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# How to Stop Octopus Farming with Dr. Jennifer Jacquet

By **Ana Bradley** (<https://sentientmedia.org/author/anabradley/>) July 6, 2023 - 24 min 51 second read

**J**ennifer Jacquet is an associate professor in the **Department of Environmental Studies** (<https://as.nyu.edu/departments/environment.html>) at New York University and a visiting professor in the **Department of Environmental Science and Policy** (<https://environmental-science-policy.earth.miami.edu/>) at the

University of Miami. She is the recipient of a **2015 Alfred P. Sloan research fellowship** (<https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2015/february/two-nyu-faculty-win-sloan-foundation-research-fellowships-.html>) and a **2016 Pew fellowship** (<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/projects/marine-fellows/fellows-directory/2016/jennifer-jacquet>) in marine conservation. Along with Becca Franks, Peter Godfrey-Smith and Walter Sanchez-Suarez, she published an article on “**The Case Against Octopus Farming** (<https://issues.org/the-case-against-octopus-farming/>)” in 2019.

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## 034 Dr. Jennifer Jacquet: How to Stop Octop...



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In this conversation, Dr. Jacquet discusses the state of the growing octopus farming industry around the world, what life would be like for animals on the world's first octopus factory farm proposed by Nueva Pescanova, and how this widely opposed form of intensive aquaculture can be stopped before it begins.

Dr. Jacquet 0:00

We really do have to ask ourselves why we would do this in the 21st century to an animal that the world is in love with. I mean, [in the documentary] *My Octopus Teacher*, it's the same species. It's *octopus vulgaris*, and you have it winning the Academy Award, winning a BAFTA, and then in the same breath, announcing that we're going to put [the octopus] into mass production. I am just baffled at how this is possible. And the truth is, I don't think it is. I'm so encouraged by how much resistance there is to this idea.

Ana Bradley 0:38

Hello, and welcome to the Sentient Media Podcast, where we meet the people who are changing the way we think about and interact with the world around us. Normally, with our guests, we talk about a variety of topics or a variety of animals, a variety of experiences. But today, we are going to have a special octopus edition with Dr. Jennifer Jacquet. As some of you might already know, the Spanish fishing company Nueva Pescanova has been trying to work on the process of factory farming octopuses. And as far as I know, they've proposed what is the world's first factory farm for octopuses in Gran Canaria, which is a Spanish island off the coast

of northwest Africa. I actually just spent the last month over there. And there's a bit of good news in that there is no construction happening there yet. But a lot of the operation, a lot of the work that's being done is happening in mainland Spain, so I didn't get to see any of that. But today, I'm very excited to dive into the reality of what life on an octopus farm might be like, what's driving the demand for octopuses, and a little bit more about why it's been so hard to actually successfully farm these animals. So Dr. Jacquet, thank you so much for joining us today. Could you start off by perhaps telling us a little bit about your background? Like what's got you to this point now, where you're researching and talking about octopuses in this situation?

Dr. Jacquet 2:01

Yeah, sure. Thank you. Thank you for having me. And thanks for addressing such an important topic. I completed my PhD with a fisheries biologist named Daniel Pauly, who runs this program called The Sea Around Us. And he created a kind of global look at capture fisheries, and then from there, also built out to aquaculture because it turns out the two are highly interrelated; especially if you farm carnivorous animals, they actually put additional pressure on the oceans because we have to catch fish to feed to them. So I completed my PhD with him in 2009. And it was titled fish as food in an age of globalization. And I think that sort of encapsulates why I'm interested in this particular issue, because you have a global issue with consumers all over the world, potentially, for octopuses, especially in luxury markets, and then you have production in various places. As you say, the main threat appears to be in Spain right at the moment. But there are other countries right now also working on octopus farming, like Japan and China. And there's a farm that isn't a factory farm, but more of a ranch in the Yucatan of Mexico, and there was an octopus ranch in Hawaii, in the United States of America. And so I'm sort of interested in when you have this, you know, kind of production in various places, consumption in other places, and the way that the global markets connect these consumers. And I had no idea that we would ever dream to farm octopuses,

