

# Reviving point-counterpoint dialogue in *Fisheries*

Steven J. Cooke\*

Editor-in-Chief of *Fisheries* Magazine and Department of Biology, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada K1S 5B6

\*Corresponding author: Steven J. Cooke. Email: [stevencooke@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:stevencooke@cunet.carleton.ca)

Point-counterpoint dialogue creates an opportunity for sharing different perspectives on important issues in fisheries and aquatic sciences. These can take many forms including live “debate” style events that require skilled moderation. The American Fisheries Society (AFS) has a history of facilitating such sessions at AFS meetings going back to at least 1993. Then AFS President Ray Hubley included point-counterpoints in his program of work, which led to several sessions including at Division meetings. One such event at the North Central Division Meeting in 1993 focused on conservation genetics and current stocking practices where the participants explored the extent to which they were compatible. They published a summary of those discussions in *Fisheries* (see Philipp et al., 1993). Twenty years later the concept has languished. Yet today, there is no shortage of issues or topics for which different views are held by members of our profession. To that end, *Fisheries* will be launching a new series of articles that represent a written version of the point-counterpoint approach. We are open to different formats. For example, once a topic and two “teams” are identified, each would be tasked with writing a 3,000-word perspective presenting their view. The two teams then exchange their text and write an additional 2,000 words where they respond to the perspectives raised by the other team. These two pieces are published back-to-back in the journal after peer review (focused on clarity, civility, and factual correctness—by the same referees and handling editor for both papers). The last component of the process is bringing together the two teams to generate a short joint paper that highlights key messages and opportunities for addressing the issues or bridging the divide between the differing perspectives. Indeed, that was the initial approach that was embraced in Cooke et al. (2025, this issue) and Corsi et al. (2025b, this

issue) for their papers on the extent to which individual outcomes matter in catch-and-release science and management. However, upon exchanging papers it was agreed that they stood alone well and that it was clear we could easily find middle ground in a summary paper (see Corsi et al., 2025a, this issue). The point is that we are flexible and keen to work with authors to structure these in ways that work for a given topic. The editorial team of *Fisheries* will be generating ideas and reaching out to potential authors. However, we also welcome members of our professional community to identify topics and reach out to the editorial team. Point-counterpoints can have an in-person (or online) component like back in 1993 followed up by a paper in *Fisheries* or use *Fisheries* as the forum for orchestrating the dialogue as described above.

## REFERENCES

- Cooke, S. J., Danylchuk, S. C., Tracey, S. R., Arlinghaus, R., Brownscombe, J. W., Weir, A., Hinch, S. G., Patterson, D. A., Guckian, M. L., & Danylchuk, A. J. (2025). Individual outcomes matter in the context of responsible and sustainable catch-and-release practices in recreational fisheries and their management. *Fisheries*, 50, 172–181. <https://doi.org/10.1093/fshmag/vuae023>
- Corsi, M. P., Cooke, S. J., Danylchuk, A. J., Guckian, M. L., Kozfkay, J. R., & Quist, M. C. (2025a). Points of consensus on catch-and-release: Considerations for science, ethics, and fisheries management. *Fisheries*, 50, 182–184. <https://doi.org/10.1093/fshmag/vuae024>
- Corsi, M. P., Quist, M. C., Kozfkay, J. R., Roth, C. J., & Schill, D. J. (2025b). Why the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: A case for population-level management. *Fisheries*, 50, 164–171. <https://doi.org/10.1093/fshmag/vuae022>
- Philipp, D. P., Epifanio, J. M., & Jennings, M. J. (1993). Point-counterpoint: Conservation genetics and current stocking practices—Are they compatible? *Fisheries*, 18, 14–17. <https://doi.org/10.1577/1548-8446-18-12>