



Water Roundtable Launch

Brussels, Belgium – June 15-16, 2010

Conference Report

Contents

1. Launch Meeting Overview / Key Outcomes.....	2
2. Day 1 Presentations and Participant Feedback.....	4
3. Day 2 Presentations and Participant Feedback.....	6
4. Questions for Further Consideration	9
5. Water Roundtable Next Steps.....	9
6. Appendix: Launch Participant List.....	10

1. Launch Meeting Overview / Key Outcomes

On June 15 -16, 2010, The Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS)¹ brought together public, private, and civil society stakeholders for the launch of a multi-year Water Roundtable (WRT) to develop international water stewardship standards.²

Goals for the Launch in Brussels were to:

- Present the case for water, the Alliance for Water Stewardship and the importance of a Water Roundtable process;
- Refine the proposed benefits and model for international water stewardship standards development;
- Build understanding and alignment on key global water-use impacts;
- Explain the proposed roadmap for creating multi-stakeholder standards; and
- Describe engagement opportunities and invite participation in the Water Roundtable and Regional Initiatives.

The meeting utilized diverse stakeholder interaction to test and refine AWS' rationale and proposed model for international water stewardship standards development. In this initial meeting, AWS sought to build alignment, not consensus, among an initial group of stakeholders.³ These stakeholders were identified and invited by the AWS based on regional⁴ and sectoral⁵ representation, expressed interest in the WRT, availability and past involvement. The AWS recognizes that a complete representative balance amongst stakeholders was not achieved at this meeting. Accordingly, the AWS will be undertaking a stakeholder mapping exercise to improve representation and help to ensure that this process is as open and accessible as possible. The Launch was organized by AWS and facilitated by the Consensus Building Institute (CBI), a non-profit U.S.-based facilitation firm.⁶

Seven core conversations framed the two-day event:

- *WHY ARE WE HERE?* – The background and work of the Alliance leading up to the Roundtable Launch

¹The Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) was formed in 2008 to promote responsible use of freshwater that is both socially beneficial and environmentally sustainable. The AWS is a collaboration between a group of diverse international organizations who share a common vision of water stewardship (www.allianceforwaterstewardship.org).

² Similar to other successful and transformative standard setting efforts, the Water Roundtable seeks to create an inclusive, voluntary, and consensus-driven approach to how freshwater is managed and protected globally.

³ See Appendix: List of Participants

⁴ Regions include: North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Oceania.

⁵ Sectors include: Businesses / Water Service Providers, Public Sector Agencies, and Civil Society Organizations.

⁶ The Consensus Building Institute (CBI) is a non-profit institution that works to improve the way leaders use negotiations to make organizational decisions, achieve agreements, and manage multiparty conflicts and planning efforts (www.cbuilt.org).

- *WHERE TO FOCUS?* – Key Impacts and Core Challenges for Water Stewardship
- *WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A WATER STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM AND FOR WHOM?* – Exploring the Benefits for Businesses & Water Service Providers, Civil Society, and Public Sector Agencies
- *HOW COULD STEWARDSHIP WORK?* – A potential model for delivering benefits through the implementation of a water stewardship program
- *WHAT COULD STANDARD(S) LOOK LIKE?* – Exploring current standards; high level similarities and convergences; options for further development
- *HOW CAN WE BUILD AGREEMENT?* – Charting a Roadmap to Agreement Building
- *HOW TO GET INVOLVED?* – Opportunities for Ongoing Roundtable Participation and Support

Several high level insights emerged from the Launch meeting:

- A Water Stewardship Program can provide both short and long-term benefits to businesses and water service providers, civil society and public sector agencies;
- In order to deliver these benefits, the Water Roundtable Steering Committee⁷ needs to refine the proposed list of impacts, finalize watershed level targets, and develop international standards with management actions designed to reduce impact.
- The draft impact list⁸ provides a solid foundation, but it should be reorganized and refined to take into consideration additional social, political, and sector-specific factors;
- Representation gaps exist at this stage and should be addressed at the Water Roundtable Steering Committee level. Additional gaps can be filled within individual regional processes;
- Parties interested in contributing to the Water Roundtable process have a range of possible entry points, including decision-making, advisory roles, and /or financial support;
- While the proposed process had general acceptance, core questions concerning overall design and implementation of a water stewardship program need further attention by AWS and/or the Water Roundtable Steering Committee to provide greater detail and ensure the success of the standards setting initiative.

