AWS ver 2.0
Guidance for <u>Step 4: Evaluate</u>
Version of 11th Sept 2018

In is important for a water steward to periodically review its performance and progress. This includes assessing its contributions and benefits to water management, as well as how risk exposure has changed for the organization and its stakeholder. Evaluation forms the basis of determining which new actions or approaches are required and what they should be. This may require an update to the water stewardship and incident response plans from time-to-time, and will support the principle of continuous improvement.

4.1.1 The organization should list the targets for action and improvement from its water stewardship plan, and report on to what extent they are being, or have been met. It should also report on how it has contributed to achieved the four AWS Outcomes.

4.1.2 The organization should report on its financial investment in water stewardship, and any savings that result. The ideal may be to achieve a net saving. However, this should not be the only target. There may be a net cost to the benefit of reducing risk (and avoiding unexpected higher costs), to achieving longer term water security, and achieving a wider benefit for stakeholders and the natural environment. Value creation might not be a direct financial benefit, but can be in the context of improving natural capital and ecosystem services.

4.1.3 Where identified, the organization should report on the value benefit to others. This may be financial benefit, but may also be a value benefit such as improved natural capital and ecosystem services. The benefit may also be improved long term water security across the catchment and reduced risks.

4.1.4 The organization should undertake and report on a senior management or executive level review of its water stewardship policies and plan. This should be by senior managers (perhaps at board level) who are not involved in day-to-day water management or stewardship.

4.2.1 The organization should report at least annually on any significant or emergency water-related events, its response, actions and outcome. It should aim to understand the cause of events, and where appropriate, implement new actions or modify its water stewardship plan. This includes events that impact on the organization and events arising from the organization or its site that impact on others in the catchment.

4.3.1 The organization should report on its consultation efforts, the means of communication, and any feedback. Principal stakeholders should be consulted at least annually.

4.3.2 An evaluation of the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement can include a review of the amount of feedback compared to the number of stakeholders. Where feedback is limited, then consideration should be given to how that could be improved, perhaps with alternative communication methods and frequency. For example, physical meetings will often be more effective than written communication. Could a questionnaire be more successful?

4.3.3 The organization should select methods of communication and engagement that are expected to be the most effective for relevant stakeholders. The scale of engagement may also depend on the nature of actions by the site. For example, physical actions and interventions outside of the site boundaries are more critical for obtaining feedback and consensus than more passive activities, such as monitoring.

4.4.1 Modifications to the water stewardship plan may be influenced by a range of reasons, of which the following are examples:
- A target was achieved, so an action can be stopped or reduced in scope
- A target was not achieved (or at too slow a pace), so new or modified actions may need to be implemented to improve on this.
- Stakeholders objected to an action or its outcome
- An action did not have the expected consequence or impact
- An action caused an unexpected unwanted impact
- An action proved to be disproportionately costly
- A change in regulation