since all of the evidence we've been seeing in the last decades of the YouTube videos and the experiments and it's just, they're such amazing animals, frankly. It's hard not to look at them and see how incredible they are. I used to show my class, I would start the class every semester with Roger Hamlin's TED talk, which shows how an octopus can blend into its background, and this kind of incredible ability that we really fundamentally don't understand. And then one day, in 2014 or 15, an article came into my Google alert for something about: octopus farming could be the next big thing. And I thought, 'what on earth?' Why would we do that? And as I started digging in, not only had I found out that there were a lot of people who sort of seemed sympathetic to octopus, Roger Hamlin among them, who had actually published on the potential of aquaculture for these animals, but also that there had been these major government investments. So you'd see in the EU and Brussels really putting money into getting octopus farming off the ground. And as you mentioned, in our introduction, there were these technical hurdles to that. And there still are in some cases, you know, it's very hard to close the lifecycle, they would say; that's why a lot of these operations are ranches where they gather the juveniles from the wild and then grow them in captivity. But I think we will be able to leap over that technical hurdle; I think there's no doubt that we'll achieve closing the lifecycle. And it struck me that the only thing that we needed to be talking about was the ethics, the evidence base for the ethics as well. And the question of whether or not we should be farming octopuses, who it would benefit, who would pay the cost (very much, of course, the animals themselves, among others). And so that was the impetus. And so we wrote an article in 2019. We got it published, but we've been working on it for years, making the case against octopus farming.

Ana Bradley 6:03

And, as far as you know, you touched on these other ranches or farms in Yucatan, in Hawaii, I knew about those. I wasn't aware of actual ranches in Japan or China. But as far as you know, with Nueva Pescanova, what are the proposals and how far along are they?

Dr. Jacquet 6:25

Well so just to be clear, we just know that, or I have seen, industry say that they've closed the life cycle in Japan, for instance. I don't know that they have any large-scale operations. But that suggests that they have experimental farms, which is really what the Yucatan and Hawaii were as well; they were kind of experiments, they weren't the mass production that Gran Canaria is proposing. As for that site, there are people really now working civil society groups working on preventing this particular farm from getting off the ground who know more about the nitty gritty details than I do. But one hurdle, for instance, is the environmental impact assessment or statement that has to be completed before the farm can be built. And as I understand it, that is a place in which the farm is still in limbo, that that has not been granted yet. And then I think there will be other regulatory hurdles after that, as there are in any major construction project. And as I said, I think that the question also remains on whether or not this farm will have the social licence to operate, whether or not there will be a market, whether people want to buy octopus created and produced in this farm, and also whether or not the people of, of Europe generally, and certainly Spain, in particular, really want this kind of operation in their backyard.

Ana Bradley 8:09

Yeah, what I saw, when I was there was I went to the proposed site, the proposed location, and it's in a port, where you've got passenger ferries, you know, going off to the neighbouring islands, and to mainland Spain, etc. You have oil, have BP, you have the big oil canisters everywhere. And then just general kind of dock working industry. And then you have like a big kind of gap, basically, where, where this proposal is, but there is absolutely nothing happening on that site right now. Because as you say, they can't actually, it's not actually legal for them to start building there. They don't actually have that land. They can't, like continue with their dream of building this factory farm. But as far as I know, what's happening in

Galicia in the north of Spain, where they've been doing the research, is they have now closed the life cycle. They've had some breakthrough. And I was wondering if you knew, if they close the lifecycle if they're able to reproduce and bring octopuses successfully into the factory farm space? What would it like look like on the ground in Gran Canaria? So it would be, you know, we know what a factory looks like, do you have an image of how many octopuses we're talking about? Like what the kind of situation would be, where the waste would go, how they would be killed or slaughtered? Like, what would it look like in reality, do you think?

Dr. Jacquet 9:40

Well, I think the questions you're asking are exactly the right ones. Because what happened when we published our article, we actually wound up getting a lot of media coverage and all of that coverage that was talking about, you know, the case against octopus farming. The imagery were octopuses on coral reefs or in the middle of the ocean, floating, and that fundamentally is not how this operation will look. I mean nobody knows exactly what it will look like, well, I assume the engineers who are trying to actually put the tanks together, but even that might be modified over time. Because, again, this was sort of like the first CAFO for octopuses. And as you know, even with beef farms, they've changed drastically through the years. And so we could expect the same thing to happen there, it's actually pretty terrible to imagine. But one thing we did was work with some artists to create an octopus farm image. There, these artists use dystopian algorithms to help make their work. And that seemed kind of the perfect metaphor for factory farming. And we know that they will be in relatively barren environments in tanks. So the images that I've seen are from experimental tanks in Australia, as well as from the farm in the quote, 'farm ranch' in Hawaii. And what you see there, I mean, first of all, in Hawaii, it's really a petting zoo. It wasn't really a ranch; they were having people from cruise ships come, they were fondling the octopuses. It wasn't a kind of typical food production environment; you wouldn't sell that, you know, en masse to the marketplace. But again, the environment was incredibly sterile, they

