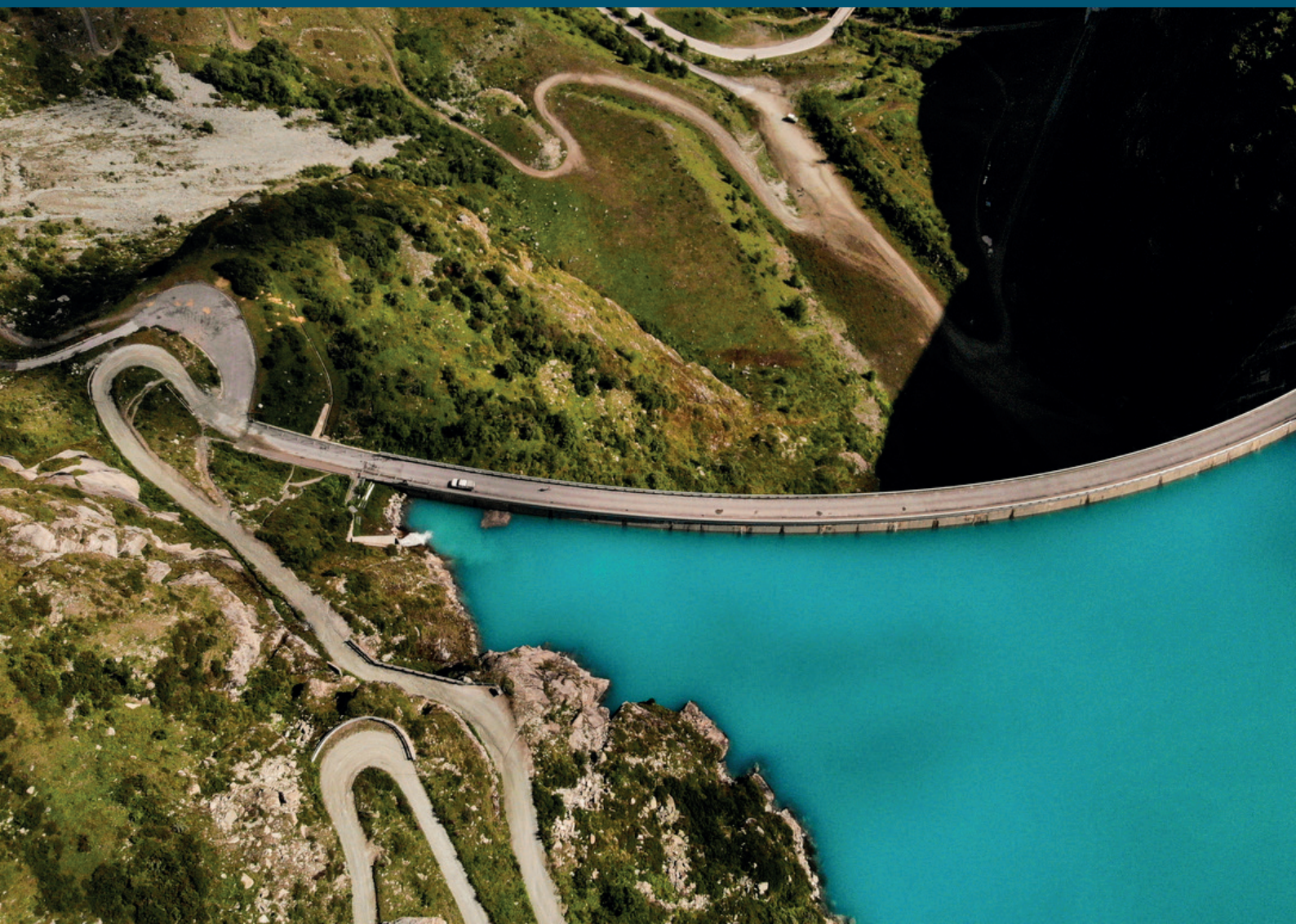
ALLIANCE FOR
WATER STEWARDSHIP

DRIVING WATER STEWARDSHIP IMPROVEMENTS AT SYSTEM, SITE AND CATCHMENT LEVELS

ALLIANCE FOR WATER STEWARDSHIP (AWS)

PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2020



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ACRONYMS

AWS	Alliance for Water Stewardship
CAB	Conformity Assessment Body
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICT	Information, Communications and Technology
ISEAL	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals (of the United Nations)
SCIO	Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alliance for Water Stewardship's (AWS) vision is to ignite and nurture global and local leadership in credible water stewardship that recognises and secures the social, cultural, environmental and economic value of freshwater.

Our 'Theory of Change' articulates how we see our work bringing about change in the world at scale and driving uptake of good water stewardship practices. It provides the basis for the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system we have developed to measure the results of our work and progress toward our vision.

This is our first Performance Monitoring Report, and it is an important milestone in our organisation's development. This report presents the 2020[1] monitoring data on the AWS Standard and Standard System, covering membership, types of sites and industry sectors worldwide. It presents the scope and scale of AWS in 2020 and provides analysis of information on activities that directly affect our work.

AWS has developed a set of 23 M&E Indicators[2]. This report covers 14 indicators across the three levels, as described below:

i. AWS Standard System Level (SSL) – There are nine SSL indicators of which all nine are covered in this report.
ii. AWS Site Level (SL) – There are nine SL indicators of which three are included in this report.
iii. AWS Catchment Level (CL) – There are 5 CL indicators of which two are included in this report.

