



Fisheries researchers suggest promoting resiliency, not a single species, in face of climate change

A major review recently published in the journal *Fisheries* suggests that climate change will produce significant changes to western Canada's freshwater fish populations, and the best solution is the adoption of an ecosystem-based approach.

Mark Poesch, the lead author on the study, says that a "complicated and diverse set of issues are predicted to unfold" with climate change.

Poesch notes that, historically, fisheries have been managed species by species, but this approach simply will not work in the future.

"We need to build resiliency within the ecosystem, as opposed to focusing on the needs of one species," said Poesch.

The review suggests that, moving forward, fisheries managers should identify opportunities to create biodiverse systems. This approach is believed to maximize the ability of the ecosystem to withstand future stresses, including those resulting from climate change.

An ecosystem-based approach is already being adopted for the Milk River Watershed of southern Alberta, which is home to an assemblage of fish species that is unique in Canada. The project aims to conserve a variety of species including the Western Silvery Minnow (Endangered), Rocky Mountain Sculpin (Threatened) and Mountain Sucker (Threatened).

