ALLIANCE FOR WATER STEWARDSHIP AFRICA

Strategy 2018-2023

Executive Summary

The Alliance for Water Stewardship Standard guides responsible use and collective action on priority water challenges and recognises and rewards good water stewards through third party certification. AWS applications have demonstrated significant value for communities, government, companies and civil society groups in Africa since 2010, and there is strong demand for an African-led membership organisation: AWS Africa, to champion, coordinate and accelerate uptake and positive impact of the AWS system across the content.

In January 2018, 26 stakeholders from 8 countries representing the private sector, governments and civil society came together in Lusaka, Zambia to develop an AWS Africa strategy which responds to needs and opportunities for water stewardship across the continent[1]. The group reviewed AWS activity, achievements and status in Africa, explored the optimal form and function for a regional AWS partner or entity in Africa, and agreed on strategic goals and priority activities required to advance water security for all through stewardship in Africa. This strategy document is the resulting output of that meeting and sets out a clear direction and next steps towards delivery of a shared vison and mission for AWS Africa.

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[1] This strategy was developed through regional stakeholder deliberation and inputs in Lusaka on January 25th – 26th 2018. The event was hosted by Water Witness International – UK, Shahidi wa Maji - Tanzania and Action for Water - Zambia, with financial support from the Scottish Government's Climate Justice Fund. Participants included representatives from:

1. AWS Africa – understanding our context

One of the many things I have learnt as a President, is the centrality of water in the social, political and economic affairs of our continent.
Nelson Mandela

Dirty water can't be washed.
African Proverb

Africa faces the greatest water related challenges of any region on earth, but it also faces the opportunity to harness water to drive economic growth, social progress and accelerated sustainable development.

• 325 million people in Africa do not have access to an improved water source (JMP 2015). Poor and inequitable coverage of improved water supply, sanitation and hygiene continues to exert an unacceptable humanitarian toll across Africa and costs in excess of 5% of regional GDP, figures which exceed the total flows of aid and debt relief into the region.

• Agricultural production - by far the greatest consumer of water will need to grow by 3.3% per year to ensure Africa's food security. Obtaining new and reliable water resources, or using available resources efficiently through sustainable intensification is a challenge for both large scale irrigated agriculture and small-scale subsistence farming.

• Economic growth across the region is dependent on an ability to meet rapidly escalating demands for water in agricultural production and processing, manufacturing, mining and for hydro-power generation. Sub-Saharan Africa's electrical production capacity is currently comparable to that of Spain. The continent exploits only 7% of its hydro-electrical production potential. Imperatives to harness water for commerce and power supply also come with imperatives to manage the risks posed by water use in these sectors on the environment and society.

• The degradation of water related ecosystems in Africa mirrors the alarming losses of biodiversity seen globally with significant implications for livelihoods and economies. Invasive species are an additional problem with water hyacinth alone costing in excess of $100 million per year.

These problems are faced in an extremely challenging context, where the impacts of natural climatic variability presage the effects of climate change, with floods and droughts regularly wiping percentage points off national GDPs as well as inflicting catastrophic and chronic human suffering. Relatedly, the extent and performance of water related infrastructure is low: Africa has the lowest water storage capacities per capita in the world. Conflating these already significant challenges is the transboundary nature of Africa's water resources, where 85% of the continent's run-off is shared between nations.

Development of water resources in one country or basin can have long term political, social, economic and environmental implications across the region.

Despite investment in governance reforms and capacity to manage these issues, water institutions are struggling to perform across the continent.

As a result – water users in Africa lack the water security they need to thrive, where water security is defined as 'the reliable availability of an acceptable quantity and quality of water for health, livelihoods and production, and acceptable levels of risk of flooding, drought, pollution and conflict.'

Water Stewardship has emerged as a promising means of engaging water users in good governance and proactive action to ensure water security for all, and to support implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management and universal WASH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene). Water stewardship means that all water users including businesses take responsibility for their influence on a common water resource and collaborate in its sustainable management for the benefit of all. Effective water stewardship assures the management of water risks for people, businesses and ecosystems.

The Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) standard is a globally-applicable framework through which water stewardship can be stimulated and delivered. It enables water users to understand their water use and impacts, and to work collaboratively and transparently for greater water security within their local context. Globally, the Standard (AWS Standard) has proven to be an effective tool to demonstrate compliance with globally accepted, and auditable principles of water stewardship. Within Africa, recognition of the AWS brand and the AWS role as a thought leader is growing. Clear demand and mandate has been provided for a regional AWS initiative by relevant stakeholders at key events (AWS launch: Brussels 2010; SADC Water Division 2013; Arusha Water Stewardship Leaders Forum 2016). In addition, regulatory bodies are now advocating for the AWS to be adopted as an approach (South Africa, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania). The AWS has significant influence through its role as a benchmark of good practice and integration into the policies, procedures and systems of others (for example as the reference point for the International Council on Mining and Metals).

This document, developed by 26 water stakeholders from 8 countries sets out a shared strategy for advancing water security in Africa through the AWS water stewardship system and standard. It explores the achievements of AWS in Africa to date, and the future opportunities for scaling its impact, and the challenges to be overcome.

What has the AWS achieved in Africa so far?

➢ Proven effective in stimulating regulatory compliance (Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia).

➢ The AWS 'beyond fence-lines' approach of catchment-wide action is seen as particularly relevant to the context and challenges of water management in Africa.

➢ The AWS Standard has a reputation of credibility and integrity with global endorsement.

➢ The AWS Standard is already being applied across the continent (South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and Nigeria).

➢ Evidence of significant value to water users and other stakeholders and investment in collective action (Kilimanjaro, Lake Naivasha, Umathulezi Water Stewardship platforms).

➢ Provided valuable strategic support to other initiatives (iWASP, 2030 WRG, WWF, SADC Water Division in Africa).

➢ Ongoing learning and innovation of applying the standard with smallholders and corporate engagement with WASH. Strong interest and demand for support from stakeholders across Africa.

What capacity and networks can AWS Africa draw on?

• The AWS network already has active members and implementing partners in Africa (including Olam, Diageo, Nestle, Woodlands Dairy, Friesland Campina, Fairy Bottling, Coke Hellenic, Tullow Oil).

➢ There are dedicated human and financial resources to support the implementation of AWS in Africa (AWS South African coordinator and Water Witness International and its partners in Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania).

➢ AWS Africa work has compatibility and growing alignment with other programs (e.g. IWASP), together with support from AWS Secretariat and other global partners.

➢ AWS has trained 172 professionals over the past 2 years, and has large numbers of trained service providers and a growing number of accredited consultants, trainers and compliance Assessment Bodies (CABS).

➢ A good and growing collaboration with CRIDF, INECE, GIZ/IWASP, WRG, WWF, WaterAid and Oxfam.

What's the opportunity for AWS Africa?

➢ There is untapped potential to build more local engagement towards water stewardship efforts, which are currently being championed by multinationals, INGOs and donors.

➢ AWS Africa will align and coordinate various water stewardship frameworks across the continent, and work towards harmonisation of the AWS Standard with existing regulatory systems – contributing to the relevance, reputation and attributed impact of the organisation.

➢ AWS Africa will continue engaging stakeholders from the private sector, civil society and government, in order to develop critical thinking and alignment of the business case for application of the AWS Standard. This will make the AWS Standard the preferred tool for managing water risks within a catchment context.

➢ With alignment from its members, AWS Africa will establish a governance structure and systems that will foster a culture of institutional sustainability, fair representation and accountability.

➢ AWS Africa will capitalise on its existing relationships to bring more awareness, acceptance and adoption of the AWS Standard by governments.

What challenges must AWS Africa overcome?

➢ AWS will continue with existing efforts a to provide strong, financially viable business case for water stewardship in Africa.

➢ Continued outreach and stakeholder liaison to strengthen AWS's visibility and links across Africa to increase relevance, inclusion and local ownership, build representation from all regions and develop a stronger mandate from governments.

➢ Further contextual research to explore and overcome barriers to entry, incentives and 'service offerings' to increase uptake of AWS Standard.

