

## **EFFECTS OF ACIDIFICATION ON THE PRIMARY PRODUCERS OF SOFTWATER LAKES**

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**Abstract:** Increased acidification of the aquatic environment has brought about alterations in community diversity and distribution, shifts in species dominance, and changes in the levels of biomass and productivity. Phytoplankton biomass decrease is concomitant with increased water clarity. Benthic mats of Sphagnum or bluegreen algae often develop, effectively sealing sediments from overlying water. A relatively few species of macrophytes dominate the littoral zone which increases in depth due to improved water clarity. As pH decreases, the emergence of a more simplified ecosystem is observed; this is even more vulnerable to changing environmental conditions than the one which existed previously.