Regenerative ocean farming is a climate-friendly form of aquaculture that can benefit coastal communities, ecosystems, and economies. To responsibly grow the industry in the U.S., Urban Ocean Lab recommends policymakers take the following actions:

**Local policy actions:**

1. **Protect working waterfronts and invest in waterfront infrastructure** to ensure ocean farmers can access their farm sites and necessary facilities for processing, storing, and transporting harvests.
2. **Provide funding and technical assistance to ocean farmers** and support incubator programs and aquaculture parks that can help accelerate industry growth.
3. **Create incentives and programs to increase demand for domestically farmed seafood,** such as procurement policies that leverage the purchasing power of local governments and public institutions, like schools and hospitals.
4. **Build local and regional industry networks** by bringing stakeholders together to help facilitate information sharing.
5. **Educate the public about regenerative ocean farming** and provide opportunities—like public stakeholder forums—for ocean farmers to discuss their projects and respond to community questions.

**State policy actions:**

1. **Improve state permitting processes** by designating a single state agency to coordinate and review applications; improving interagency coordination; creating joint agency permits and interagency review teams; developing state-specific leasing and permitting portals; and increasing staffing at state agencies.
2. **Create more flexible permit and lease options,** such as a tiered permitting system with an easy entry point for new or prospective ocean farmers.
3. **Establish pre-permitted ocean farm sites** by conducting regional environmental impact assessments for regenerative ocean farming, and guide ocean farmers through the siting process in areas that are not pre-permitted.
4. **Create state-specific industry development plans** informed by an interdisciplinary task force that assesses the current state of the industry, identifies barriers, and sets targets for industry growth.
5. **Create financial incentives and funding opportunities,** such as tax abatements, credits and deductions, grants, loans, and other financial support for ocean farmers.
6. **Invest in a skilled workforce and ensure safe working conditions** by implementing paid apprenticeship programs that prepare workers for high quality jobs with a living wage, benefits, and paid training opportunities; and by protecting ocean farmers under state workers’ compensation programs.
7. **Protect the rights of Indigenous communities and subsistence economies** by supporting the revitalization of Indigenous cultural practices, food sovereignty, and environmental governance.
8. **Enhance food safety regulations for seaweed and shellfish** by providing additional state- and species-specific guidance for growers, producers, and consumers.

**Federal policy actions:**

1. **Fund research on the climate mitigation potential of farmed seaweed and shellfish** to better understand the long-term carbon sequestration potential.
2. **Improve data collection on seaweed farming** by creating a seaweed category in the Census of Aquaculture, conducting outreach to seaweed farmers to participate in the Census, and creating consistent seaweed harvest reporting across states.
3. **Fund federal research and development (R&D)** on potential end-uses of farmed seaweed and shellfish, to help increase the domestic supply.
4. **Expand federal grant programs for aquaculture to include regenerative ocean farming,** and develop an online platform to help ocean farmers and producers navigate grant programs.
5. **Increase access to federal loan programs for regenerative ocean farmers,** particularly low-income farmers, to ensure they qualify for and are aware of existing low-interest and forgivable loans and crop insurance.

For more information on these recommendations, read Urban Ocean Lab’s full policy memo, *Advancing Regenerative Ocean Farming in the U.S.*