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## President's Log

Dear Marine Fisheries Section members:

As the fall winds down and we head into winter, I'd like to briefly update you on what your section has accomplished over the last several months. We held our annual business meeting during the AFS meeting in Québec, and I'm pleased to report that we had quite a strong showing of marine scientists, administrators, and managers at the meeting. Overall, the 2003 meeting in Québec City was the best attended meeting in AFS history – more than 1900 fishery professionals from 22 countries gathered to take in the hospitality of the québécoise people, enjoy the beautiful city of Québec, and practice our French! As a member of both the Governing Board and the Management Committee, I arrived early to participate in the Management Committee meeting on Thursday. We discussed the AFS budget and the new Fisheries Conservation Foundation. On Friday, the Governing Board held its retreat at Manoir Brulé, about 90 km northeast of Québec. It was a wonderful opportunity to visit a Canadian fishing lodge and learn about the on-going brook trout restoration work. Following a gourmet meal at the lodge, we heard from various Canadian fishery professionals about fishery challenges in Canada. The Board had an excellent exchange with our Canadian partners and we vowed to work together for the common good of the fish. Saturday was the meeting of the Governing Board, and I reported on a few highlights from that meeting at the MFS business meeting. Briefly, the Board developed a proposal for a better mechanism of identifying recipients of the AFS raffle proceeds; in future years, 70% of the proceeds will go to the Skinner Fund and the remainder will go to the AFS unit that operated the raffle. We also discussed the need to focus on retention of AFS members. AFS Executive Director Gus Rassam reported that Fisheries InfoBase will now include articles from all issues of *Fisheries*, more publication years will be added from the AFS journals (i.e., pre-1988), and books will now begin to be included as well. If you are unfamiliar with InfoBase, I suggest you check it out ([www.fisheries.org](http://www.fisheries.org) -- click on Fisheries InfoBase). InfoBase provides abstracts and the full-text PDF versions of articles appearing in AFS journals from 1988-1997.

During the Section's business meeting, a number of awards were presented. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Russell Brown and his committee for doing an excellent job with the Section's Student Travel Awards. This year, after a concerted effort toward greater publicity, Russ received 19 applications from US and Canadian students. Karen Burns (University of South Florida), Michelle Davis (Virginia Tech University), Daniel Gomez Uchida (Oregon State University) and Karen Scheduling (University of

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*(president's message continued)*

Alaska, Fairbanks) were awarded travel grants, presented with AFS plaques, and provided a paid 2004 membership to AFS and the Marine Fisheries Section. Congratulations Karen, Michelle, Daniel, and Karen!

Also, during the Section business meeting, the 2003 Oscar E. Sette Award was announced. Dr. Michael P. Sissenwine was recognized for his outstanding contribution to marine fishery science. Mike is currently the Director of Scientific Programs and Chief Science Advisor at NOAA-Fisheries. He has published more than 100 scholarly works on a wide range of topics and is active with many international organizations focusing on global fisheries policy including ICES, FAO, and ICCAT. The section extends its gratitude to Desmond Kahn for chairing the Sette Award committee, and to Ed Houde, Dick Stone, and Pat Gerrior for serving on this committee. Next year, Emory Anderson will join the Sette Award Committee. Thanks, Emory, for volunteering!

Finally, I want to remind you that the next Annual Meeting of the AFS will be in Madison, Wisconsin, Aug 22-26, 2004. Yes, it will be a challenge to attract lots of marine fisheries folks to the meeting, but a number of MFS members will be organizing symposia, so plan to attend.

~Mary

## Old Business

### REPORT OF THE TREASURER OF THE AFS-MARINE FISHERIES SECTION FOR THE PERIOD OF 23 JULY 2002—31 JULY 2003.

Balance on 31 July 2002 ..... \$11,603.43

#### **Receipts**

Members' Dues ..... 1,753.00

Sales from Beverton Notes (I and II) ..... 890.00

Total Receipts/Credits ..... 2,643.00

#### **Disbursements**

Student Travel Grants: Year 2003 (4) ..... 2,000.00

Sponsorship of AFS Equal Opportunities Section ..... 300.00

Sponsorship of Fourth World Fisheries Congress ..... 1,000.00

Sponsorship of Mote Symposium via FSU Research Found ..... 500.00

Purchase of Beverton Notes from US Government Printing ..... 1,237.50

Postage and plaque ..... 84.00

Total Disbursements ..... 5,121.50

**Balance on hand 31 July 2003 ..... \$9,124.93**

As of 31 July 2003, there were 348 members in the Marine Fisheries Section.

