REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND LEARNING: 2017-2018

ALLIANCE FOR WATER STEWARDSHIP

Image: Arabica coffee plantation, Songea Rural District, Tanzania - Olam

OUR IDEA

AWS is a global multi-stakeholder network dedicated to advancing and deepening the impact of credible water stewardship. Together with our members and partners we inspire water users and managers to be responsible stewards of our freshwater resources.

We unite organisations behind our mission:
To ignite and nurture global and local leadership in credible water stewardship that recognizes and secures the social, cultural, environmental and economic value of freshwater.

We achieve this through a global water stewardship system that connects and motivates leading organizations, and an internationally-endorsed standard that drives, recognizes and rewards good water stewardship performance.

THE AWS STANDARD

The AWS Standard offers a credible, globally-applicable framework for water users to understand their own water use and impacts, and to work collaboratively and transparently with others for sustainable water management within the wider water catchment context. Implementers follow the steps and guidance in the AWS Standard to achieve good water stewardship practices that improve site water performance and contribute to wider sustainability goals.

Developed through a four-year global multi-stakeholder process, the Standard supports implementing sites in understanding the local context and its shared water challenges, and to begin transparent and constructive engagement with other stakeholders. Our standard is the only framework for water users that is fully compliant with the stringent requirements for standards systems laid down by ISEAL, the global umbrella organization for credible standard systems.

Implementing the AWS standard helps sites to

- Understand their water use in the context of a catchment
- Build internal capacity through a stepwise learning framework
- Manage water risks at site level and through supply chains
- Engage effectively and build trust with local stakeholders
- Demonstrate real leadership in addressing water challenges

Implementation will support catchment-level improvements related to

- Good water governance
- Sustainable water balance
- Good water quality status
- Healthy status of important water-related areas

Building trust and driving continual improvement

The multi-stakeholder processes through which the AWS Standard was developed provides users with a tested framework that drives transparency, builds trust and promotes a common catchment-level understanding of shared water challenges. The AWS System ensures integrity of standard applications via third party certification achieved through a network of accredited professional service providers who support and assess implementations of the Standard. Applicants are incentivised to drive continual improvement through three performance levels: core, gold and platinum.

Image: Taicang, China - Ecolab

A global initiative, driven by members

The Alliance for Water Stewardship is a global membership-based collaboration. Our members are drawn from all sectors: leading businesses, non-profits, public sector agencies and academic institutes.

By connecting organizations at the forefront of collaboration on water, AWS membership acts as a forum to exchange learning and advance the uptake of water stewardship worldwide. This knowledge helps our members to continually refine their own stewardship practices.

As owners of the AWS system, our members shape the development of AWS processes so as to be responsive to the learning generated and changing nature of water challenges. By working together we are also able to support, and draw strength from, other water initiatives and other sustainability standards pursuing compatible objectives.

Connecting global-to-local and local-to-global

Water use is a local issue with primarily local impacts. The AWS Standard aims to deliver genuine benefits for local stakeholders.

To achieve this, we are building a network of local and regional partners who engage local stakeholders and establish localized networks, expertise and data sets. These facilitate contextually appropriate water stewardship actions within the globally consistent framework of the AWS Standard.

Local partners play a key role in raising awareness, building water stewardship capacity, and supporting uptake of the AWS Standard. The work of local partners helps to establish the "local-to-global" learning pathways that are a critical part of the AWS approach, informing our governance and connecting multinational organizations with local water expertise. AWS regional coordinators support the local-to-global approach.

Supporting implementation of water stewardship

AWS-accredited specialist service providers are a key part of the capacity development program necessary to advance understanding and implementation of AWS water stewardship.

Working closely with our local partners, AWS-accredited organizations support organizations implementing the AWS Standard, and provide third party assessment of conformity with the Standard.

PROGRESS AND LEARNING: 2017-2018

This has been a landmark year for AWS

Our network is growing, our partnerships are strengthening, our visibility is increasing and we are helping our members and partners to engage more deeply in water stewardship.

Our growing multi-stakeholder network

The last year has seen our membership grow in both numbers and in diversity.

Our members are organizations big and small, local and global, and represent a wide range of interests. The result is an increasingly vibrant membership that actively engages with AWS and with other members and partners of the wider AWS system to deliver more value to more organizations.