The remainder of this summary provides a high level overview of core stakeholder discussions. Power Point presentations and supporting documentation are available at the Water Roundtable website: http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html . Corresponding presentations are named respective to their section. I.e. WHY ARE WE HERE? Section’s documentation is entitled “Why Are We Here?”

⁷ See “How Can We Build Agreement?” documentation for more information on the AWS and WRT structure. http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

⁸ See “Where to Focus?” documentation for a full list and current thinking on impacts. http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

2. Day 1 Presentations and Participant Feedback

WHY ARE WE HERE?

The meeting opened with a presentation regarding the need for better water stewardship, an overview of AWS's composition and mission, and the importance of an international, multi-stakeholder Water Roundtable⁹ process. Currently, stakeholders observe that irresponsible water use and increased water scarcity highlights the need for improved collaboration among existing water forums to address social, environmental, and economic impacts of poor stewardship. The AWS was formed to facilitate this collaboration by linking together, and leveraging, existing and developing water forums to promote cross-cutting standards that could drive change in water management at the global level. AWS coordinates the process to create international water stewardship standards and is tasked with ensuring the standards are robust, credible, and meaningful. The AWS proposes the Water Roundtable as an effective means of addressing these unacceptable impacts of poor water stewardship by engaging a diverse group of stakeholders in an efficient, inter-regional process to develop standards that can be tailored to regional context.

http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

WHERE TO FOCUS?

AWS defined and proposed a taxonomy of water impacts and risks, and provided a rationale for the scope of potential standards. Major tenets of the AWS approach include the importance of assessing and managing stewardship at the watershed level, and the need to address cumulative change in quantity and quality of the water system. Impacts categorized under ecosystems & species, human health, social & cultural wellbeing, and economic use can be mitigated by four watershed level targets: a) improved water flow regime, b) improved water quality, c) better protected habitats, and d) more effective governance.

After discussion in small groups, participants noted the relevance and interconnectedness of the proposed four watershed level targets. The draft impacts list proved a useful starting point for identifying and prioritizing impacts in a given watershed. However, most groups identified the need to reorganize and add to the current taxonomy. Stakeholders posed the following selected recommendations for the Water Roundtable as it further refines the scope of potential standards:

- Modify 'impacts' definition to include positive impacts and human-to-human systems.
- Expand and subdivide impact categories
- Add impacts related to conflict, displacement, broader context of political governance, access to water, sustainable livelihood, and impacts from/on energy and other sectors.
- Address social equity in each of the four target areas
- Take into consideration that impacts are highly locally and socially mediated

⁹ A "roundtable", as it's used here, is a form of a Multi-Stakeholder Initiative (MSI). MSIs are voluntary, market-based approaches that employ multi-stakeholder consultation and negotiation to develop a set of principles, criteria, and indicators for more responsible production, sourcing, and manufacturing practices within or across a given product or sector.

- Recognize and address cultural values placed on water

http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A WATER STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM AND FOR WHOM?

Water stewardship has both short and long-term benefits for businesses and water service providers, civil society and public sector agencies. Water is a source of risk and cost, as well as a source of opportunity and value. In the short-term, participants in the Water Roundtable process can *be seen as founders* of the Water Stewardship Standards; *get a head start* understanding the issues and processes at play in the Standards; establish and *improve relationships* with other stakeholders; *improve understanding* of water issues; and help *shape the content* of the Standards.