Ours is a story of growth. The data in this report show that AWS continued to grow during 2020 across key performance indicators:

- number of AWS members ↑ 148
- number of site certificates ↑ 150
- geographic reach and location of site certificates ↑ 48 countries
- number of registered sites ↑ 133
- number of Professionally Credentialed Individuals ↑ 275
- number of AWS Standard System trainings delivered ↑ 22
- ↑ 1,900+ Standard downloads

Other information such as female trainers and female participation in the AWS Standard System, AWS corporate commitments, and catchments with more than one AWS site have been captured and reported on for the first time.

Our future plans include geospatial mapping of all sites; provision of more real time M&E reporting; continuing our research projects on standard implementation; and building research partnerships to explore outcome and impact evaluations.

[1] Some data presented are current up to 31 March 2021 where stated
[2] See: a4ws.org/download/aws-me-indicator-framework-summary/

INTRODUCTION TO AWS

The Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) is a global membership collaboration that includes businesses, Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and the public sector. AWS members contribute to the sustainability of local water resources through their adoption and promotion of a universal framework for the sustainable use of water – the International Water Stewardship Standard, or AWS Standard – that drives, recognises and rewards good water stewardship performance.

AWS defines water stewardship as the use of water that is socially and culturally equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial, achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process that includes both site[5] and catchment[6]-based actions.

AWS defines water stewardship as the use of water that is socially and culturally equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial, achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process that includes both site[3] and catchment[4]-based actions. AWS works on three fundamental building blocks of water stewardship:

1. The AWS Standard is globally recognised and respected as defining best practice in collaborative and catchment-focused water use.
2. The AWS Standard is widely used by organisations to help them address water risks and seize opportunities to build a sustainable future.
3. Independent certification and multi-stakeholder processes ensure that the AWS Standard provides a 'safe place' to strengthen relationships and build trust between diverse water users.

Figure 1 below illustrates the five steps and five outcomes of the AWS Standard V2.0.

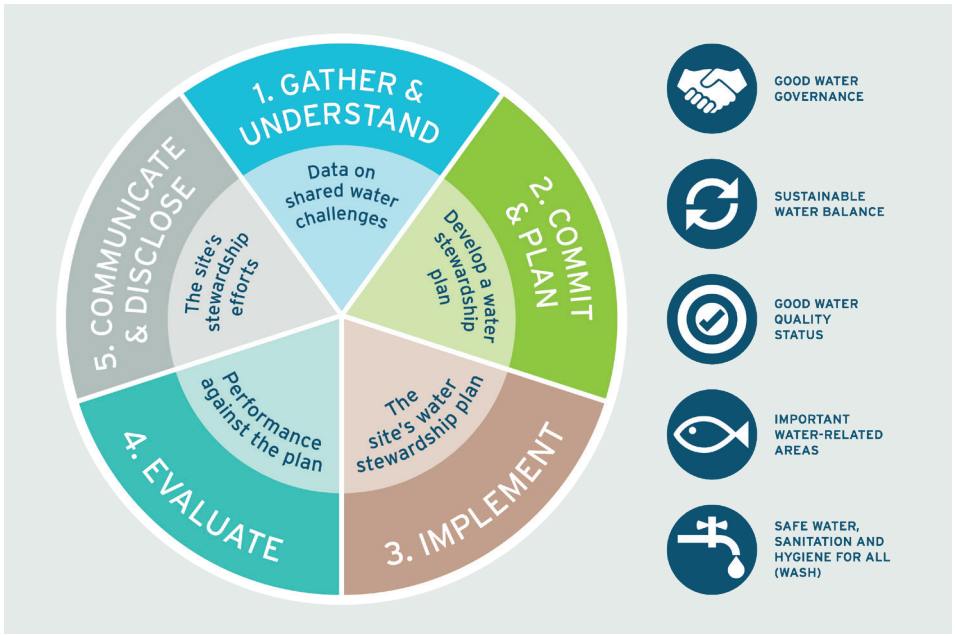


Figure 1: The Five Steps and Five Outcomes of the AWS Standard System

AWS Membership connects progressive organisations around the world and different industry sectors in advancing water stewardship. AWS Membership is open to any organisation, from any sector that shares our aim of the responsible use of freshwater. It enables precompetitive collaborations to flourish at different levels.

Organisations join to:

- Be part of a global network and be at the forefront of water stewardship and draw upon experience from peers, multi-disciplinary water experts and water-relevant initiatives.
- Strengthen their water stewardship practices through access to valuable AWS resources, including access for all staff to the AWS Tools Hub, home to the E-Standard & Guidance, webinar recordings, on-demand Online Learning Modules, tools and all latest AWS innovations as they come online.
- Enhance their credibility and performance on water-related goals and sustainability ambitions, via engagement with AWS, our Membership, partners and wider stakeholders.

The AWS Strategy is based on three strategic goals: Influence, Inclusion and Impact. It focuses on strengthening and deepening the AWS System across sectoral engagement in four priority industry sectors while remaining agile and responsive to demand in other sectors. This focus allows AWS to drive increased international commitments and adoption of water stewardship.

