

ALLIANCE FOR WATER STEWARDSHIP

CHAMPIONING A GLOBAL STANDARD
FOR THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF FRESHWATER



Growing populations and economies, changing lifestyles and global climate change are putting increasing pressure on our water resources. Major water users, governments, cities and citizens all recognize the urgent need to work together to ensure the sustainability of this vital resource on which we all depend. Water stewardship enables water users to work together to identify and achieve common goals for sustainable water management and shared water security.

What is the Alliance for Water Stewardship?

AWS is a global membership collaboration comprising businesses, NGOs and the public sector. Our members contribute to the sustainability of local water-resources through their adoption and promotion of a universal framework for the sustainable use of water - the International Water Stewardship Standard, or AWS Standard - that drives, recognizes and rewards good water stewardship performance.

What is water stewardship?

Stewardship is about taking care of something that we do not own. Stewardship approaches focus on the management of common pool resources like forests, fisheries or, in our case, freshwater. Water stewardship is based on the principle of there being a collective need for sustainable water-resources and a collective need for effective responses to address shared water-related challenges.



How does the AWS Standard work?

The AWS Standard offers a credible, globally-applicable framework for major 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.



How do I know the AWS Standard is credible?

The AWS Standard was developed through a four-year global, multi-stakeholder consultation seeking a framework that could be implemented by any site, in any sector, in any catchment around the world. Our standard is the only framework for water users that is fully compliant with the stringent guidelines for standards system laid down by ISEAL, the global alliance for credible standard systems.



How do I know claims made by users of the AWS Standard are robust?

The AWS Standard is built around six steps. Site owners commit to water stewardship (1), gather and understand water-related data (2), create a water stewardship plan (3), implement their plan (4), evaluate performance (5) and communicate progress with stakeholders (6). Each step contains a series of criteria and indicators. Following the steps and criteria will lead to improved performance in four areas: water balance, water quality, healthy status of important water-related areas and water governance. Fulfilment of each criteria is evidenced by the related indicators. Sites making claims to good water stewardship are audited and certified as meeting the indicators by credible, third party assessors independent of AWS or the site.



Who is involved?

Our members comprise businesses facing water risks relating to operations, supply chains, local stakeholders and end of line consumers; public sector organizations working in water-relevant policy; investors and financial service providers seeking to enhance risk management processes; development agencies and NGOs with water-related programmes; sustainability service providers who support the implementation or assessment of standards and CSR programmes.

How do I get involved?

Join AWS as a member and get involved in the AWS System. Membership is open to all organisations motivated to tackling water-related challenges collectively. Membership is open to organisations of any size and in every location. The strength of the alliance lies in the diversity of experience members bring to it, and from the knowledge of how stewardship can contribute in the locations that they have a stake in. For more information on how to join please contact membership@aws.org

