

AWS ver 2.0

## Guidance for Step 3: Implement

Version of 11<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018

### General guidance

The organization should be able to provide appropriate evidence that it is implementing its water stewardship plan as defined in Step 2. Documentation may be in paper or electronic form according to the organization's own convention, provided these are accessible to auditors.

#### 3.1

Knowledge of regulatory and water rights is addressed in Indicator 1.5.2.

##### 3.1.1

- The organization should provide, or reference, the documentation demonstrating legal compliance and provide documentation of any violations or corrective actions taken to address violations.
- Documentation may be in the form of authorizations, auditor records, compliance submissions, etc.
- Sites may reference documentation already gathered by regulatory bodies where appropriate, provided they are accessible by the auditor for verification

##### 3.1.2

- Guidance on the respect of human rights is given in the UN Guidance Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011). This sets out that while sovereign states clearly have a role to respect and uphold human rights, businesses also have a responsibility as “specialized organs of society performing specialized functions, who are required to comply with all applicable laws and to respect human rights”
- It states: “The responsibility to respect human rights requires that business enterprises:
  - (a) Avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through their own activities, and address such impacts when they occur;
  - (b) Seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their operations, products or services by their business relationships, even if they have not contributed to those impacts.
- “Business enterprises should have in place policies and processes appropriate to their size and circumstances, including:
  - A policy commitment to meet their responsibility to respect human rights;
  - (b) A human rights due diligence process to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their impacts on human rights;

- (c) Processes to enable the remediation of any adverse human rights impacts they cause or to which they contribute.

Reference:

UN Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework: <https://www.business-humanrights.org/sites/default/files/reports-and-materials/Ruggie-protect-respect-remedy-framework.pdf>

UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011)

[https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf)

### 3.2.1 and 3.2.2

If targets are relevant and have been defined (Indicator 2.3.1), then the organization should show what the targets are and how it has progressed against them in a format that is clear and appropriate.

3.2.3 Where water savings are made, and not required to achieve a sustainable water balance, then there is an advanced benefit in allocating this water to environmental and social needs in the catchment. Re-allocations should only be undertaken with the approval of relevant stakeholders and regulatory agencies. This is particularly important for water supplied for human use, but also for water bodies containing important biodiversity. Whatever the purpose, the organization must be confident the water quality is safe and compliant for the intended use, and should include water treatment if necessary to achieve this.

Examples include:

- Transferring saved water to a sensitive WHCV feature, such as a biologically important wetland
- Providing a drinking water supply to a small local community
- Providing irrigation water to subsistence farmers

3.2.4 Re-allocations should only be undertaken with the approval of relevant stakeholders and regulatory agencies. Where legal agreement or compliance is required, the organization should provide evidence of this.

3.2.5 The organization should show it applies a best practice approach to achieving or maintaining a sustainable water balance in its water use, and briefly describe the practices. The organization should show it has the support or validation of these practices from a relevant water

management expert. For example, this may be a letter or signed report from the expert to endorse the practices. Examples of best practice for achieving or maintaining a sustainable water balance:

- Maximise water efficiency through leak reduction and water efficiency technology
- For agriculture, maximize irrigation efficiency through scheduling and technology
- For agriculture, select crops requiring less water, appropriate to the local climate and soil conditions
- Maximize returns of used water to the local water environment (with appropriate treatment) to minimize net (consumptive) water use

## Reference

Guidance document on the application of water balances for supporting the implementation of the WFD, 2015, European Commission  
<https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/820ec306-62a7-475c-8a98-699e70734223/Guidance%20No%2034%20-%20Water%20Balances%20Guidance%20%28final%20version%29.pdf>

3.2.6 The organization should show it has improved its water balance, or is maintaining a sustainable balance through records of inflows, outflows and on-site water storage.

3.2.7 The organization should show it has informed relevant stakeholders of its best practices (for example by sharing its water stewardship plan) and has requested feedback from them, which will ideally confirm their support. In recognition the site cannot insist on feedback, as a minimum, it should show it has invited it.

3.2.8

[Peter: I recommend to drop this indicator. It is hard to understand, and probably very hard to assess and demonstrate. A key question is, how important is this in achieving improved water stewardship?]

3.3

3.3.1 For each water quality target, the evidence should show: the water body or feature it applies to, the target water quality and planned timescale to achieve it. The organization should show how it is progressing against this plan. Where it is not progressing at the planned rate, the organization should provide an explanation of why it thinks it is not achieving this, and appropriate corrective action to do so.