Our four strategic sectors are:

- **Food and Beverage Manufacturing**
- **Agricultural Supply Chains**
- **Textiles and Apparel**
- **ICT and Micro-electronics**

[3] For the AWS definition of a site see Glossary in Annex B
[4] For the AWS definition of a catchment see Glossary in Annex B
[5] For the AWS definition of a site see Glossary in Annex B
[6] For the AWS definition of a catchment see Glossary in Annex B

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF AWS

As of March 2021, AWS has 17 employee positions under the aegis of AWS SCIO[7] International Secretariat.[8] This includes five Regional and National Coordinators located in Europe, Latin America and The Caribbean, South Africa, India and Pakistan. AWS also works with Regional Partners covering Asia-Pacific (including their country delivery partner in Indonesia) and North America. Information on AWS staff, Board members and Technical Committee members is found at **a4ws.org/about**

AWS SCIO is registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCO45894).[9] Last year, 2020, was the fifth full year of the Organisation's operations, having been incorporated in August 2015. AWS SCIO is the scheme owner of the International Water Stewardship Standard V2.0.

AWS SCIO is an ISEAL Code Compliant Member.[10] This means that the AWS Standard System has been independently evaluated against ISEAL's Codes of Good Practice[11] – a globally-recognised framework for effective, credible sustainability standard systems. The ISEAL Alliance is the global membership organisation for ambitious, collaborative and transparent sustainability standards systems and initiatives.[12]

AWS believes in working together for greater benefit and, as such, holds reciprocal memberships with five other sustainability standard organisations and reporting initiatives: Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), Bonsucro, CDP, GLOBALG.A.P. and Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP).

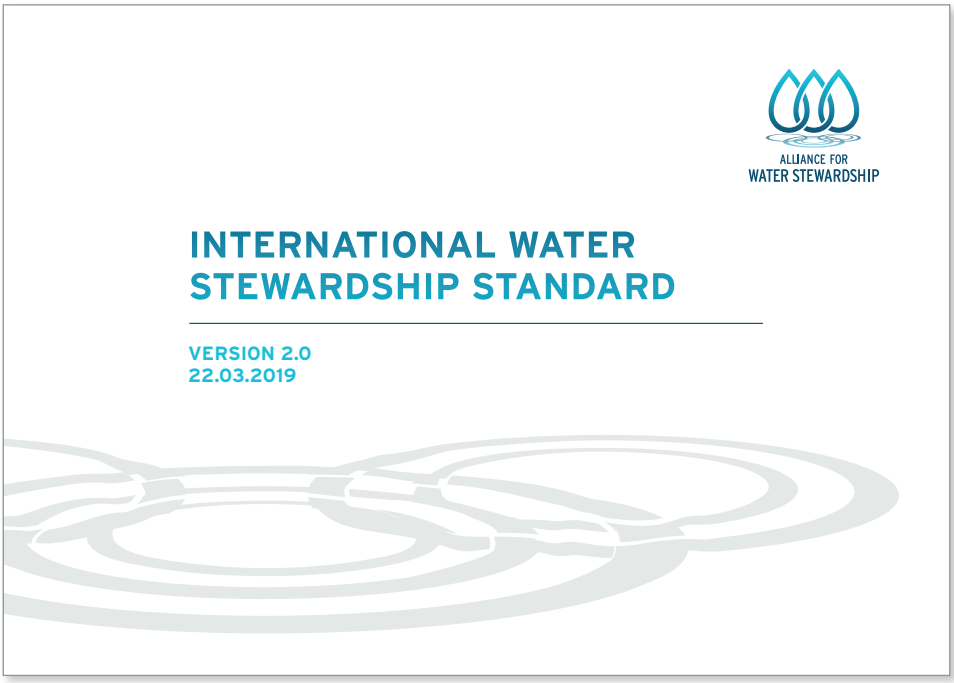


Figure 2: The International Water Stewardship Standard V2.0 (known as the AWS Standard).

In October 2020, following a comprehensive review, the AWS SCIO International Board approved a proposal to revise the AWS SCIO International Secretariat and Regional Partner organisational structure. The new structure moves away from a regional approach to focus more on our four priority business sectors: Food and Beverage Manufacturing; Agricultural Supply Chains, ICT and Microelectronics, and Textiles and Apparel. The new structure is made up of four Business Units: Finance & Operations, Outreach & Engagement, System Integrity and Global Programmes. This structure is being implemented over the course of 2021.

Also in 2021, we are taking steps to modernise our Assurance Model in response to stakeholder feedback. These revisions will further strengthen the credibility of AWS certification while providing an improved experience for all sites seeking certification to the AWS Standard.

Key benefits include:

- **More robust and effective oversight of assurance processes**
- **A new digital platform providing a simpler user experience**
- **Enhanced training for auditors and audit teams**
- **Stronger alignment with monitoring and evaluation requirements**
- **Greater consistency in interpretation and reporting**

Central to this modernisation is the establishment of a new mission-driven organisation, which will be the sole Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) for the AWS System. Several other leading standard schemes use similar models of assurance, including Fairtrade. For more information visit **a4ws.org/certification**

[7] Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)
[8] There is currently one ongoing recruitment process.
[9] SCIO https://www.oscr.org.uk/about-charities/search-the-register/charity-details?number=SC045894
[10] For more information visit isealalliance.org
[11] There are three ISEAL codes commonly referred to the: ISEAL Impacts Code; ISEAL Assurance Code and ISEAL Standard-setting Code.
[12] This report also fulfils ISEAL Impacts Code "Clause 8.3 Performance Monitoring" and "Clause 10.4 Increased Transparency, Public Access and Engagement"

AIM OF THIS REPORT

This is the first Performance Monitoring Report produced by AWS. Its purpose is threefold: to share progress made in relation to our Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system; to report developments to our stakeholders on M&E insights and learnings; and to convey our future plans.

