



## THE AWS INTERNATIONAL WATER STEWARDSHIP STANDARD V1.0

Water stewardship is defined as *water use that is socially equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process that involves site- and catchment-based actions*. The framework for implementing water stewardship is set out in the **AWS INTERNATIONAL WATER STEWARDSHIP STANDARD** version 1.0 (the AWS Standard). The Standard was developed by a 15-member multi-stakeholder representing a cross-section of global regions and stakeholder interests. Members were drawn from business and corporate water interests, from civil society and from public sector water managers and policy-makers. The AWS Standard v1.0 was released in April 2014.

## SITE-LEVEL ACTION WITH CATCHMENT-LEVEL IMPACT

The AWS Standard was designed to be implemented at a major water-using site – be it an agricultural operation, a processor or manufacturer, a commercial or institutional site. It requires site-level action framed by an understanding of the catchment context, based on four intended outcomes. This understanding is best achieved through cooperation and partnerships between water users and catchment managers, natural resource management agencies and civil society groups.

## FOUR OUTCOMES OF GOOD WATER STEWARDSHIP

Underpinning the AWS Standard are the four outcomes – or principles – of water stewardship:

- **Good Water Governance**
- **Sustainable Water Balance (quantity and flow)**
- **Good Water Quality**
- **Healthy Important Water Related Areas (special sites and values)**

## SIX STEPS TO GOOD WATER STEWARDSHIP

The Standard sets out 6 steps for achieving good water stewardship (Figure 1). This is based on an ISO quality assurance process and is designed to encourage both innovation and continual improvement in water performance. Each step has criteria and indicators of conformity, verifiable through AWS accredited independent conformity assessment bodies. Organizations achieving conformity are entitled to make certain claims and can thereby gain market recognition.

The AWS Standard can also be used for self-assessment or as a means to engage stakeholders in catchment sustainability. AWS also has a network of highly skilled and accredited trainers and consultants to support the implementation of the AWS Standard.

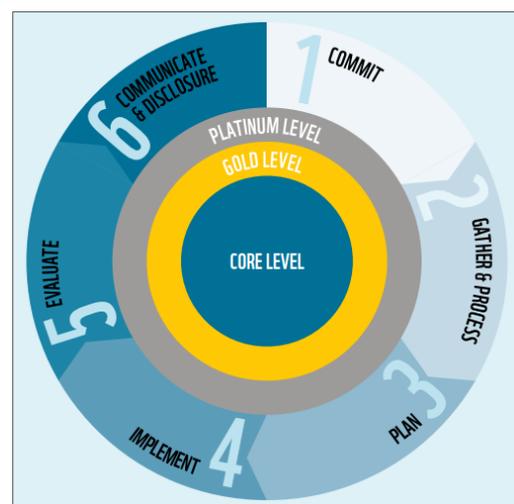


Figure 1: Six steps for good water stewardship



## THREE LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE ENCOURAGE CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

The Standard’s structure allows for increasing levels of performance in water stewardship. This is recognized by Core, Gold and Platinum levels. All core criteria are required for certification at all levels. Advanced criteria have points attached to them, which reflect both the degree of effort required and the anticipated impact. Points are set out in the right hand column of Table 1 below. The aggregation of points, in addition to conformity with core criteria, results in Gold or Platinum level performance.

Level	Conformity with Core Criteria	Cumulative Advanced-Level Criteria Points
AWS Core	Required	0-39
AWS Gold	Required	40-79
AWS Platinum	Required	80+

Table 1: AWS International Water Stewardship Standard Levels

## AWS THEORY OF CHANGE

The standard is based upon a logical sequence of how water stewardship can be driven from site-level actions to result in catchment level impacts. This “theory of change” is illustrated below.

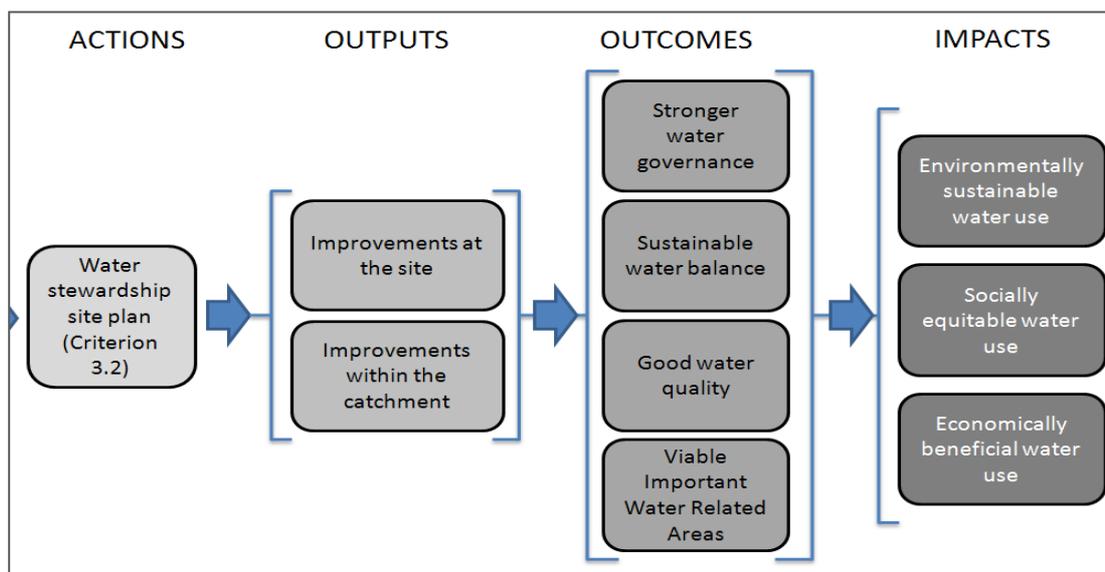


Figure 2: The AWS Standard Theory of Change

## A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT AND ACTION

While implementation of the AWS Standard is aimed at major water users, the broader water stewardship system can be used various stakeholders including by organizations seeking to promote best practice (e.g. through supply chains or investment portfolios), those seeking to achieve catchment goals (e.g. catchment management agencies), or those seeking social or environmental outcomes (e.g. NGOs)

## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

To download the AWS Standard, join AWS or get more information on our programs, please contact

[INFO@ALLIANCEFORWATERSTEWARDSHIP.ORG](mailto:INFO@ALLIANCEFORWATERSTEWARDSHIP.ORG) | [WWW.ALLIANCEFORWATERSTEWARDSHIP.ORG](http://WWW.ALLIANCEFORWATERSTEWARDSHIP.ORG)

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