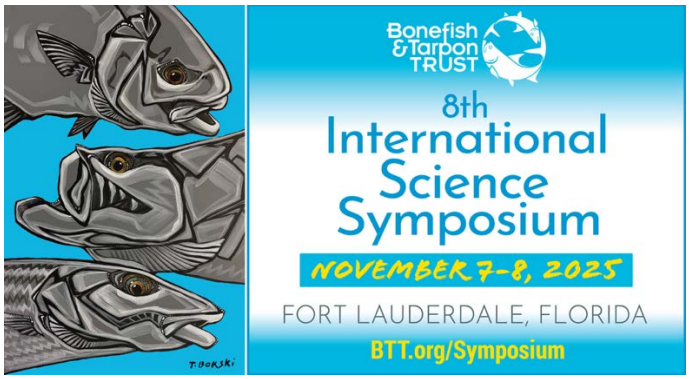


Lessons from inland fisheries relevant to the protection and conservation of coastal marine flats fishes

Steven J. Cooke[1], Jessica Robichaud[1], Lucas Griffin[2], Jake Brownscombe[1], Aaron Adams[3,4], Sascha Clark Danylchuk[5], and Andy J. Danylchuk[6]

Flats fishes are targeted by recreational anglers and even some small-scale subsistence fishers, yet the biggest threats to flats fishes tend to be external to the fishing sector. For example, threats such as habitat loss and alteration, pollution, and climate change make it difficult for fisheries managers to use harvest regulations or other interventions to protect or restore flats fish populations. There is remarkable similarity between the plight of flats fisheries and inland fisheries in rivers and lakes. For decades efforts have been underway to protect and restore inland fish populations and fisheries. Engaging with other sectors such as agriculture, energy, and forestry has been deemed essential to protect inland fishes given the consequences of those sectors on fishes. Moreover, inland fishes depend on environmental professionals such as urban planners and water resource managers making decisions that benefit fish and people. Another common theme for inland fisheries management is the recognition of intact and high quality habitat as being fundamental to healthy and productive fish populations. Here we share some learnings from the inland fisheries space that are relevant to the management and conservation of flats fishes and their ecosystems.

1) Department of Biology, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, K1S 5B6
2) Department of Integrative Biology, University of South Florida. Tampa, FL, 33620
3) Bonefish & Tarpon Trust, Miami, FL, 33133
4) Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, Florida Atlantic University, Fort Pierce, FL, 34946
5) KeepFishWet, Amherst, MA, 01002
6) Department of Environmental Conservation, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA, 01002