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

- The AWS organisation operates globally, and the AWS Standard applies to all types of freshwater[13] used by an organisation. It is applicable to any type, size of organisation or industry sector in any location around the world. Thus this report covers our work worldwide.
- The majority of data presented in this report covers the period from January 2020 to 31 December 2020. Some data presented are current up to 31 March 2021, where noted.
- The AWS M&E System, the foundation of this report, has been developed to measure and understand change at three levels: system, site and catchment levels.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

This report is primarily targeted at AWS Members, Partners and AWS SCIO global staff.

AWS MISSION

We ignite and nurture global and local leadership in credible water stewardship that recognises and secures the social, cultural, environmental and economic value of freshwater.

AWS VISION

A water-secure world that enables people, cultures, business and nature to prosper now and in the future.

[13] The AWS Standard applies to all types of water including surface water, ground water, recycled water, desalinized water (from ocean or brackish sources), precipitation, non-renewable reserves (fossil water), as well as snow and ice.

APPROACH

THEORETICAL APPROACH

Our Monitoring & Evaluation System takes a Theory of Change (ToC) approach. A ToC aims to articulate what impact or change an organisation is hoping to achieve and how its work brings about that change. Using a ToC approach requires that standards organisations make their tacit assumptions explicit as part of reaching consensus with colleagues and key stakeholders about what they are trying to do and why. It is best thought of as a compass rather than a roadmap. It is not a static process but one to be revisited.

In 2019, AWS undertook an organisation-wide consultation process to develop its ToC. The ToC infographic is shown below and is also available at **a4ws.org/impacts**

AWS views the development of its ToC as an essential and strategic planning management tool. It identifies several strategies (also called interventions) that can be categorised as primary or systemic.

Readers will appreciate that it is not possible nor advisable to undertake all strategies at once. As tempting as this may sound, it would be too costly to undertake and monitor all the ways in which a standard could potentially operate. Strategies need to be prioritised. Many standards systems spend up to 80%,[14] of their time recording, organizing and processing data to turn it into information, leaving little time for sense-making and learning. Rather, AWS prioritizes membership, training and standard implementation as primary strategies to deliver on its vision and mission.

DATA, INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE & LEARNING APPROACH

Good data collection, analysis and reporting is critical to increasing the reach, impact and effectiveness of the AWS System. In 2019, AWS developed its first Data & Information Strategy. This gave AWS a firm pathway to transfer data held in largely analogue systems to a central database.

Today, our Salesforce central database system holds all our membership, training, assurance, M&E, and Professional Credentialing programme data, with future plans to configure the system to integrate finance and invoicing systems.

PUBLIC DATA REPORTING

AWS has made further improvements in making its M&E data publicly available and is moving closer to real-time reporting on our website. Data and information such as the total number of valid AWS site certificates[15]; certification reports[16]; total number of AWS registered sites[17]; and total number, names and levels of Professionally Credentialed Individuals[18] are posted on the AWS website and updated at least every two weeks.

An increasing amount of our M&E data are collected online, and automatically uploaded to the Salesforce database, including the site information described above plus Stakeholder Announcements for upcoming audits that invite public consultation and input.

