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## **Groups March in Washington, DC During Ocean Week To Oppose Offshore Fish Farms**

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**Washington, DC:** Today, hundreds of people join together in a March for the Oceans in Washington, DC. Preventing development of industrial ocean fish farms was a prominent issue for participants, wearing pins and carrying signs with the hashtag “#dontcageouroceans”.

Alfredo Quarto of the Mangrove Action Project said, "MAP has advocated for over two decades against open water industrial fish feedlots globally. We strongly urge Congress not to consider these kinds of wasteful and unsustainable systems in the U.S."

Worldwide, ocean finfish aquaculture has caused a wide range of problems, including fish escapes, deaths of sharks, seals and other marine life, and changes in ocean ecosystems.

Marianne Cufone of the Recirculating Farms Coalition said, “Industrial marine finfish farming is an outdated and unnecessary practice. It poses serious risks to our oceans and public health.” Over 100 other organizations agree, and [signed a letter](#) to members of Congress, calling on legislators to protect oceans from development of marine finfish aquaculture off U.S. shores.

Over the past 15 years, Congress proposed draft laws that would permit industrial finfish farming around the U.S. However, overwhelming public opposition stopped enactment of such sweeping federal laws to date. Now, legislators are developing a new initiative to bring industrial aquaculture into U.S. waters. Opponents are collectively rising to protect fishing communities, public health and our oceans.

“Industrial aquaculture is not a solution to any perceived concerns about seafood; it will only lead to future problems. Every fishing community we visited so far on the [America the Bountiful Tour](#) raised concerns about impacts of industrial aquaculture on the marine ecosystem and coastal economies,” said Niaz Dorry, the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance’s coordinating director, who is traveling to rural fishing communities around the country. “A growing world population should not be used to justify industrial aquaculture. Our focus needs to be on changing our food system to one that supports what is available in our marine ecosystem.”

Organizations continue to join the new campaign to stop industrial finfish farming. Many are planning activities to reach out to others about concerns.

“The Gulf of Mexico is a primary target for industrial aquaculture. Our participation in the march today is one of the first of many events to help raise awareness and prevent this industry from taking over our oceans,” said Raleigh Hoke, Campaign Director for the Gulf Restoration Network.

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