AWS Membership 2017/18

117 AWS Members in 2018
98% growth from 2016
29 Civil Society Organisations
38 Businesses
21 AWS Service Providers
29 Public Sector / Platforms / Other

Perhaps most importantly, AWS members are increasingly developing a sense of ownership for our development. This is most notably evidenced by the exceptional commitment that members of our Technical Committee have given into the revision of the AWS Standard, a crucial task that will provide the basis of water stewardship actions for the next five years.

The Technical Committee is drawn from our membership and helps to ensure the diversity of stakeholder interests are represented in our technical processes. Over the last year, members of the Technical Committee invested huge amounts of time and grey matter in both revising the content and in stakeholder engagement. On behalf of all the members, partners and stakeholders in AWS we recognise and thank them for their commitment and diligence.

Deepening engagement with partners

As the AWS membership network has grown, so has our work with partners, old and new, deepened and broadened.

Stronger partnership working has yielded, and will continue to yield, results and insights that will help us to improve the AWS System. Highlights from 2018 include:

- We signed a strategic partnership with SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) as part of its new water stewardship program. This will enable us to secure the expertise we need to deliver scale up and maintain the integrity of the AWS System. This partnership has a specific focus on 1. Engaging a larger and more diverse range of stakeholders; 2. Building a library of material to support the adoption of water stewardship by different groups, and 3. Deepening collaboration with other organizations engaged in water stewardship.
- Our work with the Australian Water Partnership (AWP) has continued to deliver impressive results, as highlighted in the next section of this report. While the focus of the work is on the Indo-Pacific region, AWP also recognizes the importance of the global AWS system. AWS Asia Pacific's partnership with AWP has also helped support AWS technical capacity at an international level.
- In Africa the partnership between the Scottish Government and Water Witness International has enabled AWS Africa to be solidified. From its hub in Malawi, AWS Africa is supporting a range of implementations of the AWS Standard that will provide both local impact and valuable strategic learning for AWS.
- Our tri-lateral partnership with Edeka and WWF-Germany has already provided critical lessons to inform how the AWS Standard can be applied in agricultural contexts. A major milestone was achieved in June with Edeka supplier Iberesparragal becoming the first certified site in Europe (certified gold). This Spanish citrus grower has shown exceptional leadership and commitment to the AWS process, with expert support provided by AWS partner Good Stuff International.
- Our partnership with Edeka and WWF-Germany also enables us to advance our ambition of closer collaboration with other standard systems, in this case developing a methodology to enable Global GAP certified producers to achieve AWS certification in a cost-effective way. This methodology will be piloted over the coming months.
- We are also partnering with the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) and Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation to provide technical assistance and develop training modules for BCI producer units in in Pakistan, Tajikistan, India, China and Mozambique. This is will provide important learning on how water stewardship can address the needs of small scale farmers.
- Our collaboration with DEG has enabled training in the AWS Standard for 17 major agricultural suppliers to EU retail from across South America and awareness raising in AWS water stewardship for water utilities in China.

Partnership spotlight: AWS and International Water Association

An example of emerging partnership opportunities and the strategic importance of diversity in our membership is the MoU we signed on 2018 with the International Water Association. IWA is a non-profit organization and knowledge hub for the water sector, with over 60 years' experience connecting water professionals worldwide to find solutions to the world's water challenges. As well as reciprocal membership, this MoU allows us to combine our resources to bring stewardship onto the agenda of municipalities. A key focus will be how we can collaborate to engage cities on the stewardship agenda via an exploration on how the AWS Standard can support IWA's Action Agenda for Basin-Connected Cities initiative.

Image: Kunshan Business Park, China

Commitments to the AWS Standard

The growth of AWS membership and networks and the strengthening of collaborative partnerships is fuelled by, and provides fuel for, the increasing visibility of commitment to AWS actions.

The integrity of the AWS System and its demonstrable ability to deliver results has provided the confidence needed for more public commitments to AWS certification. Examples include Coca-Cola Hellenic's commitment to certifying all non-EU sites, Edeka's commitment to support certification of all high-risk supplier sites, PMI's commitment to certify 11 factories by 2020 and all operations by 2030, and Nestlé Waters commitment to certify all its sites worldwide by 2023.