Debra J. Murie, Secretary/Treasurer, Marine Fisheries Section

## Recollections from the Marine Fisheries Section Business Meeting, 10 August 2003—Québec City, Canada

After calling the meeting to order, introductions of all those present, and approval of the 2002 business meeting minutes, Mary reported on some of the activities at the AFS Governing Board, and the activities the section's Executive Committee tackled during this past year. In a nutshell, your ExComm has:

- provided the AFS President with speaking points for his meeting with Congressional staffers on the Hill (March 2003)
- reviewed drafts of two position statements for AFS (one titled 'Fisheries Issues and Ocean Policy' and the other 'Guidelines for the Use of Fishes in Research')
- appointed MFS members James Brister, John Merriner, Max Stocker, Selina Heppell, Bill Fox, Churchill Grimes, and Joe Margraf to several key AFS committees
- worked with Doug Vaughan to distribute and sell a new book 'The Raymond J. H. Beverton Lectures at Woods Hole, Massachusetts'
- at the request of the External Affairs Committee, provided a list of topics for a series of popular articles
- sponsored 5 symposia: 'Propagated Fish in Resource Management (June 2003), Mote Symposium on 'Confronting Tradeoffs in the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management' (Nov 2002), and 3 symposia at the AFS annual meeting (August 2003) – 'New Quantitative Methods in Fisheries Stock Assessments', 'Large-Scale Fishery Independent Surveys: Looking to the Future by Learning from the Past', and 'Predation Impacts on Depressed Fish Stocks'
- revised the section's web page (thanks to Edgar Kleindinst!)
- resumed the newsletter (thanks to Donna Johnson!)
- presented student travel awards to Karen Burns, Michelle Davis, Daniel Gomez Uchida, and Karen Scheduling (and paid for their 2004 AFS membership and 2004 dues to the Marine Fisheries Section)
- provided \$300 to the Equal Opportunities Section for a travel grant

The Oscar E. Sette Award recipient was announced, but unfortunately, Michael Sissenwine was unable to attend the business meeting. A discussion ensued about the Sette Award Committee and Chair Des Kahn described the process for nominating recipients. Emory Anderson volunteered to serve on the committee for this year. Thanks, Emory!

The section discussed the need to make several miniature trawl doors to present to the Sette Award recipients. Gene Huntsman apparently has the plans for these doors.

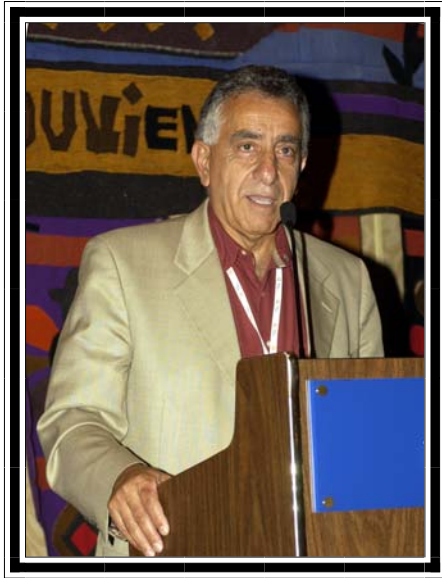
Christine Fletcher (AFS headquarters) provided information on the successful Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program and encouraged section members to consider mentoring students. Lots of students want to work as 'marine biologists'!

John Boreman agreed to work on the history page for the MFS web site. He was later provided a list of past presidents from the section, and he will add information on major accomplishments through the years.

A discussion on the need to reinstate the Section's regional representatives to the Executive Committee took place. Our by-laws require election of 4 reps (Northeastern Division, Southeastern Division, North-Central Division, and Western Division) to the ExComm, but we have not functioned this way for some time. After discussions with the AFS Constitutional Consultant, a method was developed for proceeding. The ExComm has invited section members from the NE Division and SE Division, but we are looking for a volunteer from the Western Division to stand in until we can hold elections in the spring. If you would like to help us out, please contact Mary ([mary.fabrizio@noaa.gov](mailto:mary.fabrizio@noaa.gov) or 732-872-3129). Also, we are beginning to consider removing representation from the North-Central Division and replacing this with a representative from the Canadian Aquatic Resources Section, but this would require a change in our by-laws.

