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New study outlines recommendations for improving climate change resilience in U.S. fisheries

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

New research could help U.S. fishing communities adapt to the effects of climate change

A new study from the University of California-Santa Barbara has outlined recommendations for helping U.S. fisheries and fishing communities adapt to the effects of climate change. The paper, which was published in *Fish and Fisheries* (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/faf.12724>), identifies actionable steps fishing managers can take to adjust the rules that guide how much of a stock can be fished, known as Harvest Control Rules (HCRs).

Chris Brown, president of Seafood Harvesters of America, said this study will help create climate-resilient fisheries and protect fishermen's livelihoods.

"We are the canary in the coal mine – we are already seeing the impacts of climate change out on the water every day. Black sea bass and fluke have moved north," said Brown. "We are all deck hands on planet Earth. We need unconventional thought that leads to reasonable solutions."

The recommendations laid out in the paper include using catch limits based on stock population size,



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accounting for potential impacts of climate change in the rules, and evaluating which management approaches are best for a specific fishery. They were developed by a team of researchers led by Chris Free at UCSB, who evaluated the management of over 500 fisheries across the United States with a specific focus on the HCRs.

A horizontal banner advertisement for AquaBounty. On the left, a dark blue box contains the text "SUSTAINABILITY NEVER TASTED SO GOOD" in white. In the center is a photograph of a cooked salmon fillet on a white plate, garnished with green leafy vegetables and orange slices. On the right, the AquaBounty logo is displayed in blue, with a button below it that says "DISCOVER WHY" in white text on a dark blue background.

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“The recommendations in our paper will help fisheries managers improve the climate resilience of the nation’s fisheries in the short and long term,” said Free.

A few of the key recommendations include adjusting fishing rates based on stock status, fine-tuning and adapting the precautionary buffers that are used when calculating catch limits, considering climate change in the management of data-limited stocks and exploring ecosystem-based catch limits.

Read the full study and recommendations [here](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/faf.12724)
(<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/faf.12724>).

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