2018 has seen significant growth in additional certifications by existing implementers. Following certification of two sites Australian poultry producer Inghams is in the process of seeking certification for five new sites. Ecolab, owners of the world's first AWS certified site, achieved new certifications at two additional sites in California with a third registered to certify imminently.

Just as importantly, there has been significant growth in new businesses adopting the AWS Standard. Eleven new sites were certified in 2018 bringing the total number of AWS certified sites to 25. As of writing 63 new sites have formally registered to undergo certification, expected to happen early 2019, with several hundred other sites anticipated to register for certification in the coming strategy period 2019-21.

Within the AWS Global Strategy 2019-21 we are making a formal commitment to focus our resource toward building on the growth we have seen coming from the four key sectors which make up the bulk of this certification activity to date. These priority sectors are: food and beverage producers, agricultural suppliers and retailers, textiles and apparel businesses and micro-electronics production.

One of our most important challenges in 2019 will be to ensure sufficient support is available to accelerate uptake in these sectors while maintaining sufficient flexibility to respond to fresh demand for water stewardship wherever it arises, both sectorally and geographically.

AWS Standard V2.0

Version 1.0 of the AWS Standard was launched in 2014. Since then, the water stewardship community has gained many useful insights into the use and implementation of the AWS Standard. As part of our commitment to continual improvement, and in line with ISEAL requirements, we are undergoing a standard review and revision process that will lead to the launch of AWS Standard Version 2.0 in 2019.

The review and revision process is led by the Technical Committee, a multi-stakeholder body comprised of representatives from AWS Members. Following several iterations of stakeholder consultation, the drafting of a revised standard and incorporation of feedback the committee will provide recommendations on the new iteration of the AWS Standard for approval by AWS Members. There will then be a transition period as we move towards implementation of the new Standard, with a phased approach to the roll out during 2019.

Accompanying the launch of v2.0 will be the development of updated and new guidance. We will be seeking member and partner collaboration on this following formal approval of v2.0 of the revised standard by AWS Members.

Image: Iberesparragal, Seville, Spain - EDEKA/ Christian Schmid

REGIONAL GROWTH OF AWS

Our regional partners and representatives are critical to achieving impact at a local level.

Regional partners and representatives are responsible for developing and strengthening the local water stewardship networks through which implementers can access technical support, broader participation of less powerful groups can be enabled and the wider policy and public-sector impacts we seek can be realised.

Knowledge gathering and sharing by regional partners, representatives and their stakeholders provides the much-needed contextual experience from which version 2.0 of the standard has been developed, and from which the accompanying guidance and support will be developed.

2018 has seen significant progress in the embedding and scaling of work led by our Regional Partners and representatives:

Africa

AWS Africa came to life in 2018 when 26 regional stakeholders from eight countries came together in Zambia to map out a strategy for the region. An advisory group is now in place to guide the development of AWS Africa and to support implementation of the AWS Africa strategy. Water Witness International is acting as an interim secretariat for AWS Africa and has established a hub for AWS Africa's work in Malawi, with support from the Scottish Government.

Amongst the innovative projects that AWS Africa is supporting in Malawi are applications of the AWS standard in education, at Malawi's largest hospital (see box right), with a major agri-business and a smallholder co-operative. An action research approach incorporating rigorous documentation of the costs, benefits, challenges and value of the AWS Standard in these settings will provide vital strategic insights for the global AWS system.

Building on insights from application of the AWS Standard by Serengeti Breweries Ltd (SBL) in Moshi, Tanzania, the Maji SASA! Initiative, a collaboration between AWS Africa, Diageo and the GIZ International Water Stewardship Programme, is helping smallholder farmers in SBL's barley supply chain address climate and water shocks.

Project spotlight: Improving care through water stewardship at a major hospital

Application of the AWS Standard at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre, Malawi's largest hospital, validates the Standard as a valuable framework for identifying, documenting and driving action on water challenges which pose a strategic risk to the cost-effective functioning of a hospital. On signing the hospital's water stewardship commitment, Hospital Director, Dr. Gonani, said "It [the AWS Standard] is very helpful. The Ministry of Health knows the challenges we face, but this exercise provides concrete evidence and the technical assistance we need to make progress".

Through Maji SASA! the partners have helped SBL to characterise the water risks facing their smallholder suppliers and target appropriate actions within a strategic response. Evaluation of this work demonstrates how the AWS Standard implementation supports local livelihoods and sustainable economic growth for smallholders. It also generates guidance for water stewardship action within supply chains and for smallholders that can be utilized in other contexts.