*(continued on page 10)*

## A Picture Perfect Symposium in Québec City



Gus Russam, Executive Director



Ira Adelman 2003-4 president addressing the society at its 133rd annual business meeting.



Daniel Pauly recipient of 2001 Oscar Sette Award, addresses the AFS meeting participants at the Plenary Session.



(Above) MFS member Dave Allison receives Distinguished Service Award.



(Left) Mike Sissenwine, recipient of 2003 Oscar Sette Award, receives the 2003 Ricker Conservation Award from AFS.



Ken Beal, MFS member, accepts, bound issue of Fisheries from Fred Harris and steps down as Past President of AFS.



Bruce Ward and MFS member Dana Schmidt discuss Fourth World Fisheries Congress at the Business Meeting.



Photo by Linda Bireley

Mary with Barb Knuth, pres-elect of AFS, model the latest style in footwear at the Governing Board Retreat in Le Manoir Brule.

## Casting Blame for the World's Overfishing

By J.R. Pegg

Washington, DC, June 13, 2003 (ENS)- The rising tide of debate over the world's fishing practices hit the Senate Commerce Committee Thursday and although there was widespread agreement that overfishing is a global problem, disagreement raged over the state of fishing in U.S. waters.

"There is a disaster globally, but I do think witnesses are bringing the domestic scene into that disaster area and we do not belong there," said Alaska Senator Ted Stevens, a Republican. "Why can we take credit for what we are doing?"

"I would urge you who are concerned with the world to give us credit for what we have done," Stevens said. "How can we sell to the world the success we have if it is criticized at home?"

Stevens pointed to recent numbers by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that the agency said reflects "steady, incremental improvement in the status of America's fisheries."



Photo courtesy of NOAA.gov

"The problem tends to be more of an international problem than one domestically," added Dr. Rebecca Lent, deputy assistant administrator for regulatory programs at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which oversees NMFS. For complete article: go to <http://ens-news.com/ens/jun2003/2003-06-13-10.asp>

## West Coast Trawlers Accused of Wrecking Deep-Sea Coral Colonies

Even as marine scientists are discovering extensive colonies of deep-sea coral off the western coast of the USA, huge factory trawlers are already destroying the fragile areas, which are believed to provide habitat to large populations of marine species, conservationists say. "These are the old-growth forests of the sea," said Mark Powell of the Ocean Conservancy. His group is one of many now pushing for new restrictions on deep-sea trawling, which involves dragging heavy equipment along the ocean floor to net massive quantities of fish. The National Marine Fisheries Service plans to release an environmental impact statement on ocean trawlers in the Pacific. The report, due out in September, is likely to call for at least some new protections, but environmentalists say the Bush administration seems unwilling to move fast enough to effectively tackle the problem.

For complete article: Grist Magazine, August 11, 2003.

## Reef Scientists Warn of Unprecedented Destruction

WASHINGTON, DC, August 15, 2003 (ENS) - "In the next 50 years, coral reef ecosystems will experience environmental changes greater than any they have faced in the past half million years," says evolutionary ecologist Rick Grosberg at the University of California at Davis. His conclusions and those of 16 other reef scientists published in today's issue of the journal "Science" show the downward spiral started when people first began killing off large reef fish, turtles, seals and other top predators--thousands of years ago in some parts of the world and just 100 years ago in others. The experts, led by James Cook University's Professor Terry Hughes, conclude that the coral reef management strategies of today must change if they are to make a real difference. "Existing approaches to protecting reefs must undergo a radical change in emphasis and a substantial expansion in scope if they are to make a real difference," Hughes said.

To read the entire story, go to: <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/aug2003/2003-08-15-05.asp>

--SOURCE: Environment News Service, August 6, 2003.