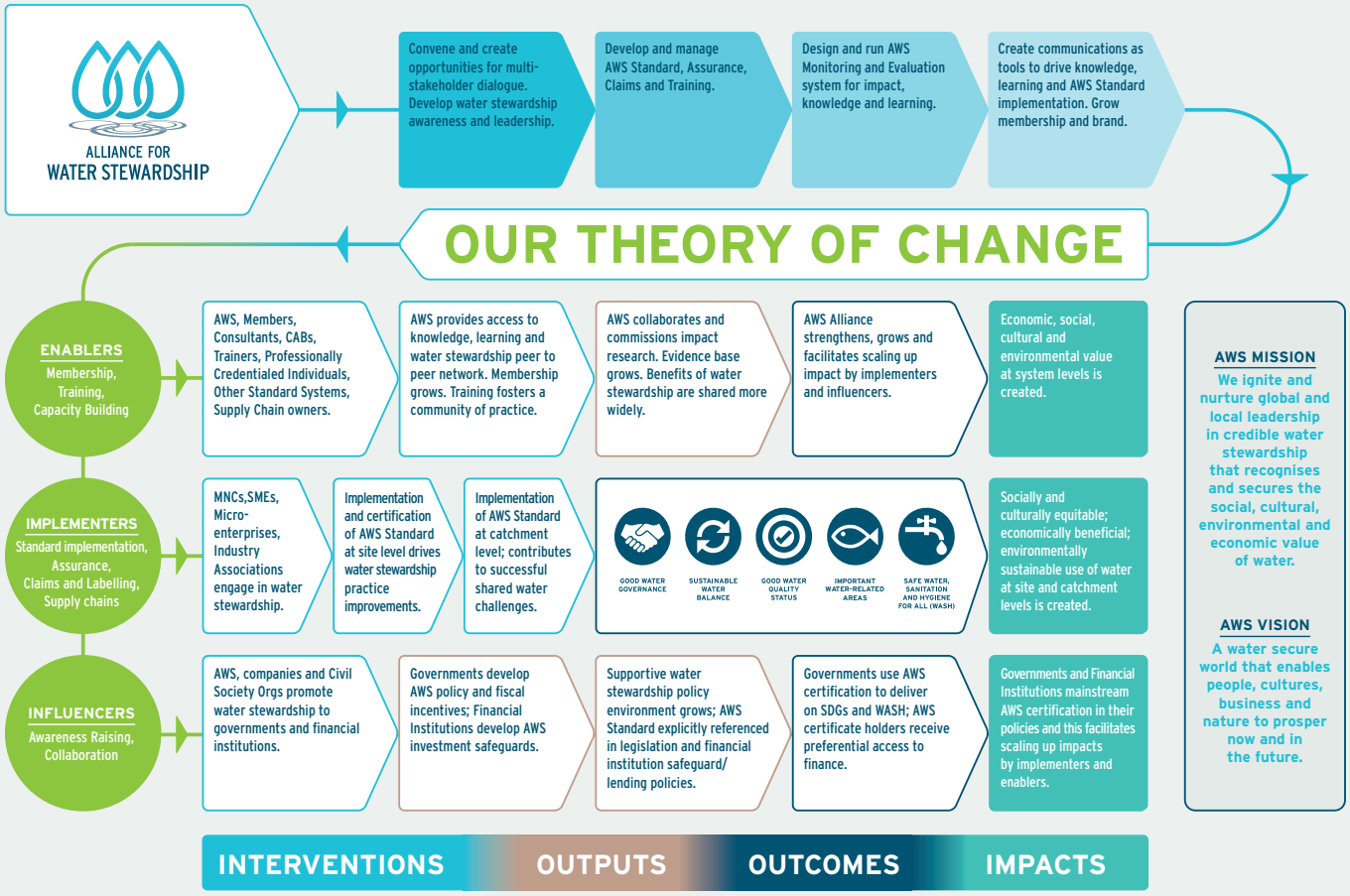
A M&E SYSTEM

A Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system is an ongoing process through which an organisation draws conclusions about its contribution to intended outcomes and impacts. It consists of a set of interconnected functions, processes and activities, including systematic collection of monitoring data on specified indicators and the implementation of outcome and impact evaluations.

[14] SSSG (2018) Sustainability Standards Specialist Group Newsletter
[15] Valid AWS Site certificates are found here: https://a4ws.org/certification/certified-sites/
[16] Certification and/or Audit Reports are found here: https://a4ws.org/certification/certified-sites/
[17] AWS registered sites are found here: https://a4ws.org/certification/registered-sites/
[18] Our directory of AWS Professional Credentialed Individuals is found here: https://a4ws.org/training/professional-credentialing-directory/

AWS THEORY OF CHANGE

The AWS ToC diagram shows three key groups of actors: Enablers, Implementers and Influencers (highlighted as green circles). The 'theory' is that, as each of these key groups sets about creating and supporting interventions, outputs, and outcomes, the desired positive impacts will be realised to deliver on our mission and vision (as seen on the righthand side).



M&E SYSTEM

Our M&E System monitors progress toward achieving our vision and mission and evaluates the contribution that the AWS System makes toward achieving long-term positive social, cultural, environmental and/or economic impacts.

To view the M&E Indicator Framework see Annex C. It is also available on **a4ws.org/impacts**

AWS monitors its performance and evaluates its contribution to deliver impact to:

- Improve the AWS Standard System and its effectiveness
- Build capacity by learning from experience, not only for the Standard System but also for sites, members, partners and others involved in the system
- Provide accountability to stakeholders and to those who are affected by, and are meant to benefit from, the activities of the standards system; and
- Earn credibility through willingness to be open about the results (good or bad) of the AWS system.

COMMUNICATING ABOUT IMPACT

AWS is careful about communicating data and information and aims to do it in a simple and clear way. AWS works to ensure that claims made in reports or statements that it issues about the outcomes and impacts of the AWS Standard System are accurate and linked to actual findings and conclusions from performance monitoring or outcome and impact evaluations. This approach conforms to ISEAL Impacts Code "Clause 10.3 Substantiating Claims".

As a Code Compliant Member of the ISEAL Alliance, AWS defines impact very specifically as: the positive and negative long-term effects resulting from the implementation of a standard system, either directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

M&E DATA LEVELS

A Data Collection Pyramid helps standard systems to define and communicate about its data collection activities. Performance Monitoring data are captured in Level 1 and in part of Level 2 (sampled monitoring). The data level for each indicator is noted in the M&E Indicator Framework (See Annex C and a4ws.org/impacts)

Level 1

Data that can be collected from all relevant entities, for example, from all members, or all certificate holders, or all Professionally Credentialed Individuals.

Level 2

Data collection from a sample of certified entities or other organisations involved in the standard system (for example, a sample of sites with certificates, or a sample of members). If the sample used is representative, Level 2 results can be extrapolated to draw conclusions about the full portfolio of certified entities. Level 2 is useful for collecting information that may be too difficult, time consuming, expensive, or sensitive to collect from all certified entities, but is still considered important enough for tracking across the portfolio. Data collection in Level 2 could come through surveys but might also be an add-on module or self-assessment questionnaire applied during the assurance process to a subset of certified entities. Sampling can also be done after data is collected – for example, selecting a sample of audit reports for data entry and further analysis.