In South Africa, with the total number of professionals trained in the AWS Standard approaching 200, and the AWS Standard being introduced into several convened spaces, we are seeing increasing evidence of water stewardship behaviours taking root. This became especially evident in the multi-stakeholder collective actions in response to drought related crises affecting Cape Town, Ceres and Richards Bay.

While direct attribution is not possible, these cases have provided useful learning that will help us to understand the potential for the AWS Standard to provide a "safe place" that facilitates collective responses.

Other highlights from across Africa:
- Coca-Cola Hellenic seeking certification at 10 sites in Nigeria
- Strategic collaboration agreed with IWaSP and AfriAlliance
- AWS Water Stewardship Award scheme launched in Zambia

Image: Agricane Kaombe Estate, Southern Malawi – Tyler Farrow

Asia Pacific

AWS Asia Pacific have made significant strides in advancing AWS water stewardship in 2018. Not least of these was Renmark Irrigation Trust (RIT) in South Australia becoming the world's first irrigation scheme to achieve AWS certification (Gold). This paves the way for other groups of irrigators and farmers to adopt water stewardship. RIT is now looking at group certification opportunities for their farmers. Together with the RIT and government, AWS Asia Pacific is also aiming to use this experience and the resources developed to spread water stewardship in South Australia and throughout the Murray Darling Basin.

Also in Australia, Inghams engagement with the UNESCO Western Port Biosphere, prompted through implementation of the AWS Standard, has catalyzed the Western Port Water Stewardship Project. This sees more than 30 sites within Western Port developing and implementing water stewardship. This is a model for AWS stakeholders on how to build out to wider impacts via multi-scalar, multi-stakeholder collective action from an initial commitment by a major corporation.

Pan-regionally, AWS Asia Pacific and the Australian Fashion Council are collaborating on supply chain water risk. Both parties worked on advocacy and promotion for Australian fashion business to look beyond water efficiency and promote stewardship and collective responses to water challenges. Baseline water risk studies have been conducted of 40 Chinese wet-processing sites supplying Australian fashion brands Cotton On, Bianca Spender and Designworks. Results show both a potential for site-level improvements and increasing operational risk at production clusters. Another innovation is the launch of 'Australian Fashion Water Stewardship Program' which will work initially in textile clusters in China.

Other highlights from across Asia-Pacific:
- First Indonesia Water Stewardship Forum
- Seminars and workshops in Taiwan, Thailand and Cambodia
- Launch of publication "Evolution of Water Stewardship: An Australian Perspective"
- First AWS certificate issued in New Zealand (Ingham's - Core)'

Project spotlight: Developing local incentives for good water stewardship in City Of Kunshan

AWS Asia Pacific's focus on key industrial clusters has broadened its reach to the ICT sector in China. Building on two years of successful collaboration with AWS and WWF-China, the City of Kunshan announced financial incentives for companies to achieve AWS-Certification. These are part of a package of measures outlined by the City to address water pollution challenges and respond to National Government initiatives to clean-up China's air and water.

As one of the major clusters for the micro-electronics industry, our engagement in Kunshan has also drawn attention from global brands sourcing from China. In January, a round-table discussion was organized involving brand representatives, local manufacturers, government, NGOs and financial institutes. AWS is now engaging closely with the global micro-electronics brands that are committed to improving water stewardship in their supply chains.

Learning from this cluster-based approach is informing work in other countries including WWF-Pakistan's work with textile clusters.

North America

The U.S. Gulf Coast region contains nearly $1 trillion of petrochemical assets and infrastructure. Most of that is critically threatened by sea water rise, salt-water intrusion, increased damage from storm surges and overland flooding. AWS North America is working with a group of committed organizations including the US Business Council for Sustainable Development and other NGO partners on a 'water synergy' project that seeks to leverage climate change investments that protect the water resources.

Central to AWS-NA engagement in Louisiana is the implementation of the AWS Standard by Ecolab at their site in Garyville, Louisiana. In addition to making these critical investments in local water resources, sites can gain third-party recognition of their actions through AWS. This is also an ideal mechanism to have a greater impact at the catchment scale while also mobilizing an entire industry sector to action.

