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## A wider view: It's blue food's time

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By Laura Rose

### Experts agree that aquatic proteins deserve a bigger share of the plate



Blue food is defined as all edible aquatic organisms, including fish, shellfish and algae from marine and freshwater production systems (aquaculture and fisheries). Shutterstock image.

The "blue economy," or the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, reminds us that we thrive – or we suffer – together. **Every second breath** ([https://schmidtocean.org/cruise-log-post/every-other-breath/#:~:text=Take%20a%20Breath%20and%20Thank%20Plankton&text=Diatoms%20are%20a%20kind%20of,in%20all%20bodies%20of%20water.&text=Half we take comes from the ocean, and all our waters sustain us in ways that deserve greater appreciation](https://schmidtocean.org/cruise-log-post/every-other-breath/#:~:text=Take%20a%20Breath%20and%20Thank%20Plankton&text=Diatoms%20are%20a%20kind%20of,in%20all%20bodies%20of%20water.&text=Half%20we%20take%20comes%20from%20the%20ocean,&text=all%20our%20waters%20sustain%20us%20in%20ways%20that%20deserve%20greater%20appreciation)).

In this context, "blue food" gets a deserved share of the spotlight for its contributions to food security, nutrition and livelihoods. Blue food is defined as all edible aquatic organisms, including fish, shellfish and algae from marine and freshwater production systems (aquaculture and fisheries).



A January 2020 YouGov [survey](https://today.yougov.com/topics/food/articles-reports/2020/01/23/millennials-diet-climate-change-environment-poll) (<https://today.yougov.com/topics/food/articles-reports/2020/01/23/millennials-diet-climate-change-environment-poll>), shows that one in five U.S. millennials has changed their diet to reduce their climate footprint. They are more likely than Gen Xers or Baby Boomers to do so; however, a February 2020 [research report](https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/climate-change-american-diet.pdf) (<https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/climate-change-american-diet.pdf>) by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication and Earth Day Network revealed the dire need for reaching more Americans with the food and climate message. More than half (51 percent) of Americans said they would eat more plant-based foods if they better understood the environmental impacts of their food choices. Four in 10 Americans said they hear about the impact of food choices on global warming in the media "once a year or less often" (11 percent) or "never" (29 percent). The authors found that there is a huge need for the environmental impact of food to be discussed more widely in America.

Blue food has many attributes that can drive positive outcomes in food systems transformation, including its important climate advantage and the resulting benefit to the climate-challenged ocean when all is done within sustainable boundaries. The blue food sector has been striving to unify the wild and farmed communities, building networks and embracing pre-competitive collaboration to lift the performance of the whole sector. Low climate impact is a message everyone can get behind, while also pinpointing where improvements can be made and demonstrating that individual business actions toward the winning climate outcome are maximized. Combined with its ability to provide vital nutrition to the developing world and others that a plant-based diet cannot, blue food is uniquely positioned at the table.

The next generation deserves to inherit a healthy planet, and they are demanding action. It's blue food's time to answer the call.

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