



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **African Center for Aquatic Research and Education's Board Evolves**

### ***African and European members join and leadership changes***

**ANN ARBOR, MI**—The African Center for Aquatic Research and Education announced today the on-boarding of two leaders in African Great Lakes research and education: Dr. Ken Irvine, IHE-Delft, The Netherlands, and Professor Emmanuel Kaunda, Director of the World Bank Africa Centre of Excellence in Aquaculture & Fisheries and Professor at Lilongwe University of Agriculture & Natural Resources, Lilongwe, Malawi.

Dr. Irvine brings vast knowledge of freshwater expertise to ACARE having obtained his PhD from the University of East Anglia (UK) working on shallow lake ecology, having conducted studies on Lake Malawi/Nyasa/Niassa, and having investigated policy and ecology to support European water policy. In 2011 he moved to IHE Delft Institute of Water Education in the Netherlands to head the Aquatic Ecosystems Group. Recent projects on the Great Lakes includes work on Lake Victoria.

Professor Emmanuel Kaunda is currently the Director of the World Bank Africa Centre of Excellence in Aquaculture Fisheries at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. His research is on aquaculture and fisheries and he has contributed immensely to the development of the Pan African Fisheries Reform Strategy having coordinated the Aquaculture Working Group of the New Partnerships for Africa's Development. Professor Kaunda has also received notable awards in recognition of his contribution to aquaculture development and science in general, and is greatly involved in numerous multinational projects regarding fisheries. He is President of the Pan African Fish and Fisheries Association (PAFFA) and is a Robin L. Welcomme Fellow at Michigan State University in the USA. He obtained his PhD in Fisheries Science from Rhodes University in 2001.

“In our efforts to broaden ACARE’s capacity, knowledge, and expertise in addressing some of Africa’s Great Lakes’ most challenging issues, we identified two members of the community who have already been leaders and supporters of our efforts,” said Dr. Bob Hecky, co-founder of ACARE and former chair. “They have been leading various efforts, research, and education during their rich careers and they will strengthen ACARE’s ability to grow in its next phase.”

In addition to adding two new board members, the board changed leadership, with Dr. Bob Hecky retiring from the board in line with plans for transferring guidance to the emerging generation of leaders. Dr. Hecky is one of the founders of ACARE and has been a stalwart figure in both North American and African Great Lakes research.

### **African Center for Aquatic Research and Education**

*Advancing the next generation of African freshwater experts on the African Great Lakes*  
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“Having Dr. Hecky develop this organization at the onset was crucial for our current success,” said Dr. Kevin Obiero, on-coming chair of ACARE’s Board. “We would not be where we are without his knowledge, passion, direction, and support. We have been honoured to have Dr. Hecky as our leader, and though we will miss him on the board, we look forward to his continued guidance in his contributions as an advisor.”

The new board chair, Dr. Kevin Obiero, Centre Director, Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, Sangoro, Kenya, joined ACARE’s board in 2017 and was also critical in the development of the organization at the beginning. Dr. Obiero will lead ACARE for at least two years and is assisting in development of virtual meetings during the increasingly difficult time of the Coronavirus pandemic.

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*The African Center for Aquatic Research and Education (ACARE) is a U.S.-based organization with partner organizations in Africa, Canada and Europe. ACARE was established to help strengthen and harmonize science and information exchange through a highly collaborative network of freshwater experts. ACARE’s network address issues affecting the large, multi-jurisdictional African Great Lakes on which millions of people depend.*



Professor Emmanuel Kaunda (left) and Dr. Ken Irvine joined the African Center for Aquatic Research and Education Board of Directors in May, 2020 to help lead the organization in advancing science on the African Great Lakes.