had like one kind of concrete brick in with them. They're trying to make money here, you know, so you can just square that. You know, Peter Godfrey-Smith is a co-author of mine, and he's an incredible octopus expert, and really studies octopuses as another model for the origin of consciousness. He studies them in the wild, he observes them, and he and I, early on in this conversation, were sort of a little at odds, because he thought, potentially — and I don't want to misrepresent his views — but he thought potentially, there was a way to have octopuses in mass production that wouldn't give them a totally terrible life. And I thought that there was sort of no way that they would ever be given a good life under the circumstances that capitalism demands, you know, a kind of constant reduction in costs and increase in profits. And, and lo and behold, you know, seeing the, the news coverage, and the BBC had a really good article about the kind of slaughter that might be used at the farm and the kind of tanks that you see again, both sort of as prototypes, but also in the case of Hawaii. Peter was also aghast at what it looked like and thought, 'absolutely not,' this is really not going to work out in the ways that one could imagine in that sort of best well-meaning system. So all of that to say it's going to look very much like a factory farm, you know, it's going to be maybe potentially a little more sterile, because it's aquatic animals. And you know, there's not going to be sort of hay everywhere. But it's going to be a factory, it's going to look like, you know, a giant square building is sort of what I imagined. And the octopuses will be kept in basically solitary confinement, something that is very different from their life normally in the intertidal. They'll be fed, you know, food that may or may not be their preference. They're kind of picky eaters. So that's one thing that the industry will have to cater to. And they'll be killed in sort of ghastly ways. And to be honest, the more you think about it, and even just talking about it now, it's just, we really do have to ask ourselves why we would do this in the 21st century, to an animal that the world is in love with. I mean, [in the documentary] *My Octopus Teacher*, it's the same species. It's *octopus vulgaris*, and you have it winning the Academy Award, winning a BAFTA, and then in the same breath, announcing that we're going to put [the octopus] into mass production. I am just



baffled at how this is possible. And the truth is, I don't think it is. I'm so encouraged by how much resistance there is to this idea, and I really hope that Spain is not successful.

Ana Bradley 14:41

I have a few things you touched on there about even trying to create a space, that the animal could arguably live a good life. And obviously, the lives of chickens and cows, we can think these are more sociable animals, so you know, farms make that excuse that, yes, they like to be in this kind of density. I think I read a piece recently about the pigs in the gas chambers and you know how they're slaughtered. And they were saying like, 'Oh, well, you know, they like it going in there together into the gas chamber,' like it's some kind of, well, they would prefer that because the kind of pack animals. I know octopuses obviously lead a very different life. But I'm curious, you know, when we look at like aquaculture with fishes, it's usually in the ocean. You know, you can see the fish bombs in the ocean, whereas this proposal is for building a space on land. Do you know why they've decided to build a concrete construct for them versus trying to do it in the ocean?

Dr. Jacquet 15:44

Yeah, well, I think that also, that's a little bit of a misconception. The vast majority of aquaculture is produced inland in China in these kind of like carp and koi ponds that often are grown alongside grass, sorry, rice, and a kind of more traditional system that has its own issues, especially with regards to methane. But certainly, as you point out, in the west we've gotten really used to I think images of farmed salmon, farmed seabream, farmed sea bass, that's what's all over the Mediterranean right now, in that pen swimming around. But you know, the octopuses, especially *vulgaris*, this is an intertidal species. It lives in caves and the bottom, and it's not swimming around in some circles so that net-pen idea would never work. And then they would have to sort of colonise the intertidal to create farms. And I think that's sort of just out of the question in terms of the competing other uses. It may be out

of the question in terms of the octopuses ability to escape in those conditions as well. So I think they've been following more of the aquarium model. And a lot of what we know, of course, from octopuses in captivity is from being kept in aquaria. And then these experimental places in both the industry as well as places like Vigo and Spain that are linked to universities. So yeah, an octopus farm is going to look more like maybe the pig factory, you know that China built, that I think is really sort of next-level in terms of the factory component of factory farming. And that will be, you know, sort of octopuses will leapfrog that idea of sort of keeping them in the intertidal in these small ways, or trying to sort of keep them in something semi-wild and go straight to that really intense factory model.

