

Mapping the shifting contours of fisheries knowledge and governance in Canada's four coastal regions.

(Panel presentation at CZC 2016 by Emily Bingeman, Lisa Blenkinsop, Shelley Denny, Mirjam Held, Nicole Latulippe, Saul Milne)

To what extent and how are different knowledge systems incorporated into fisheries decision-making regimes at national, regional, and local levels in Canada? What are the opportunities and challenges available to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous resource users and decision-makers to enhance fisheries governance at multiple scales? These questions animate Fish-WIKS (Fisheries - Western and Indigenous Knowledge Systems), a research partnership involving Indigenous communities and organizations, and Universities from all four of Canada's coastal regions – Arctic, Atlantic, Inland, and Pacific. Given ecosystem complexity and additional uncertainties posed by climate-induced changes, current national level decision-making processes, premised on Western knowledge systems, have been inadequate for effective fisheries governance. Fish-WIKS hypothesizes that Indigenous knowledge systems offer a better framework for the implementation of ecosystem-based management of fisheries. Working with four distinct Indigenous coastal communities (Tla-o-qui-aht, BC; Repulse Bay, NU; Nipissing, ON; and Eskasoni, NS), the project seeks to enhance management, ease barriers to the full inclusion of Indigenous peoples in resource governance, and obtain mutually beneficial outcomes through the interplay of diverse knowledge systems. In this session, papers will address the questions and underlying assumptions posed by Fish-WIKS, drawing on emergent research findings from each region. Attending to place-specificity, the session will also work conceptually to map Indigenous knowledges, practices, and beliefs onto the shifting and uneven contours that mark fisheries governance in a settler-colonial regime.