

Greetings!

This month the FishWise newsletter features Mariah's recent trip to Sierra Leone in West Africa, highlights our participation in the 2013 Conservation Alliance Meeting in San Diego, presents an update on GE salmon and offers a reminder regarding the 2013 International Boston Seafood Show.

Enjoy!

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Feature Article: Mariah's Trip to West Africa



Mariah Boyle, FishWise Project Director, spent the first three weeks of the year in Sierra Leone, West Africa. In Sierra Leone Mariah is helping fishermen determine which fish stocks are most vulnerable and create management measures to help protect those most important to local fishermen. Sierra Leone has decided to use Marine Protected Areas, enforced through co-management by local communities, to regulate and preserve their fisheries.

Illegal fishing by foreign-flagged vessels has been a serious problem off the coast of Sierra Leone, particularly off Sherbro Island where the continental shelf is particularly good for bottom trawling. The [Environmental Justice Foundation](#) has been working with communities in the region to conduct surveillance for illegal vessels. When a vessel is spotted the EJF team is mobilized and tracks down the vessel, taking photographs and GPS coordinates as evidence, which is then forwarded to the relevant authorities. Between January 2010 and July 2012, EJF received 252 reports of illegal fishing by industrial vessels. This program has proved to be a great success, as no trawlers have been spotted since February 2012 in the region.

2013 Conservation Alliance Annual Meeting

CONSERVATION ALLIANCE FOR SEAFOOD SOLUTIONS

The [Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions](#) held its annual meeting in San Diego, CA from January 30th - February 1st. The 16 member organizations and several collaborating organizations met to share successes and update each other on work efforts from the past year. As always, it was a great opportunity re-connect with each other and collectively address specific issues and discuss ways to overcome common challenges in the sustainable seafood movement.

The Conservation Alliance was formed in 2008 and is composed of sixteen leading conservation organizations from the United States and Canada to pursue a [Common Vision for Environmentally Sustainable Seafood](#) and work together as the Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions. The ultimate goal is to preserve the health of ocean and freshwater ecosystems and ensure a long-term seafood supply.

The Conservation Alliance brings conservation expertise to seafood buyers and suppliers so businesses and the ocean and freshwater resources they depend on can flourish. The organizations in the Conservation Alliance also invest time and effort to address some of the biggest barriers to seafood sustainability. This includes:

- Improving the credibility and conservation benefits of certification of wild fisheries and aquaculture.
- Increasing the supply of sustainable seafood by supporting the efforts of fisheries to move toward sustainability.
- Finding ways to provide clearer guidance to companies as they implement their sustainable seafood policies.

FishWise looks forward to making progress on all of the initiatives that are currently underway and to further explore opportunities for coordination and collective action.

GE Salmon Update



The debate over genetically engineered (GE) salmon continues to rage as the FDA inches forward towards approving the highly controversial fish for sale within U.S. markets. This February, after receiving more than 30,000 responses from the public, the FDA announced it would be extending the comment period for its draft environmental assessment of AquaBounty's GE salmon. The FDA's preliminary findings, released this past December, determined that [AquaBounty GE salmon](#) "would not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment in the United States."

At the core of this debate is the Atlantic Salmon. Using recombinant DNA technology, AquaBounty has incorporated the growth hormone from a chinook salmon and an antifreeze protein from another marine fish species, the ocean pout, to engineer a line of Atlantic salmon with incredibly fast growth rates. Broodstock for the GE salmon would be produced at AquaBounty's east coast facility in Canada, while the actual salmon for market would be grown out in land-based tanks in Panama. Potential environmental risks do exist but the production and grow-out of these fish was not assessed by the FDA, since the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 does not have authority outside of the U.S.

The immediate environmental concerns for GE salmon include the potential for these fish to escape and become established in wild ecosystems. AquaBounty maintains they have addressed this risk as the fish for grow-out are engineered to be sterile. However, in order to produce broodstock, the company must retain at least some GE salmon capable of reproducing. The other major concern with GE salmon is associated with consumer rights and GMO labeling. Under existing U.S. labeling laws, U.S. consumers would not be able to delineate genetically engineered salmon from traditional farmed salmon on supermarket shelves.

Many environmental groups, including Fishwise, and a host of commercial fisherman associations are [publically on record](#) for opposing GE salmon. The FDA has extended the public comment period for AquaBounty GE salmon until April 26, 2013. FishWise will continue to track this issue and inform its partners of the latest developments.

FishWise at 2013 International Boston Seafood Show



FishWise will be sending six staff next month to attend the premier annual seafood trade show in North America, the [International Boston Seafood Show](#). Taking place on March 10th-12th, Tobias, Mariah, Meghan, William, Elsie and Ashley will all be in attendance to ensure strong FishWise representation for all of our partners.

This year's seafood show features approximately 1,000 exhibiting companies from over 40 countries. Exhibitors at the show supply nearly every type of fish, seafood, and seafood-related product or service imaginable. A packed schedule will be maintained for all involved, with NGO updates, countless supplier meetings, educational sessions and "floor walks" spread over all three day event.

If you have any questions about specific products you would like to incorporate into your offerings, please get in touch with us [here](#), as it's likely we will be meeting with someone at the show who could help out!

In Case You Missed It...

Just this past week, biologists conducting fish surveys in Lake Tahoe on the California -

Nevada border were surprised to find that a new invasive species had made its way into the crystal-clear lake, large goldfish!



Huge Goldfish Breeding In Lake Tahoe

If you have any questions, comments, or would like to contribute to the FishWise Newsletter please don't hesitate to contact me!

Sincerely,

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