Ana Bradley 17:47

There's a couple of things that I'd like to touch on off the back of that. One is, you keep kind of mentioning all of these barriers to farming this animal, like everything from where they choose to live, where they choose to eat, how we have to construct these individual units. You know, I understand that's obviously to stop them cannibalising each other and other things that we haven't quite touched on yet. But, as far as I know, this is the first species that has taken, you know, it's over 20 to 30 years that they've been trying to factory farm this animal. And as far as I know, that's like the longest it's taken for us to be able to try and get an animal, you know, or close the lifecycle to get an animal from, you know, egg to or, you know, whatever from from from young to actual viable product at the end. Is that your understanding too? Is this the first time that's happened? Why? Why then are we doing it?

Dr. Jacquet 18:47

So I think there's kind of two questions there. One is, so why are we doing and why do we work so hard to get to this point? And the other one is a sort of more empirical question. Well, I think They're both empirical. But is this indeed the longest it's taken? And so I guess to the first point, there's always been this

fascination with aquaculture. I mean, sorry, with octopuses. And I think aquaculture was a way to work on those animals and get funding for it. If you look at the research, so much is about aquaculture because I think they could sort of sell it to the government on the grounds that this would ultimately be a moneymaker. And that's why we're doing it. I mean, octopuses I think, two real reasons. One [octopuses] are a luxury product that get a lot of money, and relative to other aquatic animals, so that already is, you know, a win from the industry point of view. And then that [octopuses], you know, they max out at about two years. And so that's a really fast-growing species. I mean, you're talking about high value in a very short period of time. So the industry loves things that you can get to market in less than a year, because again that capital, short-term gains and all the ways in which our system favors that kind of model. So I think octopuses suit that model as well. But they do have these major impacts. They're carnivores, they're not even omnivores. They're carnivores. And so they do put more pressure on the oceans because we have to catch things to feed to them. You're never going to get an octopus on a soy diet. And then if you did by some, I don't know, CRISPR technology, you'd have to deforest the Amazon to grow the soy. So it you know, it just doesn't make sense. Well, as we know, from working in the food system. But then there's this question of you know, has any animal taken longer, and I guess, I find really interesting salmon farming, because it wasn't like consumers were like, 'We want salmon! We want salmon.' You know, if you look at the conditions for why salmon farming got off the ground, it's because there was already this hatchery technology in place that we had created for decades, you know, figuring out how to have hatcheries to then release these fish into the wild. So we already, for salmon farming, could build off of that hatchery research. And in addition to that, you know, salmon are anadromous, and they are born in streams and then travel to the ocean and then they come back to the stream to die and spawn. And because they're born in freshwater streams that are very nutrient-poor, they come with this really big egg sack, egg yolk, yolk sac, sorry, I'm confusing all my eggs. So salmon are born in freshwater, and they come with a large yolk sac. And that allows them to

have nutrients on their way to the ocean. And it also helps keep them alive and they come out sort of more robust, right? I don't know if you've ever seen larval swordfish; I've had the pleasure of seeing some on a dive in Hawaii. And they are like, the most delicate, tiny. It's a miracle. I don't understand how it all works. And neither do we; we don't have a system in place that can close the life cycle on swordfish. We don't have it yet for tuna, and we didn't have it for years for octopuses, because they were very much again the same. They're very delicate in those early days. And so, I guess I'm only saying that I don't know that I would say no other species took as long. If I think about salmon, I really feel like the industry benefited again from decades of hatchery work and technology that I wouldn't discount.

Ana Bradley 22:48

But yeah, that's fascinating. Thanks for shining some light on that for me. I wasn't aware of all of that. One of the things that strikes me with what you're talking about, is this: there wasn't this demand for people shouting for salmon. Like, is there that demand for people shouting for octopuses? And if so, where is that demand coming from?

