Seafood of the future: Could lab-grown fish replace its wild and farmed relatives?

Do we need animals to make meat? What if we could grow cells outside the body of an animal to create the food on our plates? Would we still farm them or would we embrace the alternative?

This is a new era of “clean meat” science, also called “cell-based”, lab-grown, or “cultured” meat. It is a way to grow cells into meat rather than feed, breed, and kill the animals in the traditional sense.

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“None of us really like the designation [of cell-based],” said Arye Elfenbein, a cardiologist and one of the founders of Wild Type. Every animal is a collection of cells, so the distinction is a bit nonsensical.

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The mission behind cell-based seafood is to make the cleanest, most sustainable fish on the planet. Cleanest here means no mercury, no sea lice, no microplastics, no antibiotics – all of which can be found to varying degrees in farmed and wild [seafood].

“Likewise, it is sustainable because we don’t have to take any fish out of the sea to make what we’re doing,” said Kolbeck, who previously worked as a diplomat in food insecure regions. “People know that this is the healthiest fish you can find on the planet in that it’s free of those contaminants.”

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This is not to say lab-based seafood won’t have its own sustainability challenges too, most notably in terms of energy use ….

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