Stewardship can help **businesses and water service providers** manage and reduce their physical water-related risks and costs, improve water accessibility, spur innovation, and strengthen reputation. Well-branded standards and resources used to implement them will help **civil society organizations** achieve specific social and environmental impacts, and the standards-owning organization offers an equal forum for engagement. A Water Stewardship Program can improve the credibility of **public sector agencies** by complementing and supporting the achievement of water-related policy objectives. The Program can also help governments reduce costs of building consensus and ensuring compliance.

http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

HOW COULD STEWARDSHIP WORK?

Building on work carried out by existing Regional Initiatives, AWS outlined a model for delivering on the proposed benefits of a Water Stewardship Program. By mitigating impacts, a Water Stewardship Program can reduce risks and costs and provide a range of stakeholder benefits. As noted above, impacts can be controlled through the four watershed level targets of a) improved water flow regime, b) improved water quality, c) more effective governance, and d) better protected habitats.

International Water Stewardship Standards will codify the management actions that managers can take to reach watershed level targets and maximize benefit of all the key stakeholder groups who have developed and support the system. Proposed management actions include: *management of water quantity, management of water quality, interaction with catchment governance, and management of habitat*. The aforementioned benefits reward businesses for taking the necessary management actions; convince civil society organizations to encourage businesses to participate; and convince public sector agencies to facilitate implementation.

Participants noted that the proposed watershed level targets would be difficult to ground locally, and that many targets have a socio-political dimension that needs to be addressed in the Water Stewardship Program. Some suggested that habitat be included in the targets of water quality and quantity, while others think it important to keep habitat separate. Regardless of target categorization, it will be important to create serious metrics that underpin targets, and the targets should somehow ensure social, cultural, and spiritual well-being.

In order for management actions to truly affect watershed level targets, stakeholders suggested that the variable of ‘governance’ be unpacked and that governance may be more important than other management actions. An additional management action of ‘catchment coordination’ could be added to incentivize intra-catchment users to engage in dialogue. Finally, participants noted that the scope for Water Stewardship Standards needs to be fleshed out further before the Water Roundtable can codify internationally applicable management actions. Codification will be more expensive in some regions than others.

http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

3. Day 2 Presentations and Participant Feedback

WHAT COULD STANDARDS LOOK LIKE?

The European Water Partnership (EWP) and Water Stewardship Australia (WSA) provided a summary of the underlying logic for existing work on standards development and shared best practices for the development of an international effort. The Regional Initiatives¹⁰ (RIs) underscored that the standards should be a *tool for discussion and exchange* in addition to a useful end product. Current RIs utilize hierarchical and decision-making frameworks for voluntary water stewardship standards that could be mapped onto a global framework with regional and sector-specific tailoring.

Both EWP and WSA based their efforts on four key principles, criteria and indicators (or equivalent); focused on catchment-based objectives; and considered direct and indirect water use. They diverge with respect to target groups (i.e. size of users), existence of a quality management system, and user accountability.

Reflections on existing framework: Some stakeholders responded that the model framework seems realistic, but that it may need differentiation in hierarchy. For example, the international standards may have common principles and criteria but allow for variation on indicators. In response to questions about how to reconcile individual certification with a watershed-level standard, experience suggests that although catchment level improvement is ideal, site level may be more actionable. Stewardship should include an advocacy role at the catchment level in addition to technical cooperation.

Utility of this standard for other regional processes: Overlaying responses to existing RIs was a call for further development of a carefully phrased business case and request for a think piece reflecting best practices from other voluntary standard-setting efforts (e.g. ISO 14000). Participants suggested that in order for existing draft standards to be useful in other regions, the Water Roundtable should involve quality stakeholders including often under-represented populations, ensure early engagement with government, and consider regional political constraints. New and future RIs will take lessons learned from existing RIs and other multi-stakeholder processes when undergoing stakeholder outreach and participating in standards creation. The creation of globally-representative Regional Initiatives is central to this Roundtable process.

¹⁰ <http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/regional.html>

Other suggestions: For some, establishment of a firewall between the standards holding and standards certification body is equally important to the definition of metrics for water stewardship, monitoring requirements, verification, and reporting. Others emphasized the need to develop a good set of standard research questions and to pilot early from the bottom up.