3.3.2

The organization should show how the quality of its wastewater discharge is improving over time compared to the planned targets and timescale. If it is not achieving this as planned, it should provide an explanation, and appropriate corrective action.

3.3.3 to 3.3.6 [These indicators need improved clarity]

3.4

3.4.1 Where an WHCV feature is to be restored or improved, the organization should have a record of its status prior to interventions. Depending on what the feature is, this may include a biodiversity study, water level and/or flow data, water quality data, etc. This then forms the benchmark against which to monitor improvements. If the target is to conserve (assuming it is already in good status), then similar information can be used to demonstrate it remains in a good condition, and to highlight any negative changes in its condition – which of course, will require corrective action. Photographs and videos can also be valuable in showing condition and change.

3.4.2 The same guidance applies as for 3.4.1

3.4.3 The organization should show it has informed relevant stakeholders of its work on WHCVs and has requested feedback from them, which will ideally confirm their support. In recognition the site cannot insist on feedback, as a minimum, it should show it has invited it.

3.4.4 Regarding its work and actions on WHCVs, the organization should show it has support from a relevant expert (eg. water or conservation expert), or from a representative of a relevant expert organization.

3.5

3.5.1

Examples of best practice in terms of water use:

- The organization should identify what is best practice in terms of water efficiency and intensity in its sector, and develop a target to match it.
- Many sectors have guidance on the best technology for water efficiency
- ....?

3.5.2

- Some sectors are known to present a greater water pollution risk than others. The organization should seek sector guidance on wastewater management and quality for its sector
- ....?

REFERENCES (industry guides to consider including)

- BIER Beverage Industry Environmental Round Table
- Agriculture: SAI Platform FSA (Farmer Sustainability Assessment)
- BonSucro
- Mining Sector (various)

### 3.5.3

The site should report on the methods and approaches it uses to maintain or improve WHCV features, and identify where they can be considered best practice. Best practice is not necessarily 'better' practice. In some cases, a standard practice approach may be appropriate.

### 3.5.4, 3.5.5, 3.5.6

[Peter: These are near identical to 3.5.1, 3.5.2 and 3.5.3. They need more clarity or to be removed]

### 3.5.7

The organization should report on how it has improved its internal water governance capacity, for example, through giving greater responsibility and time to water stewardship for existing employees and/or appointing additional dedicated staff.

In addition to its water stewardship plan and records (as required for the AWS Standard), it may also have created additional internal policy, guidance and standards documents.

### 3.5.8

The organization should show it has informed relevant stakeholders of its contributions to catchment water governance (for example by sharing its water stewardship plan) and has requested feedback from them, which will ideally confirm their support. In recognition the site cannot insist on feedback, as a minimum, it should show it has invited it.

### 3.5.9

Regarding its work and actions to support catchment water governance, the organization should show it has support from a relevant expert (eg. water or governance expert), or from a representative of a relevant expert organization.

### 3.5.10 and 3.5.11 [need more clarity]

### 3.6.1

The organization should describe how it has contributed to good catchment governance, which may be included in its water stewardship plan.

3.6.2 As for 3.6.1, but in the context of shared water challenges.

### 3.7.1

Provide information as appropriate, including the volumes of savings achieved in indirect water use from within the catchment.

### 3.7.2

Achieving a reduction in indirect water use will often require engagement with suppliers to understand how they use water, and encouragement for them to modify their practices so as to make savings. Suppliers may do this directly, or they may rely on support from the organization. Switching to a more water efficient supplier is an option, but it is preferable to work with existing suppliers to encourage them to improve their practices. Examples of how indirect water use savings may be made:

- Supplier implements a water leakage reduction program
- Supplier installs water efficient technology
- An agricultural supplier improves its irrigation efficiency

In fact, many of the actions the organization applies itself as a water steward could be relevant. Once the organization has achieved good water stewardship status, it is in a stronger position to advise its suppliers, and demonstrate to them the advantages and benefits, such as reduction of risks and costs.

### 3.8.1

The organization should confirm it already provides appropriate WASH facilities for its workers, or show that it has improved them. Examples of quantification:

- total number of workers benefitting
- reduction in hygiene related illnesses
- total of investments made

### 3.8.2

The organization should briefly describe the shared water rights issues relevant to the catchment, and any measures it has undertaken, where relevant, to ensure it respects them and has no negative impact on them.

3.8.3 Self-explanatory

3.9 Self-explanatory