Lawrence, Ted; African Center for Aquatic Research and Education
ted@agl-acare.org
Authors: Ted Lawrence, African Center for Aquatic Research and Education
Jess Ives, University of Waterloo
Title: 1. Approaching Africa’s Future Fresh Water Challenges through Capacity Building and Collaboration

The African Great Lakes (AGL) support millions of people with protein, clean water, and transportation, but also face notable challenges, including climate change, agricultural runoff, deforestation, and overharvest of fish. Attempts to address the challenges facing freshwater resources often fall short due, in part, to the underinvestment in universities and research institutions and harmonized and disparate approaches to research. Environmental problems are often addressed by international agencies targeting short-term objectives, resulting in piecemeal results. Strengthening research capacity in developing countries can bolster long-term, strategic commitments, stable funding, and address ecosystem approaches to resource development and management. Research capacity, therefore, is one of the prerequisites for meeting development goals. This talk focuses on a call from the international community to create Centers of Excellence to address African issues, and specifically, to enhance the capacity of riparian nations to conduct ecosystem research and monitoring to support sustainable basin development around the African Great Lakes. Here we discuss the newly created African Center for Aquatic Research and Education (ACARE) and discuss objectives, essential features, and scope, as well as institutional arrangements, partners, funding options, and potential African and global water initiatives that can help inform positive policy and management of the AGL.