservancy's Aquaculture Program. The program consists of active projects in seven countries designed to ensure aquaculture operates in harmony with nature and provides benefits to people. Prior to joining The Nature Conservancy in February 2016, Robert served as the Program Coordinator for the NOAA Fisheries Office of Aquaculture. Previously, Robert served as Knauss Fellow with the U.S. Department of State where he served as point of contact on aquaculture and represented the United States at international fisheries negotiations in the North Pacific Ocean. Earlier, Robert served in diverse roles for NOAA Fisheries, including as an economic analyst for the Gulf Shrimp Fishery and as a Commercial Fisheries Observer in the Mid-Atlantic. He holds a M.S. in Marine Affairs and Policy from the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science with a concentration in marine aquaculture, focusing on new species and offshore aquaculture. He holds a B.A. from Boston College in International Studies. Robert's work with the Conservancy has been featured by organizations including Harvard Business School and the World Economic Forum. He grew up fishing with his family on the New Jersey shore.