Dr. Jacquet 23:08

Well, as you may know, Spain is a huge consumer of octopuses, and Europe generally, Japan and the United States. And potentially China is just the same batch of luxury consumers we're very used to. And I've really again from studying fish as food in an age of globalisation, title of my PhD, I really started to question this idea that this was about consumer demand. Because I had seen over and over again, as with farmed salmon, as with Chilean sea bass (which is actually Patagonian toothfish. It's in Antarctica), you know, one guy basically helped get demand, create demand, for this. Nobody wanted Patagonian toothfish; no one had tried it. No one had eaten it. This was not a consumer-driven fishery. But he introduced it into high-end restaurants in New York City. And because they're very slow-growing, I mean,

they really look more like mammals in terms of their life history than like fish. They have this and they live in dark, deep, cold environments. They have this really apparently fatty flesh that is difficult to burn. So he kind of sold it to the marketplace, this guy Lee Lance in the late 70s. He sold it to the marketplace as you know the kind of fish that you can't overcook, and he got the demand to increase through getting to the specific chefs in the same way you can do with octopuses and the same way you can do with meat. You get a contract, right, with all the high-end seafood restaurants, or if you're meat and dairy, you get a contract for milk at the schools. They're able to create demand. They're not responding to it. They're really in charge of the marketplace. And I have no doubt that they'll be able to expand the market for octopuses because, as they note in their own literature, there is rising demand for exotic meats that they can easily create. They can sort of get into markets, cruise ships, right, that are trying to serve something different, something you've never had before. And so now you can have your grilled octopus tentacles. And the aquaculture will make that a more predictable market than capture fisheries, which are just, you know, they're relying on nature and they're subject to environmental fluxes. And aquaculture is more likely to provide a steady stream of flesh than the capture.

Ana Bradley 25:54

So fascinating. I've been travelling to the Canary Islands where the Gran Canaria is for many years. And it's in these last kind of couple of trips. Maybe in the last like, eight months or so I've noticed so much more octopus consumption, like just in the normal cafes and stuff. And I've actually noticed advertisement for octopus tapas in the airports for the very first time and actually in the in-flight magazines. And that's the first time I've ever seen octopuses advertised in that way to the tourists, which is you feel at odds because, like you mentioned My Octopus Teacher. You feel these islands appeal to like, you know, British tourists, other European countries [that] aren't normally known for consuming octopus, and yet we're being kind of ploughed with octopus, you know, octopus tapas ideas. There are a few reasons

that I wanted to tackle that the company Neuvo Pescanova is arguing the reasons why they think that farming octopuses is a really great idea. There's three that I wanted to just kind of get your quick take on. So the first one is solving the nutrition crisis. So they argue that we need to farm octopuses to feed people nutrient-rich food. That was one of their arguments in their paper. So what do you think about that?

Dr. Jacquet 27:15

So I think you already answered this question when you talked about the target audience, you know, visitors to Canaria, people in airports, people on airplanes. Are these people that we're actually really worried about their nutrition? And that is something the aquaculture industry has done for decades, and I think it is immoral because they act like it's about food security, but then to their investors, they tell them it's about luxury markets and exotic rising demand for meat and demand for exotic meats. And they frame it in a completely different way. It's not about feeding the world. It's about feeding rich people who have plenty of options when it comes to nutrition.

Ana Bradley 28:01

And then the next argument they have is sustainability. So I know that Nueva Pescanova has been in receipt of a grant. They argue that farming octopuses will relieve the pressure on wild octopuses, that was one of the reasons they got this grant. Do you think that's the case?

Dr. Jacquet 28:18

Evidence doesn't bear out. And in fact, when we see the rise of farm salmon introduced into the marketplace, who by the way, said the exact same thing: that this will relieve pressure on wild salmon. We saw the catches for wild salmon go up because the price went down for salmon with all the increased supply. So fishermen had to catch more salmon to make the same amount of money that they

had been making previously. And studies of aquaculture as a whole, and studies we've done species by species, really don't bear out to show any evidence in favour of that argument. Substitution is a nice idea, it can occur, but often it has to occur with other kind of integrated strategies. Right, as the government said, if Spain said 'we're going to remove our bottom trawling subsidies and we're going to put them into octopus farming,' that might actually have an effect. But that's not what's happening. They're just adding an additional product to the marketplace. So in fact, we see very, very little examples in the food system of any animal production substituting for other animal production. You know, you have this kind of even leveling off right now of milk and the increase in demand for milk is for nut milks, at least in the United States. But it's not that regular milk has gone away. It's just that all the growth is being seen for the nut milks, the oats, soy, coconut, whatever. And so we're not seeing this kind of overall reduction in meat consumption or capture fisheries consumption that we know is necessary to become a more sustainable food system. On top of that, octopuses as I say, will put additional pressure on capture fisheries. They may not put additional pressure on capture octopuses, they may though, because if they drive the price down again, the fisherman may decide to fish more octopuses out of the intertidal zone. But no doubt about it, we have to catch more fish from the ocean to feed to the farmed octopuses. This is not immoral, this is just wrong, factually wrong.