In the Great Lakes Region support from the Fund for Lake Michigan (FFLM) facilitated the implementation of the AWS Standard at two sites in the nearshore Lake Michigan catchment. These sites achieved certification in March of 2018. Due to the success of these two sites the FFLM agreed to fund support for an additional three sites to pursue certification in the same catchment.

Through the engagement in this catchment AWS-NA are aiming to align district-wide water stewardship guidelines with the AWS Standard. This will drive adoption of the AWS Standard on a much larger scale. A high concentration of certified sites combined with water stewardship-specific guidelines at a district-level has potential to create a model for replication at different scales. The learning from this initiative will also support our aim of water stewardship promotion by municipalities.

Other highlights from across the region:
- Molson Coors, Milwaukee, becomes first AWS certified brewery
- First AWS North America Water Stewardship conference
- First AWS training event in Canada

Project spotlight: First commercial building AWS certified

The Global Water Center, a water-focused research, office and collaboration space in Milwaukee, Wisconsin is the first commercial office building in the world to achieve AWS Certification. The site, which exists in the nearshore area of Lake Michigan, implemented several strategies to address water quality challenges in their catchment. Notably, the site improved on-site stormwater infrastructure, improved salt application during snow events, and established procedures to ensure the use of environmentally friendly parking lot pavement. More than fifteen stakeholder groups were consulted by the site establishing the building as a water stewardship leader in the region.

Image: Global Water Center, Milwaukee, USA

South Asia

In 2018 we hired an AWS representative for the South Asia Region, AWS India Co-ordinator Ashish Bhardwaj. Ashish comes to AWS with 7+ years' experience in water management, climate change and resource conservation, working with FICCI Water Mission and Columbia Water Centre – India. With Ashish's guidance we will greatly accelerate adoption in India and beyond.

Ashish's workplan includes support for two action learning projects, the first with Global Agri-business Alliance (GAA) and the second with Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG). Both projects are engaging influential local stakeholders, building an understanding of how AWS can support local goals. The knowledge and learning from the projects will help in strengthening the India Water Stewardship Network (IWSN).

In the project with GAA we are working with one of their member companies, Phoenix, at its rice processing site in Haryana. The project targets smallholder farmers to understand their challenges and gaps in the uptake of water stewardship. The project aims to inform the development of specific guidance material to improve the accessibility to AWS Standard for smallholder agriculture.

With IHG the work focuses in Delhi NCR region and aims to introduce water stewardship to the hotel sector. This approach uses the AWS Standard as a framework to engage diverse stakeholders for catchment water stewardship planning.

We have also been providing support and training in relation to the four sites in India that are pursuing AWS certification: ITC's food factory in Malur, Karnataka and paper mill in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, Diageo's distillery in Alwar, Rajasthan and Euro Fruit's facility in Nasik, Maharashtra.

In Pakistan eight sites are currently implementing the AWS Standard, two of which have achieved certification. The initial focus for AWS in Pakistan has been with larger companies but more recently the Standard has been introduced and adopted with smaller companies (SMEs). To-date, our work has been driven largely by WWF-Pakistan who are also embedding the Standard in their EU-funded project 'Implementation of International Labour and Environmental Standards in Pakistan's SMEs'. This work focuses on leather and textile sectors in four major production centres: Karachi, Faisalabad, Sialkot and Lahore.

Other highlights from across the region:
- First AWS workshops and outreach in Bangladesh
- Certification of Nestle's Islamabad site in Pakistan
- Strengthening of relationships with water-focused platforms across India

Project spotlight: Village level stewardship in India

In February AWS was represented on a high-level field visit as part of the Swiss-funded "WAPRO" project, led by AWS member Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation. This project seeks to advance water stewardship through value chains of two commodities, rice and cotton, using sector standards set by the Sustainable Rice Platform and the Better Cotton Initiative (both AWS members). A highlight of the visit was a presentation by a community water users association who, after receiving training by AWS Standard, have developed a water stewardship plan based on the AWS Standard. This plan will be promoted in an additional 53 upstream and downstream villages in the same catchment area.

Other regions

In those regions where we do not currently have formal partnerships or local representatives we have been supporting progress through our members and other means.