AWS suggested that for complex dialogues to be effective, they should have *targeted and documented stakeholder engagement* with a concise plan for who must be reached and why; include cross-geographic *and* cross-sector perspectives; and have sequential *and* simultaneous engagement with regional initiatives on the ground. A stakeholder mapping exercise will be used to help plot out this engagement strategy.

http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

HOW CAN WE BUILD AGREEMENT?

The AWS introduced the components and principles of the Water Roundtable, presented a multi-stakeholder process for Water Stewardship Standards development, and offered a preview of regional engagement. Over approximately 2-3 years, a small, multi-stakeholder steering committee will create baseline draft standards and vet those with regional initiatives through Regional Engagement Teams, within working groups, and also via public comment periods. After the standards are developed, focus shifts to standards implementation and the Water Roundtable itself will dissolve. Ideally all Regional Initiatives would have started at the same time, but in reality they have different timelines. Consequently, it will be important to designate regional coordinators to help harmonize regional efforts.

In discussion with the full group, AWS clarified measures of success, independence of Regional Initiatives, and the role of science in the Water Roundtable process. Long-term success of the AWS would mean real change in key watersheds; medium-term success would be measured by the existence of piloted standards across a range of watershed contexts; and short-term success would entail involvement of key stakeholders in AWS, the Water Roundtable, and Regional Initiatives. Regional Initiatives should have a context-specific structure and do not need to be uniformly managed. Working groups will explore the science behind criteria and indicators, but if standards are too scientific they may not be actionable. Given that science changes, standards will need to continuously improve over time.

Small group discussion surfaced recommendations about the Water Roundtable process, adequate stakeholder representation, and methods for stakeholder engagement.

Water Roundtable process:

- Identify the gap AWS is trying to fill and what differentiates this initiative from other
- Explain explicitly how the WRT relates to other standards initiatives (i.e. ISO) and other water related initiatives (i.e. CEO Water Mandate)
- Provide specifics on how the Roundtable will work including clarifying the governance structure and timeline in the process diagram in order to provide a better sense of sequence
- Develop a set of shared values and create terms of reference for participants at every level
- The Steering Committee should be small and should outsource to working/advisory groups

- Working groups can loop feedback into the Steering Committee and provide findings for public comment
- Task specific working groups with creating metrics for measuring social effects
- Develop a consistent set of research questions and a process that will address those questions
- Break down regional consultation groupings (e.g. industry, civil society, etc.) while keeping them meaningful
- Define regional groupings with maps and incorporate the Pacific Islands and New Zealand to the Oceania RI in the regional map

Stakeholder representation:

- Ensure transparency and general compliance with ISEAL’s Credibility Principles
- Provide guidance to Regional Initiatives about how to map stakeholders
- Work with existing NGO networks to identify a) impacts, b) those impacted, and c) quality public sector involvement
- Make sure the “industry” category includes tourism, farmers and ranchers
- Involve international coordinating bodies (e.g. UN agencies).
- Include global companies on the Steering Committee and/or in working groups
- Ensure significant involvement from water scarce areas

Stakeholder engagement:

- Design an affordable and practical engagement model that incentivizes participation
- Raise enough funds or have an adequate revenue model to support proper engagement
- Devise and utilize an effective communication strategy, both for AWS and within WWF/TNC
- Understand existing institutions and how to integrate without supplanting
- Consult other watershed-level initiatives
- Link with existing sector-based initiatives, including how to link into existing commodity certifications (e.g., Better Cotton Initiative, Beef Roundtable)
- Consider prioritizing by at-risk watersheds

http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

AWS identified several levels of potential engagement in the Water Roundtable process. Interested parties may participate in one or more of the following stages. For information about each point of entry, one should consult the source listed in parentheses.