Ana Bradley 30:47

Yeah. And, again, we don't know what they're going to be doing with the waste of their octopus farm, this particular farm, how they're going to be getting rid of what would be ammonia-rich waste coming out of these millions of octopuses. The other argument is, of course, wrong. You. Go ahead.

Dr Jacquet 31:09

Well, and putting it into sensitive marine environments that are used by a lot of tourists.

Ana Bradley 31:16

Yeah, I mean, yeah, exactly. And then the other argument that they have is jobs. So the argument that it will create jobs, which obviously helps boost the economy. Do you have any insight into that?

Dr Jacquet 31:31

Oh, always about the jobs. Yet, so little discussion of, you know, secretaries losing their jobs over the rise of the computer. So little discussion about supermarket cashiers losing their jobs over the rise of electronic checkouts. You see, almost always in extractive industries, the argument come back to jobs. Oil and gas does this all the time, coal of course. Jobs are always going to be an issue. We need to create work that is meaningful for people. We may even consider things like universal basic income as possible solutions to this jobs crisis. We do not, building more prisons would create jobs. This is not something to justify social behaviour on. We can create jobs in all, anything, we do, anything we subsidise. Any new venture will create jobs and may also destroy jobs. I am really, again, sort of tired of this argument. It comes straight out of PR and basically crisis management, that they tell the industry here say this, 'it'll create jobs, it'll offer sustainability. It'll feed the world.' You know, they're just things that the food industry says, the beef and meat and dairy says it, chicken farmers say it everywhere. Because they're all facing particular sustainability challenges and threats to the social license to operate for both the questions of environmental degradation and climate change, but also because of the moral issues.

Ana Bradley 33:20

Do you have a sense of the scientific community and veterinarians etc? Is there a consensus amongst these experts that farming octopuses is a good idea or a bad idea?

Dr Jacquet 33:36



To be clear, it's not a very large community of people that have worked directly on octopus aquaculture. So if you're working in octopus aquaculture, you agree with it, you know, there's some kind of it's rare to I haven't found anyone who said, you know, 'I regret it. I want to be on the other side.' But then there are a bunch of people, I mean, we had a letter that went out soon after our article was published in Animal Sentience, just showing, you know, support within our own network of all university scholars all around the world. We got over 100 signatures I think in a week of people who are not directly engaged on the issue of octopus farming, because again, it's not a very big. It's not a very big enterprise at the moment, but it's lawyers, ecologists, sociologists, you know, just people who study the world in which we work and operate and who were all opposed to octopus farming. And I think, on balance, the vast majority of people are opposed to octopus farming. The problem is that, you know, you only need a handful of people with access to capital and power to create an octopus farm. And so I really would feel great if this was put to a democratic decision. I think people's hearts and minds are in what I would call the right place on this. It's just that that, unfortunately, isn't the way that things work at the moment, as we see from, you know, Chat GPT. Like as if we all got to have a vote about whether or not that technology was released into the world.

Ana Bradley 35:19

Yeah, and I find it particularly odd right now, because we're in this moment, like, obviously, at Sentient Media, we track, you know, the media trends, we track what Google searches are happening around animals, etc, to see what the general public and researchers and journalists are asking questions on. And over the last maybe eight to 12 months, maybe slightly longer than that, we've seen an uptick in people asking questions about how smart certain animals are. Do certain animals, you know, do they qualify as sentient? You know, what are the smartest animals, what are the most intelligent animals? And obviously, you know, we're octopuses will be featured in these kinds of lists, and octopuses and cephalopods. In Europe, we've marked that they're sentient. In England, we've marked that they are sentient

beings, Lobsters aren't allowed to be boiled alive anymore in England. It feels to me like it's such a disconnect to what the general trend that we're seeing is, that people are accepting sentience of animals that we eat traditionally. It just seems like a crazy idea to be doubling down on what the general consensus would say, is an unsustainable practice that's not only unsustainable for the environment, but unsustainable in the sense of how we treat sentient beings who we share the planet with.

