

BUILDING PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP; MAINTAINING CREDIBILITY

AWS STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES 2016-2020

OUR STARTING POINT FOR 2016

THE GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR WATER STEWARDSHIP

2015 was a pivotal year for water stewardship: water crises ranked top in the World Economic Forum's Global Risk Report, there was growing recognition of water as a development challenge in its own right, and water's connection to other major challenges like climate change. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) gave a global focus for those challenges, including one goal specific to water with two targets emphasizing collaboration. The critical role and accountability of business in achieving global goals is now widely accepted.

At a global policy level, the scene is set for a step change in collaboration on water. As an approach rooted in collaboration to address shared challenges, and one which proactively engages the private sector, water stewardship will be central to these efforts.

BUILDING ON OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

For AWS, 2015 was also a pivotal year. After several years of development through global multi-stakeholder processes, always ensuring we met the highest integrity standards, the AWS international water stewardship system became fully implementable in late 2015

- The first specialist organizations were accredited to deliver services for AWS
- The first certifications were achieved and
- Our first members joined a reconstituted organization

As an organization at the leading edge of promoting water stewardship, we now have the opportunity to achieve a broad level of uptake in all our programs, to drive more sustainable business practice, and to make a significant contribution to major global development challenges. Our strategy for 2016-2020 recognizes this opportunity, and the importance **participation, ownership** and **credibility** in achieving it.

THE CHANGE WE SEEK: OUR 2020 GOALS

Multi-stakeholder participation is a core principle of water stewardship. For AWS, multi-stakeholder participation enables broader ownership of our development agenda and provides one of the keys to maintaining the credibility of the AWS system. The importance of participation is reflected in our Mission

to lead a global network that promotes responsible use of freshwater that is socially and economically beneficial and environmentally sustainable

To achieve this mission, we know that we need a **strong and credible system**, a **powerful brand** and, the **organizational capacity** to drive our network forward.

Our 2016-2-20 strategy, therefore, is based on three Strategic Goals for 2020:

1. The AWS **system** is robust and credible. It enables, recognises and rewards good water stewardship.
2. AWS Water Stewardship is a globally recognised **brand** that drives participation.
3. AWS has the financial **capacity** and people capability to deliver Goals 1 & 2 and build global participation in the AWS Water Stewardship system.

Achieving our 2020 goals will be critical in driving the levels of participation needed for us to make the significant contribution to the SDGs and other global development challenges, and to pursue our Vision that

water users and managers are responsible water stewards, who protect and enhance freshwater resources for people and nature

OUR PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Within the framework established through our Strategic Goals, we have set key objectives for 2020, each of which has a list of clear priorities for 2016. Having a sharp focus on 2016 with a broader mid-term perspective of 2020 will enable us to work with members and partners to further define priorities as our system develops and grows over the coming years.

In 2016, to ensure that the AWS system is robust and credible we will

- Establish credible multi-stakeholder governance with initial mechanisms for effective regional or country level representation
- Establish the AWS Technical Committee and initiate the first review and revision of the AWS Standard
- Ensure our accreditation program is robust encourages uptake and ensures high quality processes
- Build a globally consistent knowledge management system
- Build regional specificity into our training program
- Work closely with other standard systems to ensure our respective systems are mutually supportive

In 2016, to ensure that AWS Water Stewardship is a globally recognised brand that attracts participants we will

- Establish a globally consistent AWS Water Stewardship brand and certification mark that are valuable for implementers, promoters and members
- Develop strategic partnerships with key water stewardship actors
- Strengthen relationships and collaboration with AWS partners and accredited service providers to engage implementers and promoters and attract members
- Conduct a proactive outreach and marketing program for AWS Water Stewardship
- Achieve a significant increase in number of sites seeking AWS certification and in those publicly attributing the AWS Standard's role in non-certified water stewardship

In 2016, to ensure AWS has the financial capacity and people capability to deliver Goals 1 & 2 we will

- Work with regional partners and affiliates to achieve strong participation in AWS introductory membership
- Develop the capacities, capabilities and diversity of the AWS Board
- Engage funders to ensure that AWS's budget is fully funded through a balance of earned income and funding contracts
- Engage the skills we need to strengthen our business development, administration and communication work

We believe that 2016 will be a “watershed” year for AWS. The practical steps outlined in this strategy will enable us to take great strides forward as a global network. By increasing participation in our programs and by giving members and partners more ownership of AWS, we are poised to ensure that AWS Water Stewardship is both widely adopted and globally recognized as the definition of credible water stewardship.

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