➢ Continued investment through existing water stewardship initiatives to document learning and evidence of social, environmental and economic impacts (cost-benefit analysis) of Standard application to help inform the business case and generate locally-relevant guidance for different water users.

➢ Investment in fundraising capacity to secure initial start-up funds to enable AWS Africa and its Secretariat to be established

2. AWS Africa – Vision, mission and goals

AWS Africa is the regional partner of the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) and supports implementation of AWS water stewardship across the African continent. AWS is the global umbrella organisation for AWS water stewardship and the owner of the AWS International Water Stewardship Standard. AWS is governed by its regional and global members, with regional partners driving impact and learning through implementation at the local level.

Water Witness International (Malawi) has a mandate from regional stakeholders and the AWS to initially host AWS Africa, and to nurture its development as a highly effective membership-governed, Africa-led, not-for-profit organisation delivering the following vision, mission and goals.

Vision:
A water secure Africa, driven by responsible water stewards who play a leading role in economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainable environmental management.

Mission:
To collaborate with water users and stakeholders to generate action, knowledge and resources to ensure that water stewardship delivers water security for all in Africa.

Strategic Goals:
1. AWS standard and system are relevant and widely used in Africa, delivering value for users and their stakeholders, and progress towards the SDGs.

2. AWS Africa, it's brand and members are widely recognised and respected for their contributions to improved water security in Africa.

3. AWS Africa, our members and wider network have the capacity, human resources, technologies and knowledge required to deliver the mission.

4. Adequate and sustainable financing is in place to enable AWS Africa and its stakeholders to drive water stewardship in Africa.

3. Prioritised workplan -Driving uptake of water stewardship in Africa

Goal 1. The AWS standard and system are relevant and widely used in Africa, delivering value for users and their stakeholders, and progress towards the sustainable development goals.

Widespread implementation of a standard which is relevant and beneficial in the difficult contexts facing African water users (of poverty, governance challenges, dynamic environment, limited data), within a system which is cost-effective for stakeholders, are pre-requisites for impact. Generating evidence to support regional guidance and evolution of the AWS system requires uptake of the AWS standard by new sectors in new geographies in Africa, and robust documentation and evaluation of the value/benefits arising, and challenges faced. It is especially important for us to ensure that the AWS is driving measurable progress towards the sustainable development goals (SDGs). In turn this will inform the business case for onward implementation and alignment.   African stakeholders must be well informed, have a voice and be represented within discussions and decision making within the global AWS system. At the same time, AWS Africa and its partners should take the opportunity to advocate and take action for water security more widely, based on the insights, evidence and credibility generated through our work.

Prioritised Workstreams:	Activities	Responsibility
1.1. Identify and engage water users to adopt the standard and 'catalytic' partnerships to support AWS implementation, alignment & learning.	• Strategic engagement (face to face or group meetings) with agreed priority stakeholders (see Appendices). • New implementations focused on learning, knowledge generation and impact are well documented and shared.	WWI Malawi, WWI, AWSI, partners/members
1.2. Build the business case for AWS water stewardship in Africa for distinct categories of stakeholders and sectors, which considers incentives for different client groups.	• Production, sharing and getting feedback on business case materials from priority audiences and sectors.	WWI Malawi/WWI, AWSI, partners/members.
1.3. New case studies and guidance on applying the Standard in new sectors, new geographies and within 'clusters' developed and shared	• Guidance generated, shared and used in priority sectors and geographies (initially agriculture (large and small), mining, hospitality, manufacturing, oil and gas)	WWI Malawi/WWI, AWSI, partners/members
1.4. Monitoring, evaluation and learning system – aligned with AWSI - in place and supporting adaptive management throughout AWS system.	• MEL system in place & used which includes robust assessment of: Impacts, costs-benefits; growth, SDG & poverty contributions; challenges & opportunities, unexpected & most significant changes. • Stakeholder testimony documented & shared; Peer learning, knowledge sharing & informed decision making.	WWI Malawi/WWI, AWS Global, partners/members
1.5 AWS Africa and members actively involved in advocacy, discussions, groups and committees to: a) ensure relevance of AWS in the region and, b) contribute to water security more broadly.	• Priority change objectives within AWS identified & articulated by AWS Africa. • AWS Africa membership & active attendance of Technical Committee, WASH and Agriculture sub-Groups and AWS Board. • AWS Africa members involved in advocacy and influencing at local, basin, national and regional scales.	WWI Malawi/WWI, AWS Global, partners/members

Goal 2. The AWS brand and members are widely recognised and respected for their contributions to improved water security in Africa.

