

AWS AND EWP AGREE PATHWAY FOR ALIGNMENT OF WATER STEWARDSHIP SYSTEMS

Since 2009, the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) and the European Water Partnership (EWP) have been collaborating to promote good water stewardship. Both AWS and EWP have led the development of water stewardship standards: the AWS International Water Stewardship Standard (the AWS Standard) is globally-applicable while the European Water Stewardship Standard is specific to the EU regulatory context. Both Standards are scheduled for revision and review, with the two processes expected to commence in late 2016.

AWS and EWP both recognize the need for a coherent global water stewardship system to engage major water users with interests in multiple regions. In pursuit of this objective, and without pre-empting the results of the forthcoming revision and review processes, AWS and EWP have agreed to work together to achieve a single global water stewardship standard system compliant with ISEAL codes of good practice¹. Provided forthcoming revision and review processes support this alignment, both systems will be integrated into one global water stewardship system including integration of governance and business models to ensure consistency for organizations engaged in water stewardship efforts in Europe and globally.

AWS and EWP are both committed to continuing their collaboration to advance good water stewardship in Europe and around the world.

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AWS is a global membership-based collaboration that connects organizations dedication to promoting responsible use of freshwater. The AWS Standard provides a globally-applicable framework for major water users to understand their water use and impacts, and to work collaboratively and transparently for sustainable water management within a catchment context. The AWS Standard system includes third party certification and a network of accredited professional service providers who support and assess the implementation of the Standard, overseen by a multi-stakeholder governance system. AWS regional partners engage local stakeholders and strive to establish localized networks, expertise and data sets that facilitate contextually-appropriate water stewardship actions within the globally-consistent framework of the AWS Standard.

The European Partnership is an independent value based non-profit organization structured as an open and inclusive member association. EWP's European Water Stewardship (EWS) programme is dedicated to advancing Water Stewardship across the EU through application of the EWS Standard that enables businesses, farmers and cities to assess, verify and communicate responsible water stewardship practices. The EWS standard addresses the implementation of water stewardship at site level, with a strong focus on understanding and engaging in the local river basin. The use of the EWS standard is embedded in a structural system verified by recognized certification bodies and accredited auditors. In addition, the EWS Programme established the Water Stewardship Academy at the Water Campus Leeuwarden in 2015 to accelerate innovation and application of the EWS Standard across the EU.

¹ Both AWS and EWP are working according to the ISEAL principles. AWS is a full member of ISEAL, which requires compliance with the standard-setting, impact evaluation and assurance codes of good practice. See <http://www.isealalliance.org> for more details.