Dr Jacquet 36:41

Yeah, and what you just described squares with some recent work that my colleague Dale Jamieson and I just completed along with with others, looking at the kind of role of research into agencies, sentience and cognition, and its relationship to animal protection. And so what we overall find is that this kind of research is necessary, but not sufficient for production — for protection, sorry. And there's all sorts of interesting reasons for that. But there's no doubt as you say that the kind of global revolution that happened for Wales was facilitated by research that showed they were sentient, intelligent, caring, highly social, could had dialects, right? Sang to one another. These are hugely important findings. But there were a lot of other really important aspects. And there were advocates, there were really visible scientists, you know, that sort of had the public's trust and attention. And there were really important people within the government that were willing to make legislation. So one thing that I'm seeing that I'm really hopeful about is some precautionary legislation being introduced. There were two ambitious lawyers, animal lawyers in Washington state, that introduced precautionary legislation to prevent any farming or sale of farmed octopuses in the state that actually passed through the first round of committee. And now it has to go on and upward, so it's not official yet. But it's really promising. And likewise, there was a citizen bill introduced, sponsored by Elizabeth May, a British Columbia MP in Canada, that will have to be discussed at Parliament about a similar ban in Canada as a whole federal ban. And this kind of work is really promising, I think, really encouraging, because it

mirrors what I was interested in and why I wrote the article. Like, what if we could stop this before it started? Instead of, you know, I work also on climate change. I work also on meat and dairy production. And it is, as I'm sure you feel, often a very, very uphill battle. You're talking about major infrastructure, major government investments, huge amounts of subsidies, all that you have to kind of undo if we're going to change the way we live. Here, we are still at this crossroads where we can decide whether or not this industry gets off the ground. And I feel like this is just a really critical moment. And there could be a lot of action that could prevent us from being in the position that we are with meat and dairy, you know, 50 years after, 70 years after CAFOs were invented. Let's spare the future generations that pain and prevent this before it starts. And I feel like that is also a kind of promising way to think and people could feel sort of very good. You know, we all have to decide every day like what am I going to work on? What should I invest in? What should I research or advocate for or call my representative about? And I really am committed to this octopus farming question because I think it's a test case for what we could do then for other animals moving forward. You know, we're seeing the rapid domestication of marine species; it's not just octopuses. And we sort of need to step back and take a look at the system and put the brakes on. And octopuses might be the kind of, you know, the sentinel species for that.

Ana Bradley 40:49

That's a really good place, I think, to end this conversation and close it out. I think that that level of hope, I have it too, especially being on the ground and seeing that there is nothing actually built there yet, and seeing some of the activists on the ground who are really working tirelessly to try and raise awareness just in that local vicinity. And then that kind of global movement across well, not global, but the European-wide movement. I guess I'd have one kind of final question, to just follow up the back of these protests and things that have been going on. Where would

you recommend people turn to, people who feel upset or who want to help fight this and stop it from from becoming reality? Is there any way you would direct them to?

Dr Jacquet 41:34

Absolutely, so Compassion in World Farming launched the first Recipe for Disaster campaign. They wrote the letter actually, to the governor of Hawaii. They've been really engaged on this issue and really successful so far, so I would join their group and I would donate money to them. Likewise, you know, there are a bunch of really great European groups working on the issue, including yours, that I think, you know, wherever, whichever one that you identify most with the kind of actions that they're taking, their kind of theory of change would be something. It would be wonderful. Join, join in the fight, you know, send letters to your MP, send letters to Brussel. And, certainly, you know, if you like what Compassion does, if you like what Sentient Media does, definitely consider joining. I have been really heartened by the activities of groups. And you know, the other thing that I would love to see is push environmental groups into this space. Because this isn't just a question about animal sentience; it really does impact the environment. And so groups like Oceana, groups like WWF, they really should be on board in this conversation. And they should be fighting for this too, and they have a lot of power within the European Parliament as well. So I would love to see those groups get more involved.

Ana Bradley 43:10



Thank you so much for your time and for all you're doing to help stop this, this particular farm and hopefully other things from being built.

Dr Jacquet 43:19

Thank you for the work you do.

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**Ana Bradley** (<https://sentientmedia.org/author/anabradley/>)  (<https://py.pr.co.uk/>)

 (<https://twitter.com/AnaBrdly>)  (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ana-bradley-35728225/>)

Ana is the Executive Director at Sentient Media. Her background is in content production and startup consultancy.

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