



For Immediate Release
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GREAT LAKES FISHERY COMMISSION HONORS DR. MOHAMED FAISAL FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION TO GREAT LAKES ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE

Professor Faisal, of Michigan State University, is recognized for his work to enhance the understanding of the nature and impact of endemic and emerging pathogens on fishes in the Great Lakes basin

GRAND RAPIDS, MI—The Great Lakes Fishery Commission, during its most recent annual meeting, presented Dr. Mohamed Faisal with the 2015 Jack Christie/Ken Loftus Award for Distinguished Scientific Contributions toward Understanding Healthy Great Lakes Ecosystems. The award, which the Commission presents annually to those who have made major scientific contributions to Great Lakes ecosystems, honors the legacy of Jack Christie and Ken Loftus, two Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources eminent fishery scientists. Commissioner Dr. Bill Taylor, University Distinguished Professor in Global Fisheries at Michigan State University, presented Dr. Faisal with the award during the Commission’s 60th annual meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan for his “astoundingly diverse and impactful” research related to fish pathogens in the Great Lakes. Dr. Faisal currently serves as the S.F. Snieszko Endowed Scholar and Professor at Michigan State University’s Colleges of Veterinary Medicine & Agricultural & Natural Resources.

“Dr. Faisal’s research and outreach contributions have provided managers and scientists with new knowledge about endemic and emerging pathogens in the Great Lakes basin,” Taylor said. “Fish disease is serious business, and Dr. Faisal’s work has greatly advanced our ability to understand and respond to the threats that they pose to our Great Lakes ecosystems. Dr. Faisal’s work helps us understand the diseases themselves, like Bacterial Kidney Disease (BKD) and Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS), and helps us know more about the effects of disease on host species, ranging from trout to salmon to amphipods, and everything in between. Dr. Faisal’s lab works to develop methodology about how to best use technology and assays and leads the way in the development of vaccines.”

Taylor continued: “Dr. Faisal’s lab covers everything from understanding the pathogens themselves to how to monitor, contain, and stop the spread. He excels at making his lab’s findings understandable and available to regional, national and international fishery managers and scientists. He has provided expert guidance to fishery managers about risk assessment and management to assist in making decisions about allowing fish to be moved within the basin. He uses his professionalism, deep knowledge, enthusiasm and sense of humor so effectively when presenting to diverse audiences that we now all understand the importance of diseases in impacting our great lakes fishery resources.”

“His work has had a real effect on management. His research on bacterial kidney disease, for instance, remains the foundation of current control strategies. When VHS reared its head in the Great Lakes several years ago, he helped us understand quickly the nature of the outbreak and the level of fish susceptibility to the virus, and he led the development of non-lethal diagnostic methods,” continued Taylor.

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Taylor added: “Dr. Faisal is also an outstanding mentor. Under his direction, twelve doctoral and master’s students have completed their degrees at MSU, and four students are in progress. As a teacher, his love and dedication for his research are, pardon the pun, infectious. He, and the legacy of his scientific contributions, will continue to inspire new research on aquatic animal health.”

Taylor concluded: “Overall, Dr. Faisal has established a dynamic, responsive and extremely productive aquatic animal health program, with research tailored to the emerging needs of the Great Lakes basin. His highly visible and effective outreach programs ensures that new discoveries are widely shared and are made available to managers. He epitomizes the essence of the Jack Christie/Ken Loftus award presented by our Commission in recognition of excellence in scientific endeavors related to Great Lakes ecosystem health and sustainability.”

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission is an international organization established by the United States and Canada through the 1954 Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries. The Commission has the responsibility to support fisheries research, control the invasive sea lamprey in the Great Lakes, and facilitate implementation of A Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries, a provincial, state, and tribal fisheries management agreement.



Great Lakes Fishery Commission Commissioner Dr. Bill Taylor (left) presents Dr. Mohamed Faisal with the 2015 Jack Christie/Ken Loftus Award for Distinguished Scientific Contributions toward Understanding Healthy Great Lakes Ecosystems. The award was presented to Dr. Faisal on June 10, 2015 at the Great Lakes Fishery Commission’s 60th Annual Meeting held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Photo: T. Lawrence, GLFC.