Level 3

Level 3 involves more in-depth impact evaluation studies. An impact evaluation is a systematic, objective and in-depth, ex-post assessment of the medium or long-term effects; positive or negative, intended or unintended, of the implementation of a standard system. Impact evaluations employ methodologies that are designed to enable the target audience of the evaluation to understand the extent to which an observed change can be attributed to the standard system or another intervention. (Adapted from 3ie Impact Evaluation Glossary, 2012 and World Bank).

DATA COLLECTION PYRAMID

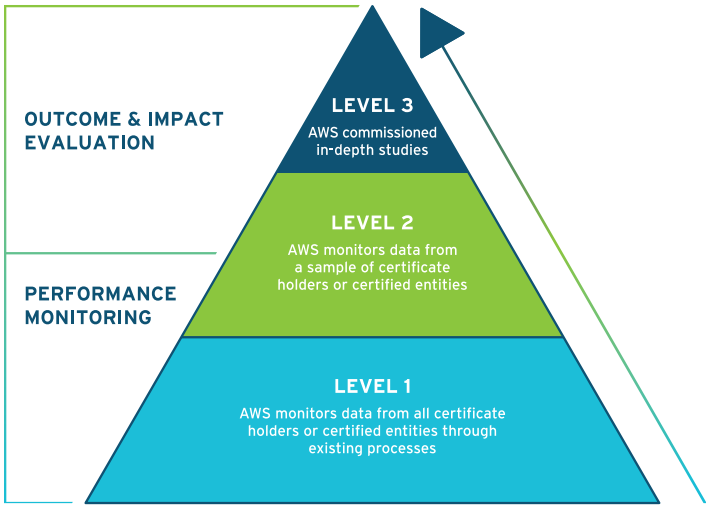


Figure 3: shows three levels in the Data Collection Pyramid. Adapted from ISEAL Alliance.

M&E INDICATORS

The AWS M&E Indicators[19] form the basis of performance monitoring of the AWS M&E System and this report. They are used in real time to report internally against. As the indicators were developed in 2019, it is still early days for the system. AWS has developed a set of 23 M&E Indicators. This report covers 14 indicators across the three levels, as described below (the next Performance Monitoring Report will cover all indicators):

i. AWS Standard System Level (SSL)[20] – There are nine SSL indicators of which all nine are covered in this report.
ii. AWS Site Level (SL)[21] – There are nine SL indicators of which three are included in this report.
iii. AWS Catchment Level (CL)[22] – There are 5 CL indicators of which two are included in this report.

The indicators were developed through consultation with AWS Staff, AWS Technical Committee members; AWS Members; AWS Board Members, Regional Coordinators, AWS Regional Partners and other water stewardship experts.

Aligning indicators is good practice. Thus, for AWS to be more effective and contribute to greater collective impact, the AWS M&E indicators are aligned with sets of other existing and globally recognised and consulted indicators including: UN SDG Indicators; ISEAL Common Core Indicators; Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Aichi Targets; and WWF International Water Risk Filter metrics.

AWS, GENDER AND WATER STEWARDSHIP

- **AWS and the AWS Standard System address a range of issues on gender and water stewardship in particular, as they relate to the AWS Standard's outcome: 'Safe water, sanitation and hygiene for all' (also known as WASH).**
- **In 2021, to mark International Women's Day (IWD) 2021, AWS shared stories on our website and on social media throughout the week celebrating women who are doing amazing work in water stewardship from Australia, China, Pakistan, Peru, and the USA.**
- **One of the three goals in the AWS 2019 – 2021 Strategy is 'inclusion' which is designed to ensure that gender issues are considered in all our work from organisation governance bodies, staffing, training and all our project work.**

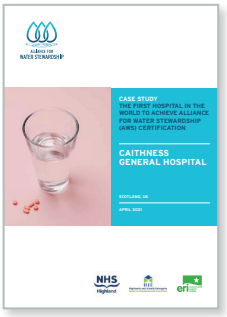
AWS CASE STUDIES

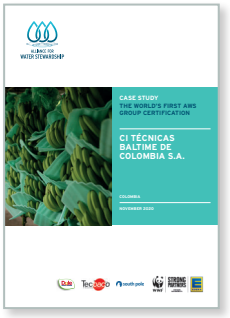
Stories are the way humans think, understand, remember and learn. Over the past few years, AWS has produced a growing number of case studies or 'stories' on AWS Standard implementation to share good practice and lessons learned.

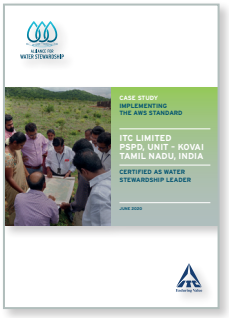
Increasingly our case studies are designed to follow a certain template to allow data to be reported in a simple way to easily identify environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits for readers implementing the Standard (See **a4ws.org/resources**).