## Sea Urchins Infest Near-Shore Reefs

BATHTUB REEF BEACH, FL. -- While studying the worm rock reefs on southern Hutchinson Island (Florida) during the last year, local biologist Dan McCarthy noticed something strange. Hundreds of rock-boring sea urchins--spiky, two-inch-long creatures--were moving slowly across the reefs, drilling into their fragile frames and eating all the algae in sight. "They sort of strip everything bare," said McCarthy, a post-doctorate fellow at the Smithsonian Marine Station. "They can drastically change the community there." From Fort Pierce south to Bathtub Reef Beach, urchins appear to have become much more plentiful in near-shore reefs in the past 20 years. By moving in masses along the reef, the urchins appear to be slowly stripping the area of bio-



Photo courtesy of NOAA.gov

diversity--making it less attractive for fish, crabs, and other species that also eat algae. In response to the discovery, McCarthy has begun

an experiment on similar reefs on Pepper Park north of Fort Pierce to better understand and document the urchins' effects on the area.

To read the entire article, go to: [http://www.tcpalm.com/tcp/the\\_news\\_local\\_news/article/0,1651,TCP\\_1028\\_2158421,00.html](http://www.tcpalm.com/tcp/the_news_local_news/article/0,1651,TCP_1028_2158421,00.html)

--SOURCE: The Stuart News. <<http://www.stuartnews.com>>

## Australian Fish Farms Accused of Spreading Disease

Australia's plans to treble aquaculture production by 2010 suffered a setback in July when Sun Aqua's proposals to raise up to three million kingfish and snapper in cages off Moreton Island in Queensland were rejected. According to an article in the Courier Mail (15th July): "the findings, from a world-first study, were released as Premier Peter Beattie hinted that the Sun Aqua sea-cage farm might not proceed because it faced regulatory obstacles." Fish biologist Tim Dempster said his studies on a sea-cage kingfish farm at Port Stephens in New South Wales in the Mediterranean showed they attracted vast numbers of fish which fed off uneaten fish food and faeces. Mr. Dempster, who works for the Queensland Seafood Industry Association but carried out the research while at the University of Sydney, said: "Certainly the number of wild fish immediately under sea cages can be hundreds to thousands of times above normal levels." There are also reports that escapees from Kingfish farms are swimming up to 50km from their pens with locals reporting declines in wild fish stocks.

To read the entire story, go to: <http://www.salmonfarmmonitor.org/intlnewsaugust2003.shtml#item1>

--SOURCE: The Salmon Farm Monitor. International News, August 2003.

## Sturgeon Project Success

Ellen Pikitch was featured in an Associated Foreign Press (AFP) article discussing the success that she and her colleagues have had in their mission to save the endangered Beluga sturgeon. The article, released in July, was titled Knife-Free Spawning Gives Fresh Hope for Endangered Beluga Sturgeon. Conservationists recently claimed a breakthrough in efforts to save the Beluga sturgeon when three females were for the



courtesy of NOAA

first time returned live to the Caspian Sea after having their eggs extracted for fertilization at a Kazakh hatchery. In recent years Beluga stocks have been devastated by soaring world caviar demand, pollution, and the legal free-for-all, which the break-up of the Soviet Union unleashed on the Caspian Sea. "This whole exercise has given us renewed hope," Pikitch told AFP.

To read the entire article, go to: <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/030712/323/e43j2.html>

---SOURCE: Science AFP

## Climate and Fish are Chief Suspects in Mysterious Sea Lion Decline

- Alaska Diary Part3: Sea lion. -Fish Tale

By John Whitfield

August 22, 2003—The sea lions' demise is difficult to study. The animals live in remote locations and the sea claims their carcasses.

"If it was a true murder mystery we'd have a body, but all we have is a missing person's report," says marine-mammal expert Andrew Trites of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.



Photo courtesy of NOAA.gov

The original suspect was overfishing: the Bering Sea, west of Alaska, supports an immense commercial catch of fish and shellfish, including pollock, cod and crab. In 1990, trawling was banned within ten miles of sea lion rookeries, but this did not stop the slump. It now looks as if the quality, not quantity, of fish has changed. Sea lions in the west used to eat mainly herring and capelin. These species are rich in fat, and live closer

to the water surface and shore than other fish. Western animals feed more on pollock, cod and flatfish, which have less energy and are harder to digest. Captive sea lions fed on pollock alone have to eat up to 80% more fish to get same return as those eating herring, Trites and his colleagues have found.

Wild adult seals, it seems, can survive but not thrive on such a diet. Pups are smaller, pregnancy rates lower, and miscarriages more common in the western population. "We've got more and more evidence suggesting that diet may underlie the decline," says Trites.

