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SEATTLE ENVIRONMENT NEWS

**Fish farming has a long row to hoe, scientists say**

By Robert McClure on January 25, 2006 at 12:28 PM

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Environmentalists watchdogging the aquaculture industry — fish farming, in common parlance — today unveiled a statement by 31 scientists urging the industry to clean up its act environmentally.

“As a rapidly growing industry, it is important that sustainable and healthful fish farming practices be adopted early before aquaculture operations expand to the point where they result in severe damage to the marine environment,” the statement concluded. “As scientists, we stand ready to help the aquaculture industry understand the impacts of their operations on the marine ecology and human health, adopt more sustainable fish farming techniques, and fulfill the promise of relieving rather than deepening the debilitating human impacts on the marine ecosystem.” The whole statement is [here](#).

It was signed by several noted scientists including Daniel Pauly of the University of British Columbia, who points out humans are eating further and further down the marine food chain. Jellyfish sandwich, any one? Other signers include Si Simenstad of the University of Washington, who has worked on restoration of Puget Sound through the [Nearshore Project](#); and [Ransom Myers](#) of Canada’s Dalhousie University, co-author of a number of papers showing how [diversity of large fish targeted in world fisheries has seriously declined in the last half century](#).

The backdrop is a meeting later today in Bellevue of Costco’s shareholders, where aquaculture reformers are running a shareholder resolution aimed at getting the board of directors’ attention. The watchdog groups say they’ve tried to talk with Costco’s Issaquah-based management but have been rebuffed.

Aquaculture backers say that the critics' attack is overblown — and [uncritically accepted by the news media](#).

Their take on the basic story is this:

A REVOLUTION is underway off the world's coasts. In that revolution, the old “capture fishery” – hardy men in boats battling the elements and each other for an unpredictable share of the wild fish swimming by – is waning. In its place is emerging the technology and the expertise to farm the seas in a stable, predictable way. Not agriculture, the cultivation of the land, but aquaculture, the cultivation of the waters.

Link: <https://blog.seattlepi.com/environment/2006/01/25/fish-farming-has-a-long-row-to-hoe-scientists-say/>