Brand recognition, supported by demonstration of impact and effective communication and influencing strategies, will influence the value derived from AWS by it's members and stakeholders. Expanding AWS uptake, influence and profile requires a clear regional identity, alongside credible, tailored and targeted messaging. To achieve this AWS Africa will need to consolidate and package the learning generated to date, build on its excellent networks in East and Southern Africa, and build experience, networks and profile in North and West Africa.

Prioritised Workstreams:	Activity	Responsibility

2.1. Develop and implement an effective communication strategy.	• Assess partner resources available to support communications strategy
	• Develop and cost a strategy which covers:
	  - Objectives; audiences; messages, channels, feedback mechanisms, frequency, measuring success
	  - Alignment and use of existing partner communications capacity and networks, and existing platforms and publications (AMCOW/AWS members in Africa);
	  - careful targeting of messages to different stakeholder groups;
	  - use of business forums, website / online resource, events
	  - Clear narrative on SDG delivery
		WWI Malawi/WWI plus selected / co-opted partners

2.2. Set up and maintenance of AWS Africa website/learning portal	• Content developed • Structure designed • Use of Akvo explored • Published and maintained monthly	WWI Malawi/ WWI/members
2.3 AWS Africa launch supported by success stories/business case material	• Generation and publication of case studies on best practices in water stewardship for different water users, shared across networks and through relevant media outlets. • Public launch of AWS Africa (SIWW 2018 tbc) • Media releases: national and globally	WWI Malawi/ WWI/members

2.4 Targeted outreach and profile raising for greater brand recognition and engagement	• Introductory carefully targeted communications and engagement with:
	  - relevant stakeholders (industries / sectors / companies),
	  - water related media and mailing lists within the region/continent,
	  - presence and participation at major water related events in the region/continent/world,
	  - relevant water related committees/think tanks in the region/continent.
	• Certification and branded packaging for regional produce in international markets.
		WWI Malawi/ WWI/members

> **Goal 3. AWS Africa, our members and wider network have the capacity, human resources, technologies and knowledge required to deliver our mission.**

Adequate capacity, awareness and organisational governance are pre-requisites to effective delivery of AWS Africa's services, and achievement of our vision. We will build on existing resources and capacity to ensure a governance structure, oversight and secretariat function which are efficient, effective, sustainable and which respond to the needs of regional stakeholders. Further, we will understand and respond to the capacity and knowledge needs of AWS Africa's members and stakeholders, and will build a network of consultant and accreditation bodies and accredited professionals able to deliver high quality and cost effective AWS services in the region.

Prioritised Workstreams:	Activities	Responsibilities
3.1 Establish clear roles and responsibilities for the AWS Secretariat (WWI Malawi), AWS Africa Advisory Committee and relationship with AWSI.	• ToRs for secretariat and Advisory Committee developed and agreed by stakeholders. • Partnership agreement with AWSI developed and agreed. • Elaborate and plan (if necessary) for regulatory/legal compliance development of guiding principles/constitution/articles of association; definition of membership structure; management structure and reporting/ monitoring of activities of AWS Africa	WWI Malawi/ WWI/ founding regional committee members, AWSI
3.2 Map and build the network of AWS members and service providers in the region.	• Creation / updating of a database for members, service providers and stakeholders, • Outreach and recruitment activities • Regular and valued communications	WWI Malawi/ WWI
3.3 Develop a capacity building strategy for AWS Africa	• Establish competency framework for individuals and organisations working across the AWS system, including the secretariat • Evaluate current capacities against this and develop a prioritised plan for bridging the capacity gaps (including leveraging on programs of other stakeholders).	WWI Malawi/ WWI; members; AWSI
3.4 Develop and implement organisational development, and international and regionally specific learning and training programmes across the AWS Africa network.	• Improved and highly rated training to support implementers, 'catalysts', consultants and CABs in the region. • Training on promoting the standard developed and delivered.	WWI Malawi/ WWI; members; AWSI