- Provide Comments on all Documents and Process Design (AWS website)
- Stay Involved in the WRT (AWS website)
- Participate in a Working Group (AWS website / RI Coordinators)
- Become a stakeholder in a Regional Initiative (RI Coordinators)
- Piloting for Standards Development (AWS Secretariat / RI Coordinators)
- Providing comments, feedback and testing Draft Standards (WRT Coordinator / RI Coordinators)
- Join the WRT Global Steering Committee (WRT Coordinator)
- Providing financial support to AWS, the WRT, and/or RIs (AWS Secretariat)

4. Questions for Further Consideration

Several foundational questions remain for AWS and Water Roundtable Steering Committee deliberation:

- What if an impact falls outside of the current upstream/downstream scope?
- Who must be held accountable along a global supply chain?
- Can you still be certified if you are “doing the right thing” in a low-quality watershed?
- How do you establish watershed-level targets in places where data doesn’t exist?
- Can a standard affect social outcomes?
- How can standard(s) differentiate between industry and geographic needs?
- Does every country need to be involved in the Water Roundtable process?
- At what point do you roll out the first version of the standards?
- How can you engage smaller users who are harder to reach but may have big impact?

5. Water Roundtable Next Steps

Next steps building from this workshop are for AWS to:

- Incorporate feedback from Launch meeting into:
 - the next generation of AWS materials
 - a draft WRT process document for further review
- Document comparison of standards and linkages to draft Water Stewardship Standards
- Assist in the formation of Regional Initiatives, from nascent to fully fledged entities, including possible launch meetings
- Determine a coordination structure for Regional Initiatives
- Structure and form Steering Committee of the Water Roundtable
- Develop and communicate a timeline for publishing draft international standards
- Obtain funding and support and make this information publicly available

http://allianceforwaterstewardship.org/water_roundtable.html

The Alliance for Water Stewardship wishes to express sincere gratitude to Water Roundtable Launch participants (see Appendix) and to our supporters, American Standard, Diversey Inc, ICCO, Nalco, and Rio Tinto, who made the Launch possible.

To contact the AWS Secretariat directly, email nicole.tanner@wwfus.org

Appendix: Launch Participant List

Company/Organization	Participant	Title
AWS Secretariat	Jonathan Kaledin	Co-Secretary
	Matthew Wenban-Smith	Co-Secretary
	Andrew Murphy	Coordinator
	Alexis Morgan	Water Roundtable Coordinator
	Ricardo Monsivais	Program Coordinator, Latin America & Caribbean Region
	Nicole Tanner	Assistant Coordinator
	Chris Heishman	Events Coordinator
American Standard Brands	Jim McHale	VP Operations & Engineering
Anglo American	Samantha Hoe-Richardson	Head of Sustainable Development & Energy
AquaFed	Jack Moss	Senior Advisor
BASF	Brigitte Dittrich-Kraemer	Senior Manager Sustainability
Borealis	Lieven Stalmans	Group Manager, Energy & Environment, HSE
	Sylvain Lhôte	EU & Sustainability Affairs, Water for the World Programme Manager
Boston Consulting Group	Diederik Vismans	Consultant
CEPI	Bengt Davidsson	Environment Manager
	Marco Mensink	Energy & Environment Director
Coca-Cola Ges. m.b.H.	Johann (Hans) Wilfling	EUR-Q&E Environmental Manager
Coca-Cola Hellenic	Jens Rupp	Group Sustainability Manager
Consensus Building Institute	Merrick Hoben	Director, Washington DC Office
	Rachel Milner Gillers	Senior Associate
Conservation International	Marielle Weikel	Director, Corporate Freshwater Strategies
Diversey	Maurice (Moe) Bechard	VP, Global Environment Health & Safety
	Lubna Edwards	Director, EHS Sustainability
Dow	Christina von Westernhagen	Director EU Government Affairs & Public Policy
ENVIRON International Corporation	Patrick Campbell	Principal
Environmental Protection and Management Services	Damian Casmiri	Program Officer
Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association	Tilaye Bekele	Chief Technical Advisor
European Water Partnership	Friedrich Barth	Vice-Chairman
	Sabine von Wirén-Lehr	Projects Coordinator, Water Stewardship Programme
	Lisa Strübbe	Communications Officer
	Gonçalo Ascensao	Project Officer, Water Stewardship Programme