In Europe our partnership with Edeka and WWF-Germany has resulted in the ground-breaking work with citrus growers in Spain, mentioned earlier in this report. We have also welcomed UK NGO the Rivers Trust to our membership and organized a joint training to explore alignment between AWS and their role as custodians of the Catchment Based Approach in England and Wales. In Scotland we have been exploring how the AWS Standard can support the stewardship efforts of the whisky sector, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and other stakeholders.

In South America, 2018 saw the region's second AWS certified site and the first in Brazil with PMI's facility in Santo Cruz do Sul. We have been working with a variety of organizations to leverage the successful completion in 2017 of the SECO-funded project to advance water stewardship in asparagus value chains in Peru. As part of these efforts DEG provided funding for trainings in Peru and Costa Rica. With strong emerging interest from EU retailers it is hoped that this will develop into a new partnership that will lead to the scaling of water stewardship in South American agricultural business, supported by an AWS co-ordinator connecting sites with each other and with policy-makers, public-sector institutions and wider stakeholders.

Image: DanPer, Trujillo, Peru

ACTING ON LESSONS LEARNED 2017-18

Learning from across the globe helps us better understand how to achieve more participation, benefits and impacts from a credible water stewardship system.

A strong, credible brand linked to a system with proven integrity will drive commitment

Initial uptake of AWS water stewardship tended to be in response to identified water-related risks at specific sites. As our system has grown, the value to members and partners of being linked to a credible brand has become more evident, as shown by the growth in multi-site commitments. With the narrative on water stewardship transitioning from risk response to value creation, the AWS brand needs to provide value for all users of the AWS system. In 2019 we will support the first applications of the AWS on-product certification mark. Increased visibility of AWS brand via products will in-turn increase our visibility, influence and ability to support corporate & public policy goals.

ALLIANCE FOR WATER STEWARDSHIP CERTIFIED

A focus on key sectors will deliver on the real potential of AWS water stewardship

The era of AWS Standard V1.0, from 2014-18, provided insight as to where demand for AWS services is strongest. With the launch of V2.0 our ambition is to build on this demand to scale adoption and impact to position AWS water stewardship as a sector norm. While maintaining sufficient agility to respond to demand where it emerges, we will concentrate efforts on four sectors which we see as having the most transformative potential: food and beverage, agricultural supply chains, textiles and micro-electronics. Working with major market players, industry associations and influential local bodies we will develop sector specific tools and guidance that reduce complexities and the risk of perverse outcomes stemming from fragmented approaches.

Evidence-based communication will accelerate uptake

A stronger body of evidence will demonstrate the business benefits and the social and environmental impacts of water stewardship. Working more deeply with priority sectors will yield a more nuanced picture of process and outcomes. We will use this to illustrate how water stewardship will make businesses better, more trusted and more profitable. Equally, the potential of the AWS network and the AWS Standard to address major water issues and make significant contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, WASH and climate change needs to be assessed and communicated. Investments made in 2018 in new AWS roles covering Knowledge and Learning and Outreach & Engagement will drive this forward.

Regional networks that have strong relationships with local stakeholders are critical

Experiences over the last 12 months have underscored what we have always recognized: the importance of having the relationships needed to effectively address local challenges. Regional or country networks are crucial in 'localizing' the AWS Standard system. They support the sharing of experience and knowledge, provide a mechanism to connect stewardship activity with policy making and enable the development of contextual guidance needed to support uptake of water stewardship. They also have a critical role in raising the profile and influence of AWS in the region. In 2017-18 we have invested in growing local capacity in Africa, South Asia and Asia Pacific. Our ambition is to continue this and to add similar capacity in South America and the EU.

Credible independent expertise is an important element in the AWS certification process

Fully understanding the local legislative and regulatory context is a critical part of AWS certification processes. Contexts involving transboundary water issues or contested water rights are examples in which additional resources may be required to navigate the regulatory or socio-political complexities. Without credible, independent, catchment expertise, there is a risk that important issues wouldn't be picked up in the certification process and the credibility of the certification and the AWS System could be put at risk. In 2019 we will launch a new AWS Professional Credentialing programme to catalyse uptake of expert AWS service provision.

