



Preface

The GLOW IV is part of a series of biennial symposia being organized regularly by the Aquatic Ecosystem Health & Management Society (AEHMS), and the manuscripts resulting from these symposia have been published, subject to peer review, in its journal—*Aquatic Ecosystem Health & Management* (Munawar, 2000, 2002; Van der Knaap, 2003; Munawar et al., 2007). In addition, a book dealing with the Great Lakes of the world has been published (Munawar and Hecky, 2001). These publications provided excellent opportunities to all Great Lakes researchers to publish peer reviewed papers in a high quality international journal (now covered by Thompson ISI and Current Contents) and a book series. The GLOW IV in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, was not an exception to this tradition since it brought together many Great/Large Lakes researchers from across the world. It was encouraging to see that the Great Lakes have received much attention, not only in North America, but also in Africa. Many research and management projects are ongoing and in the pipeline on Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika. As a result many African colleagues have used the GLOW as a new platform for presenting and publishing their research findings and management strategies.

With all that in mind, it was decided to focus on Lake Tanganyika as a case study for GLOW IV in addition to other large ecosystems from across the world. The theme for the Bagamoyo symposium was: **State of Lake Tanganyika, a Case Study, Climate change, Food web alterations, Invasive species, and Management.** The choice of the venue was easily made when the competent authorities of Tanzania offered to host GLOW IV. This time the conference was held next to the Indian Ocean in Bagamoyo, a town just north of Dar es Salaam. The location allowed for interesting pre- and post-conference excursions to the exotic spice island of Zanzibar, and of course, to some of the famous Tanzanian National parks for safaris.

A total number of 43 oral (including 7 plenary) presentations and 21 posters were presented during the conference by colleagues who travelled from far away places in North America, Europe and Africa to partake in the GLOW Conference. Interestingly, some overseas colleagues brought their families along, cementing non-science based friendships. The number of presentations on Lake Tanganyika was relatively small in GLOW IV, the reason being that some important projects were ongoing on Lake Victoria and a large one was being planned on Lake Tanganyika. Also, the Lake Tanganyika papers dealt with projects that had terminated some years ago. Particular attention was paid to an upcoming project on Lake Tanganyika that had been prepared over a number of years by the four riparian nations and a group of international partners consisting of the African Development Bank, World Conservation Union, United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Food and Agriculture Organization and the Nordic Development Fund. The objective of the multi-million project is the integrated management of Lake Tanganyika. In the forthcoming years it is expected that this multi-partner project will yield many papers, and GLOW should continue to assist in publicizing African research on Great Lakes.

The current AEHM issue on GLOW IV presents a selection of the presentations given at the conference. Out of a wide range of presentations, only a small number of the participants were able to submit manuscripts, of which seven survived the stringent peer review process. In order to discuss results internationally these types of focused symposia such as GLOW are essential. Furthermore, ample effort should be directed for publishing results, as only publications can be duly quoted when management and resource overexploitation

are discussed. Policies cannot be based on hearsay; peer reviewed publications should be the basis for rational management and sound policies. Therefore we should expand our efforts towards capacity building so that more presentations end up as publications in the future.

The organisation of an international conference is a serious matter and can only lead to satisfaction when the people behind the scene are motivated and persistent. We thank Prof. Philip Bwathondi, who chaired the local arrangements committee for his assistance. The Secretariat of the AEHMS in Canada, especially Jennifer Lorimer, played a key role in the overall organization of the conference and preparation of the book of program and abstracts. The publication of this special issue could not have been realized without continuing financial and technical support of the AEHMS. We sincerely thank the editorial committee, managing editor (Iftekhhar Fatima), referees and editorial assistants (Susan Blunt, Heather Niblock, Mark Fitzpatrick, Sabrina Fox, Lisa Elder and Joanne Dziuba) for their assistance.

Finally, the AEHMS-GLOW IV gratefully acknowledges the hard work and sincere efforts of Dr. Marc Gaden for fund-raising from the following sponsors: Great Lakes Fishery Commission, The United States Geological Survey and the International Joint Committee. GLOW V is already fast approaching, which will be held in Ethiopia in April 2008, focusing on the Great Lakes, Rift Valley Lakes, Freshwater Fishes & Fisheries of Africa and Delta Ecosystems.

Looking forward to seeing you in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia!

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