> **Goal 4. Adequate and sustainable financing is in place to enable AWS Africa and its stakeholders to drive water stewardship in Africa.**

Sustainable and adequate financing is a pre-requisite for delivery of the mission and vision. At the outset, funding will be derived from donor grants, including those already secured. In time there will be a gradual transition to sustainable revenue generated through service provision, membership fees and larger programmatic and partnership funding/grants. The need for external donor funding will also dissipate over time as AWS Africa raises increasing amounts of earned income, ultimately leading to a sustainable, independent organisation.

Prioritised Workstreams:	Activities	Responsibilities
4.1 Develop AWS Africa Fundraising Strategy	• Establish resourcing needs for Yrs 1-5 • Complete mapping of the donor landscape to identify priority *development agencies, multilaterals, trust and foundations, and corporate philanthropy* funders	WWI Malawi/ WWI; Advisory Committee; AWSI
4.2 Define and develop an efficient and realistic business model for AWS Africa with clear budget and income projections	• Define needs against and growth targets against: Stage 1: Building stage, (0 - 2 years), Stage 2: Interim (3-8 years), and Stage 3: Self sustaining (from 10 years onwards). • Model earned income scenarios: sources include memberships fees; fees to access AWS owned tools; information systems and guidance; Brand licensing; Certification fees; Accreditation fees and Fees earned through providing consulting /strategic advice.	WWI Malawi/ WWI; Advisory Committee; AWSI
4.3 Implementation: Proposal development and building relationships with funders, partners, clients and members	• Quick win clients (AWS local entities or supply chains) • Potential clients from sectors we have track record / contact with (scaling); • Potential clients in catchments where others have implemented (clustering)	WWI Malawi/ WWI; Advisory Committee; members
4.4 Design and implement financial management system appropriate to AWS Africa needs	Scope and implement financial management system which embeds efficiency and integrity	AWS Africa.

4. Taking AWS Africa forwards

The potential membership and partners of AWS Africa includes private sector, civil society, government and donor stakeholders, who have an interest to foster good practice in water stewardship across the African continent. AWS Africa will consolidate the existing membership base, embrace it's diversity of knowledge and experience, and continue with member recruitment.

AWS Africa will implement its activities, and enable members, partners and stakeholders, to get maximum value from the services, with limited bureaucratic complexity, in a cost-effective way.

With the guidance of an Advisory Committee, AWS Africa shall establish a Secretariat and seek registration in one of the African countries. The Advisory Committee shall provide overall oversight and guidance on the governance structure, workplans, monitoring and financing plans, and all aspects of implementing this strategic plan.

As a new institution, it is easy to fall into a trap of setting very ambitious targets that are difficult to implement. A more detailed workplan for Years 1 – 2 of AWS Africa will be developed setting out realistic operational milestones and Key Performance Indicators, under the supervision of it's the Advisory Committee, and consultation with members.

Careful attention will be paid to the following:

- To aim for **inclusive representation** of stakeholders in governance structures (to include geographic diversity and the range of water users that AWS wishes to engage). Guidance will be provided on how these representatives can draw on the views of their respective constituencies, and feed these into the continent-wide network.

- The inherent diversity in membership-based institutions requires a deliberate effort to build **cohesive relationships** among the members. AWS Africa shall facilitate training events that foster the creation and sustenance of a cohesive network of members.

- Ensuring a**dequate funding** for the Secretariat of AWS Africa to ensure AWS Africa is able to act effectively and in a coordinated / strategic manner.

- Setting **realistic expectations -** AWS Africa recognises that there could be a risk in that its members, partners and stakeholders, do not have clarity on what to expect from this new institution. Very high expectation may not be achieved and could result into disappointment, while low expectation can diminish morale and enthusiasm about the mandate of AWS Africa. AWS Africa, with guidance from the Advisory Committee, shall clearly define its mandate and how this shall be implemented.