Water stewardship in supply chains is critical, complex but possible

Global brands are seeking to gain a full understanding of water use and impacts in their supply chains – not just direct suppliers but also tier 2 and 3 suppliers further upstream. Reaching out to the whole supply chain is not an easy task, but evidence from China has shown that AWS's approach can have a cascading effect for supply chain management. Similarly, work in Tanzania has illustrated that by developing a transferable methodology for prioritizing and targeting responses to water risks within supply chains, site-level implementation of the AWS Standard can drive stewardship in supply chains. Learning projects like these, and others across the network, are aiding promotion and adoption of AWS.

Local government recognition can incentivise adoption of AWS

In many contexts, local government recognition is an important factor for companies adopting the AWS standard. Conversely, experiences from Peru and China show that, by providing a credible system for businesses to make claims of good water stewardship, AWS has the potential to be adopted by governments as part of incentive policy. To achieve more widespread integration into public sector goals AWS needs to continue to strengthen its capacity and credibility at the local level. Through strategy period 2019-21 we will seek strengthening of the local networks and partnerships that facilitate engagement with appropriate government departments.

Complexity must be recognized

As we gain more experience, a common theme is that water stewardship is complex. By their nature, water stewardship processes involve different interests and a resource that is essential, threatened and often highly contested. For water stewardship to be effective in building trusting relationships that drive behavioural change, we must recognize the complexities and power imbalances that exist both within the context where water stewardship takes place and within the participating groups, whether they are global organizations, local communities or any other involved party.

FIVE WAYS YOU CAN HELP TO ENSURE RESPONSIBLE USE OF FRESHWATER:

1. **Join AWS:**
   Become a member and help shape the future of water stewardship.
2. **Implement the AWS Standard:**
   Join a growing number of leading water users to commit to global best practice.
3. **Help others to use the AWS Standard:**
   Work with your supply chains, investments, clients or partners to advance uptake of the AWS Standard.
4. **Participate in a local network:**
   Take part in advancing water stewardship in your own country or region by joining one of our local networks.
5. **Fund our groundbreaking work:**
   With more resources we can accelerate the uptake and impact of water stewardship worldwide.

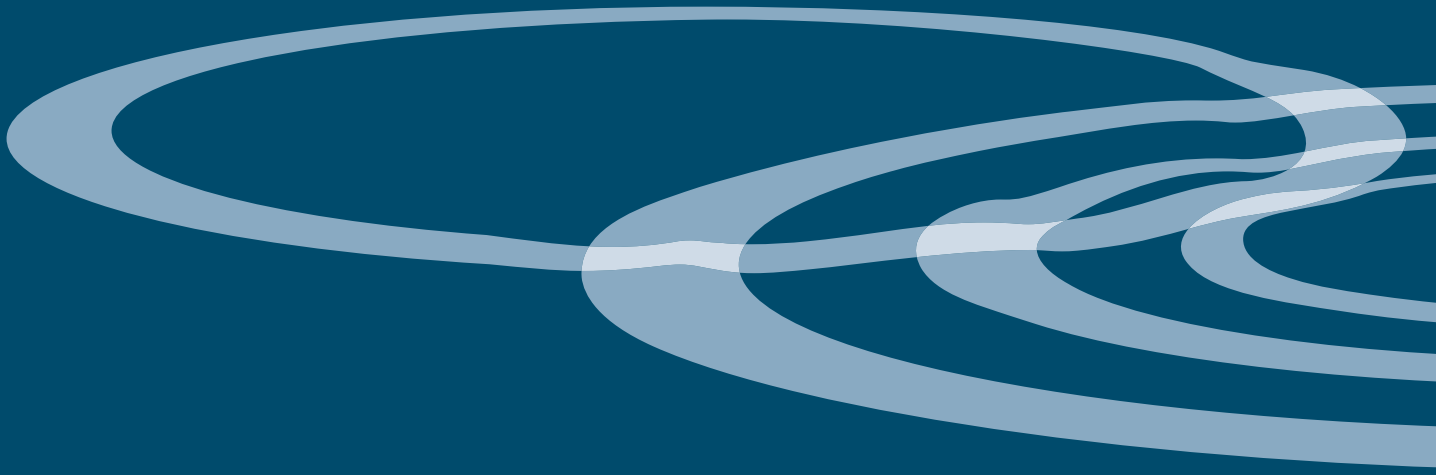
FUNDING MEMBERS

Public sector

Private sector

FUNDING PARTNERS

Image: Kathmandu, Nepal – Adrian Sym



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