Examples include:

1. Caithness General Hospital Case Study, Scotland (2021)
2. Ci Técnicas Baltime de Colombia S.A Case Study, Colombia (2020)
3. ITC Ltd. Case Study, India (2020)
4. Sheikhupura Case Study, Nestlé Waters, Pakistan (2020)
5. Water Stewardship in Agriculture: The Case of Iberesparragal Citrus Farm, Spain (2019)
6. Danper, Peru Case Study. Fostering sustainability and competitiveness in asparagus value chains through a local, global and institutional strategy (2018)
7. Renmark Irrigation Trust Case Study, Australia (2018)
8. Ingram's Case Study, Australia (2017)
9. Building a Water Stewardship Community in the UNESCO Western Port Biosphere Reserve Australia. (2017)







[19] A M&E indicator is a quantitative or qualitative variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement of outcomes, to reflect the changes connected to a standards system, or to help assess the performance of an organisation. Note that M&E indicators are not the same as the indicators found in the AWS Standard which are 'compliance indicators'.
[20] See AWS M&E Indicator Framework in Annex C.
[21] See AWS M&E Indicator Framework in Annex C.
[22] See AWS M&E Indicator Framework in Annex C.

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SDGs AND AWS WATER STEWARDSHIP

Good water stewardship practices can drive progress across all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Figure 4 below shows examples of shared water-related challenges and how they map to Targets for SDG 6.

SHARED WATER-RELATES CHALLENGES	SDG TARGETS
Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)	SDG 6.1: By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
	SDG 6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.
Water quality	SDG 6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, elimination of dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.
Water quantity	SDG 6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.
Water governance	SDG 6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.
	SDG 6A: By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity building support to developing countries in water-and sanitation related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, and recycling and reuse technologies.
	SDG 6B: Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.
Important water-related ecosystems	SDG 6.6:By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers, and lakes.
Extreme weather events	SDG 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.
	SDG 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

Based on: UN (2015)

Figure 4: demonstrates in greater detail how the AWS Standard's V2.0 five outcomes contribute to SDG 6 'Clean Water and sanitation for all'.
This means that AWS Standard implementers contribute to strengthening the connection between water stewardship and the UN SDGs and, in particular to SDG 6.

