

APPENDIX D:

1980 Designation of Responsibilities in Aquaculture Among Federal Agencies

INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT AMONG DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Subject: Designation of Areas of Responsibility in Aquaculture

I. Background

Aquaculture--the propagation and rearing of aquatic species in controlled or selected environments--has important international and domestic ramifications. Internationally, aquaculture represents an important source of food and an industry particularly suited to developing countries. Domestically, aquaculture represents: an economically sound approach to meeting the increasing demand of the American people for seafood; a source of industrial materials, pharmaceuticals, and energy; a biological approach to control of pollution and degradation of human and industrial wastes; and a means of rehabilitation and enhancement of U.S. fish and shellfish resources.

Although aquaculture currently contributes approximately 10 percent of seafood production worldwide, less than 3 percent of current U.S. seafood production results from aquaculture. Thus, domestic aquaculture production has the potential for significant growth. The primary responsibility for attaining this potential rests with the private sector. However, it is the policy of the federal government to undertake those research, development, transfer, and assistance programs and activities necessary and appropriate to stimulate the development of an active and viable U.S. aquaculture industry.

A number of federal agencies have responsibilities and programs related to aquaculture. These range from regulatory responsibilities for chemical agents and environmental protection, to programs of financial assistance, research and development, technical assistance, advisory and information services, and education and training. Coordination of these activities is the province of the Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture, established by the Committee on Food and Renewable Resources and the Committee on Atmosphere and Oceans of the Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology (FCCSET).

The primary responsibilities, resources, and programs in aquaculture reside in three Departments: Agriculture, Commerce, and Interior. If the federal government's efforts to stimulate and facilitate the development of aquaculture in this country are to succeed, it is essential that the activities of these three agencies be mutually reinforcing. It is for this reason that these Departments have entered into this agreement.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this Interagency Agreement is to increase the effectiveness and productivity of Federal aquaculture efforts by defining the primary areas of responsibility for the three principal Federal

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Departments supporting and conducting aquaculture research , development, transfer, and assistance -- the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and Interior. The Agreement describes the central focus of the aquaculture activities of each Department, establishes a mechanism for reaching consensus on potential areas of overlapping interest, and defines the means through which the agencies will coordinate their efforts.

III. Areas of Responsibility

The Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and Interior agree that the following paragraphs describe the primary focus of responsibility for aquaculture in each Department.

Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture is responsible for support of and direct conduct of research, development, extension, and other support activities in aquaculture oriented toward the conservation and utilization of privately-owned or -leased land and water for commercial, recreation, and home-use aquaculture. This work will be predominantly oriented toward freshwater aquaculture. The Department coordinates its work on anadromous species with the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Interior.

Department of Commerce

The Department of Commerce, through the National Marine Fisheries Service and Office of Sea Grant, is responsible for aquaculture research and development on marine, estuarine, and anadromous species. Work on anadromous species is coordinated with the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture (Forest Service). The Office of Sea Grant conducts education, training, and advisory services in aquaculture; its advisory services programs are carried out in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture's Extension Service.

Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior, through the Fish and Wildlife Service, is responsible for technical research and development of freshwater finfish for recreational and commercial purposes. The Department coordinates its research and development on anadromous species with the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. Its activities are conducted in Fish and Wildlife Service laboratories engaged in research on nutrition, disease, genetics, drug registration, and environmental effects.

IV. Resolution of Problem Areas

The general division of responsibility outlined above will be maintained by the three Departments. However, it is understood that some crossing of these lines of division may occur when necessary to advance national objectives in aquaculture. In such instances, this Agreement will be amended by a simple Memorandum of Understanding initiated by the Department requesting the "waiver," and signed by all three Departments.

V. Inter-Agency Coordination

It is agreed that the FCCSET Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture is the principal mechanism for achieving coordinated planning, implementation, and evaluation of Federal aquaculture programs among the three Departments as well as among all the Federal agencies active in aquaculture.

To maximize coordination of aquaculture activities both within and among the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, and Interior, each Department has established the position of Aquaculture Coordinator. In addition to performing those duties required to further the programmatic objectives of the Department he or she serves, the Aquaculture Coordinator is the principal representative to the Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture and the focal point of communication among the three Departments.

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