The main cause of the herring crisis in western Alaska is probably climate. The beginning of the sea lion slump in the late 1970s coincided with a warming of the seas around western Alaska, and the new conditions favored fish such as pollock at the expense of herring. Seal and seabird numbers are also falling in western Alaska—they too eat herring.

For complete article: go to Nature News Service/ Macmillan Magazines Ltd 2003.

## Researchers Say They've Identified the Kind of Mercury in Fish

By JAMES GORMAN

August 29, 2003-The kind of mercury found in fish has been determined for the first time, three scientists report in a paper that has implications for future research into the mechanisms of mercury poisoning.

Mercury is a contaminant that has led national and international agencies to issue warnings about seafood consumption. But the new paper, being published today in the journal *Science*, raises the possibility, though cautiously, that the form of mercury the researchers found is less toxic than other kinds.

The scientists, working at the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory, used a technique involving high-intensity X-rays to investigate the nature of mercury molecules in samples of sword-

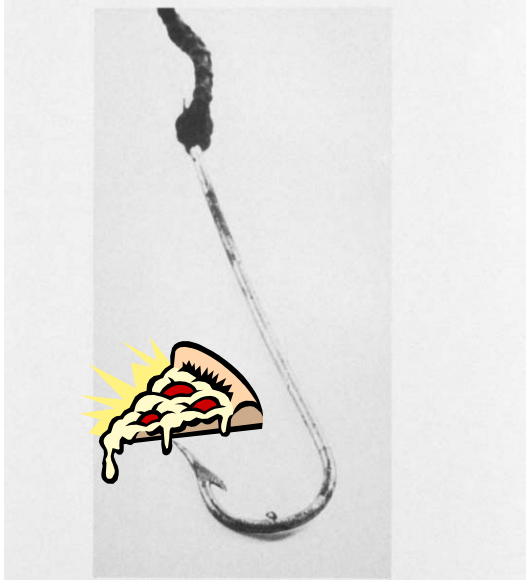


Photo courtesy of NOAA.gov

fish, orange roughy and sand sole. What they found, said one of them, Dr. Graham N. George, now at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, is most likely methylmercury cysteine.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/29/science/29MERC.html?ex=1063159533&ei=1&en=9cbdfd5f0f3e5f9>

## Editorial



by Mark Taylor, OUTDOORS EDITOR

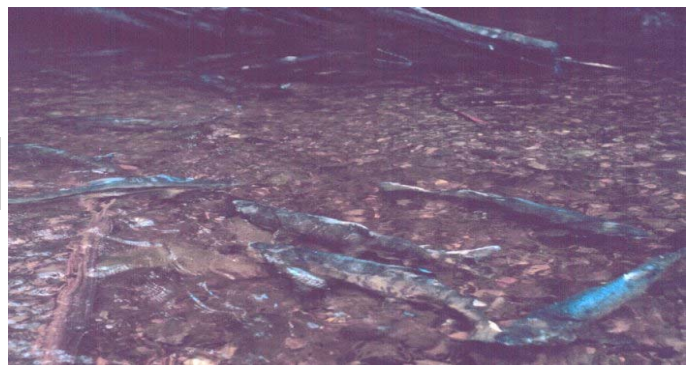
August 10, 2003- You're lazing on your recliner watching TV when the doorbell rings. It's the Domino's guy. Strange. You didn't order pizza. "It's free," he says, holding it out. "Cool," you say, reaching for the pizza. Next thing you know the guy grabs you, throws you in the back of a van, and you're roaring out of town. Three hours later your captor gently pulls you out, weighs you, and sets you free. If nothing else, the trip might give you a taste of what it's like to be a tournament-caught bass - with one exception. You'd eventually make it home. Few bass do. That's the conclusion reached by Texas Tech University associate professor Gene Wilde (AFS member, '90) after an in-depth study of what happens to tournament-caught bass.

