WATER STEWARDSHIP INDIA NETWORK
(INDIA WATER STEWARDSHIP NETWORK)

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)

I.CONTEXT

The India Water Stewardship Network (IWSN) has been formed with the purpose of bringing multi-stakeholders together to promote a clearer understanding and uptake of the Water Stewardship Framework in the Indian context, while demonstrating implementable projects. Water stewardship is an approach that engages major water users in sustainable management of shared water resources in the public interest through collective action at a site, watershed and basin level to not only mitigate water risks, but also move towards basin water security. The network has agreed to use Alliance for Water Stewardship Standard, as a baseline for developing the Water Stewardship definition and framework.

II. DEFINITION (WATER STEWARDHIP FOR INDIA)

THE IWSN has adopted the water stewardship definition of the AWS Standard in order to establish the parameters of what is considered "credible" water stewardship. It is understood that that this is a high-level definition and that local application of water stewardship will necessitate a translation of this definition into actions that are suitable in the local context. The definition adopted by the IWSN is, therefore, "The use of water that is socially equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial, achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process that involves site and catchment-based actions. Good water stewards understand their own water use, catchment context and shared risk in terms of water governance, water balance, water quality and important water-related areas; and then engage in meaningful individual and collective actions that benefit people and nature."

Notes:

− Socially equitable water use recognises and implements a 'rights approach' to water and sanitation and helps to ensure human wellbeing and equity
− Environmentally sustainable water use contributes towards maintaining or improving biodiversity, ecological and hydrological processes at the catchment level
− Economically beneficial water use contributes to long-term sustainable economic growth and development and poverty alleviation for water users, local communities and society at large
− Internal actions: within the site and under the responsibility of the site management
− External: actions in collaboration with others in the catchment and including actions in the supply chain and the catchment as a whole.
− Water stewardship is intended to support and contribute to Integrated Water Resource Management by all actors.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE WATER STEWARDSHIP NETWORK

The following core objectives shall guide the strategies and activities of the IWSN

- Promote an understanding of 'water stewardship' (as defined above) in diverse Indian contexts among multiple stakeholders
- Develop tangible implementation guidelines for credible water stewardship in India
- Develop and implement strategies to increase awareness and drive uptake of water stewardship among various stakeholders
- Engage policy makers to promote water stewardship
- Engage with and/or implement water stewardship projects
- Document successful 'case examples' to help drive uptake of water stewardship (both policy and practice levels)
- Ensure that resources are available to implement IWSN strategies
- Provide a link between water stewardship in India and the governance of AWS at an international level, ensuring effective learning pathways are established
- Act as Sounding Board to offer support and advice to internal and external partners on water stewardship

IV. FOUNDING MEMBERS

Founding Members: AWS, CDP, CIPT, CRB, HUF, IWMI, ITC, Netherlands' Embassy, WWF-India;
Observer: 2030WRG

V. GENERAL OPERATIONS

- **Meetings**: It is expected that meetings of the IWSN will take place at least on a quarterly basis. Participation will be either in-person or by teleconference. The frequency and nature of meetings may change as membership of the IWSN increases.
- **Coordination**: The AWS secretariat will be responsible for initial coordination of the IWSN, until a suitable local alternative can be established. It is anticipated that the IWSN will be coordinated by India-based personnel as soon as resources are in place to fund this position.
- **Meetings:** IWSN members may elect a Chair to act as the primary liaison point between the group and the AWS Secretariat.
- **Decision making**: Decision making within the IWSN will be done by consensus[1]. Consensus need not imply unanimity.
- **Financial support**: IWSN members will not be compensated for activities related to the Network.
- **Technical support:** Establish technical working groups based on demand

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[1] The International Organization for Standardization definition of consensus is "general agreement, characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues by any important part of the concerned interests and by a process that involves seeking to take into account the views of all parties concerned and to reconcile any conflicting arguments."