	Rob D'hondt	Water Stewardship Programme
FEMSA Foundation	Vidal Garza Cantu	Director
Freshwater Action Network South Asia	Gabbita Mruthyunjaya (GM) Sastry	Independent Consultant
Fundacion Chile	Maryann Ramirez	Project Manager, Sustainable Forests and Industries
Griffith University - Australian Rivers Institute	Stuart Bunn	Director
GTZ (Syria)	Ahmad Alkasir	Project Manager
Halcrow	Richard Harpin	Global Business Leader, Water Security
Homegrown - Finlays	Richard Fox	Sustainable Business Director
International Water Management Institute (IWMI)	Joanna Kane-Potaka	Director, Communications & Marketing
ISEAL Alliance	Kristin Komives	Monitoring & Evaluation Manager
	Wiebke Herding	Communications Manager
ITT Corporation	Thomas Glover	Vice President of Communications
ITT Water & Wastewater	Patrick Camusat	Environment, Safety and Health Director
IUCN	Mark Smith	Head, Water Programme
Korea Water Forum	Young-II Song	Chief Director
Lafarge	Rene Moretti	Vice President, Environment & Public Affairs
London Water Research Group	Martin Keulertz	PhD Researcher, Geography King's College London
Macaulay Land Use Research Institute	Grant Davidson	International Development Manager
Marks and Spencer	Laila Petrie	Supplier Exchange Manager
Michigan State University	Steven Pueppke	Associate VP for Research & Graduate Studies
Milwaukee Water Council	Dean Amhaus	Executive Director
Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations	Steven Ross	Executive Officer
Nalco	Geoff Townsend	Technical Director
National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) in Uganda	Oweyegha-Afunaduula	Programme Manager, Sustainability School
P&G	Bea Buyle	Manager, Global Sustainability
Pacific Institute	Jason Morrison	Program Director
Progressio	Petra Kjell	Environment Policy and Advocacy Officer
PricewaterhouseCoopers AG	Andrea Wilhaus	Senior Consultant, Sustainable Business Solutions
Quantis (& ISO Water Footprint convener)	Sebastien Humbert	Scientific Director
Rio Tinto	Kristina Ringwood	Principal Adviser Environment
SAP AG	André Kingham	Vice President, Global Communications
The Nature Conservancy	Karin Krchnak	Senior Advisor

	Brian Richter	Director, Global Freshwater Program
	Albano Araujo	Freshwater Coordinator, Latin America Region
UNEP	Guido Sonnemann	Programme Officer, Innovation & Life Cycle Management
University of Dar Es Salaam	Amos Enock Majule	Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Resource Assessment
Veolia Environment	Rainier d'Haussonville	Vice President for European Affairs
	Laurent Auguste	Executive Vice President in charge of the Americas
Water Center for Latin American and the Caribbean	Jürgen Mahlknecht	Director
Water Footprint Network	Derk Kuiper	Executive Director
Water Stewardship Initiative (Australia)	Kevin O'Grady	Member
Water Witness International	Nick Hepworth	Director
WaterAid	Daniel Yeo	Senior Policy Analyst, Water Security and Climate Change
	Duncan Wilbur	Private Sector Engagement Advisor
World Wide Fund for Nature - Kenya Country Office	Ombara Doris	Project Manager, Freshwater Conservation Programme
World Wildlife Fund	Jason Clay	Senior Vice President, Markets
	Mark Eckstein	Director – International Finance
WWF UK	Robin Farrington	Water Policy Advisor
WWF European Policy Office	Sergiy Moroz	Water Policy Officer
WWF International	Stuart Orr	Freshwater Manager
Wyoming Game & Fish Dept	Tom Annear	Water Management Coordinator