For complete story go to: <http://www.roanoke.com/roatimes/news/story153607.html> Roanoke Times,

## Farmed Salmon Found to Contain PCBs

In a study by the Washington, D.C.-based Environmental Working Group, 10 salmon fillets taken from grocery stores in San Francisco, Portland, OR, and Washington, D.C., were found to have an average of 27 parts per billion of PCBs. That's way below the 2,000 ppb standard set by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)--but high enough to raise eyebrows at the U.S. EPA, which assesses risk differently and sets far more stringent standards than the FDA. EWG, meanwhile, found the contamination alarming enough to recommend eating just one eight-ounce serving of salmon per month. Industry representatives, scientists, and some federal officials lambasted the report for its small sample size and alarmist recommendations. PCBs, which cause cancer and problems with fetal development, have been banned in the USA since 1976.

--SOURCE: Grist Magazine, July 30, 2003.



NOAA.gov

## Maine Ends Oppositions to Endangered Listing for Atlantic Salmon

After years of legal wrangling, Maine is finally ending its opposition to the federal government's decision to list the wild Atlantic salmon as endangered in several of the state's rivers. Gov. John Baldacci (D) announced yesterday that the state had come to an agreement with the feds and would not appeal a recent court decision in which a federal judge dismissed a lawsuit filed by the state and Maine business groups to block the listing. The salmon has been listed as endangered in eight Maine rivers since November 2000, but the listing has been dogged by legal challenges. Opponents said the fish were not sufficiently genetically distinct from other salmon to merit listing and claimed that protecting the fish would harm the state's economy.

--SOURCE: Grist Magazine, July 25, 2003.



Marine Fisheries Section Newsletter  
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WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/mfs/>

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*The Marine Fisheries Section (MFS) is a professional, interest based, subunit of the American Fisheries Society. The intent of the MFS is to further the Society's objectives within marine fisheries science and practice. MFS members wish to attain further knowledge about marine fisheries, and to identify and publicize issues and problems related to development and management of marine fisheries. MFS also addresses research and education needs associated with biological, economic, social, and other aspects of marine fisheries.*

*Through the MFS Newsletter, and web page, the Section:*

- encourages and facilitates the exchange of knowledge and ideas
- updates members on current research, issues, publications, and meetings
- communicates Section and AFS business and concerns

*The Section also fosters the exchange of knowledge and ideas through:*

- organizing meetings/symposia usually at the AFS Annual Meeting
- publishing conference and symposia proceedings
- ad-hoc committees created to comment on specific issues

*To facilitate communication among members the Section provides a periodically updated membership directory.*

*(continued from Old Business ~ from page 3)*

Jointly with members of the Estuaries Section, the MFS has undertaken a review of the Pew Oceans Commission Report. This will be presented to the AFS Governing Board at the mid-year meeting. Thanks to Steve Jordan (Estuaries Section) and Phil Mundy (MFS) for stepping forward to lead the way on this task!

Several ideas were discussed for section-sponsored symposia at the 2004 meeting in Madison including the following topics: (1) new (newer?) quantitative methods, (2) fisheries effects on ecosystems, (3) marine mammal-fishery interactions, (4) ecosystem approach to fisheries management, (5) fisheries management success stories, (6) comparison of Great Lakes and marine fisheries. Anyone willing to organize a symposium on any of these topics should become familiar with the call for symposia proposals (see Fisheries). Contact Mary if you are seeking Section sponsorship.

## **AFS - Catch of the Day**

### **New Organization Promotes Sea Ethic and Healthy Oceans**

Carl Safina (MFS Member) and Mercedes Lee have found The Blue Ocean Institute.

For details go to [www.blueoceaninstitute.org](http://www.blueoceaninstitute.org).

### **New Books and Resources:**

- Sustainable Water Resources Roundtable ~ <http://water.usgs.gov/wicp/acwi/swrr/>
- EPD Draft report on the Environment is now available. ~ <http://www.epa.gov/indicators/>
- Plan B - Plan to stabilize Climate and Population. by Lester Brown ~ [www.earth-policy.org/Books/index.htm](http://www.earth-policy.org/Books/index.htm)
- Seafood Lover's Almanac - Seafood guide book. by Carl Safina (MFS member) & Suzanne Iudicello.
- Survey of nutrient standards adopted by states document. ~ [epa.gov/waterscience/criteria/nutrient/statesummary.htm](http://epa.gov/waterscience/criteria/nutrient/statesummary.htm).
- Common and Scientific Names of Aquatic Invertebrates from the United States and Canada: Cnidaria and Ctenophora, Second Edition; March 2003.