

Concern about plans to close unique Canadian environmental project

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The Canadian government's plans to discontinue in 2013 a unique environmental research project that has yielded insights into water pollution, climate change and other topics for almost 40 years would be a "huge loss not only to science but to the scientific heritage of humanity." That's the focus of a viewpoint article in ACS' journal *Environmental Science & Technology*.

J. G. Hering, D. L. Swackhamer and W. H. Schlesinger explain that the Experimental Lakes Area (ELA) comprises 58 freshwater lakes and their watersheds in remote areas of the province of Ontario, where researchers can study how human influences impact complex, real-world waterways. The governments of Canada and Ontario put these waters under protection in 1968. Since then, scientists from around the world have conducted numerous long-term and ecosystem-scale experiments, producing 750 peer-reviewed reports, that the authors say would have been impossible elsewhere.

The Canadian government's plans to shutter the ELA fostered [widespread concern](#) among scientists. The authors reflect that concern in arguing: "In a world facing unprecedented effects of global [climate change](#), we can ill afford to abandon a facility that offers the unique combination of long-term monitoring and the capacity for ecosystem-scale experimentation."

More information: "An Unparalleled Scientific Resource Endangered", *Environ. Sci. Technol.*, 2012, 46 (16), pp 8525–8526. [DOI:](#)

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