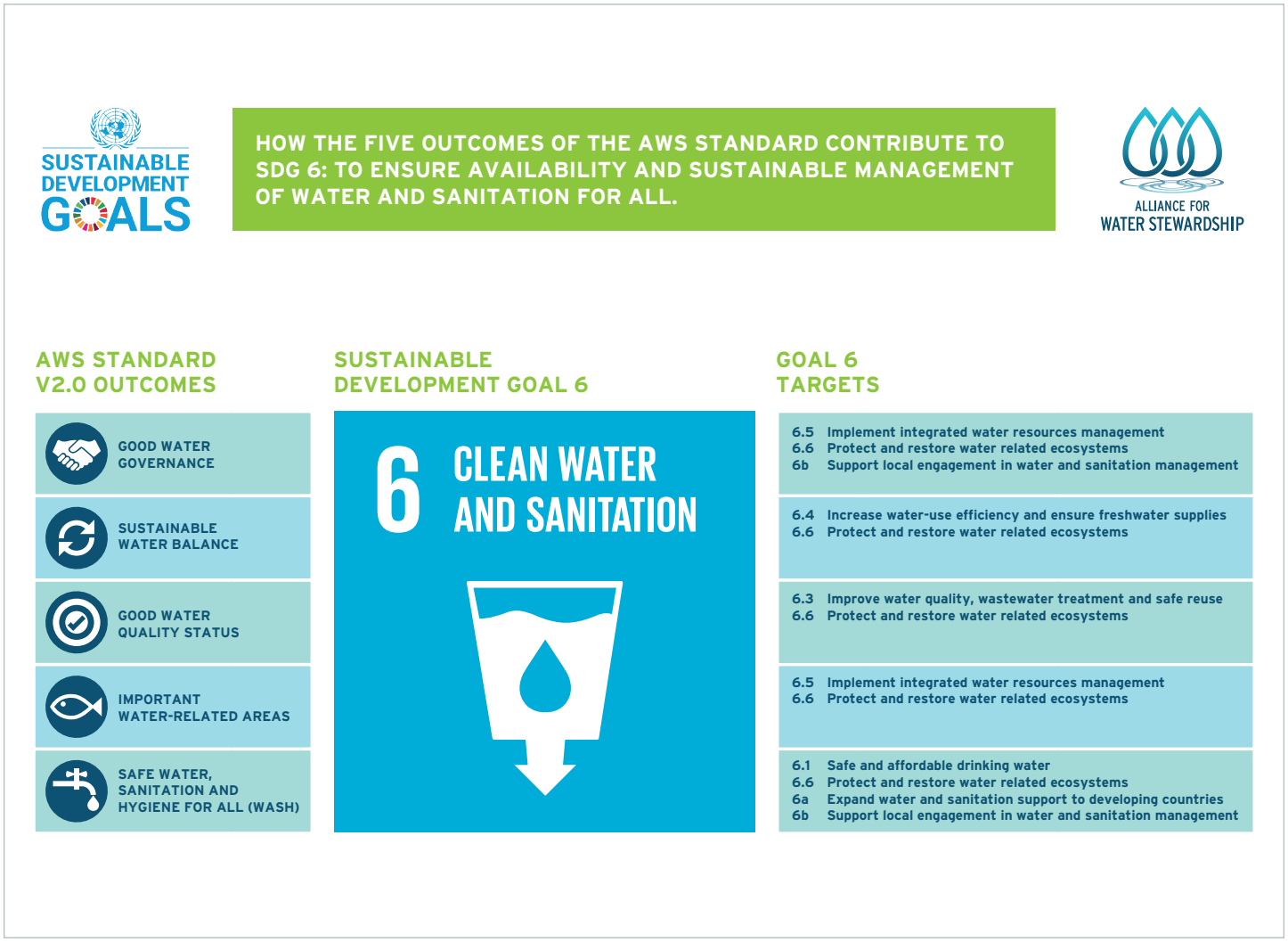


Figure 5: AWS and SDG 6

COVID-19 AND AWS

The Covid-19 global pandemic has impacted AWS's work, necessitating changes in our existing Assurance System, including permitting interim remote Initial Certification and Recertification Audits, holding our flagship event (the Annual AWS Forum) online and enabling a fully remote way of working. However, we have still been able to provide an increased level of service to our members; certification to the AWS Standard was able to continue under the revised requirements; and our project commitments despite travels restrictions are largely being fulfilled.

PRESENTATION OF M&E DATA

The following section presents the 2020 M&E data in three parts.

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATORS

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 1 - NUMBER OF AWS MEMBERS

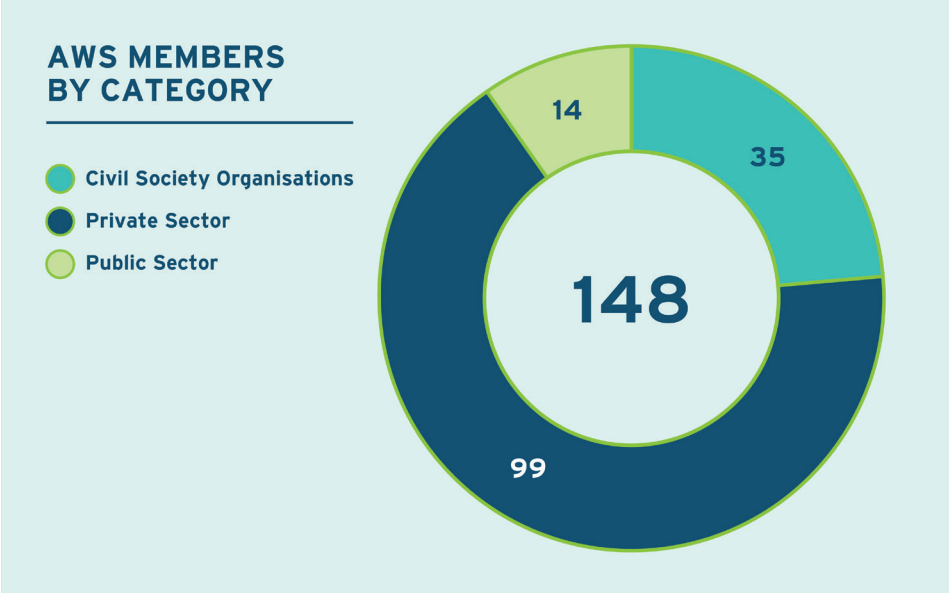
AWS Members strengthen knowledge, learning and drive participation in the AWS System. The ultimate strength of the AWS System lies in the diversity of experience that the members bring to it, and from the group sharing of hard won, locally acquired knowledge on how stewardship can address diverse shared water-related challenges. It is this shared insight, born from the multi-stakeholder nature of our governance that gives us, and our members a strong, credible voice on water use and stewardship.

It is not a requirement to be an AWS Member to implement and certify sites but, is highly recommended as membership affords many benefits including access to a network for learning and sharing knowledge, building collaborations, participation in strategic development and governance processes, and access to useful resources such as the AWS Tools Hub.[23] Our members are a powerful driving force for change and scale in the implementation of water stewardship.

In 2016, our membership programme was launched, with 33 Members joining AWS. Since then, numbers have grown. In 2020, there were 148 members – a 37% increase over 2019. All this demonstrates that, despite global concerns over Covid-19, organisations see value in AWS membership.

As of 31 March 2021, there are 148 Members across our three membership categories: Civil Society Organisation, Private Sector, and Public Sector (see Figure 6).

Significantly, five of our members are also Funding Members[24]: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Apple Inc., EDEKA, Nestlé S.A., and Unilever PLC. For a complete list of all our members see **a4ws.org/membership**



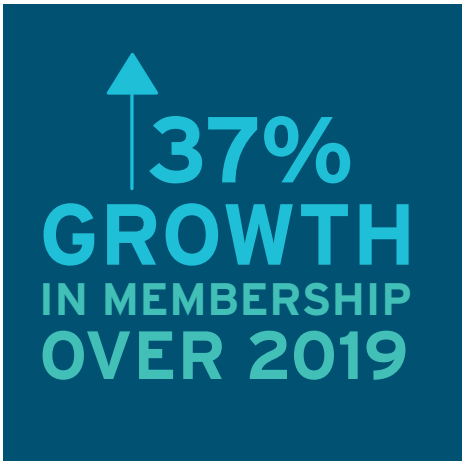


Figure 6: AWS Membership by our three membership categories (data as of 31 March 2021).

[23] AWS Tools Hub tools.a4ws.org

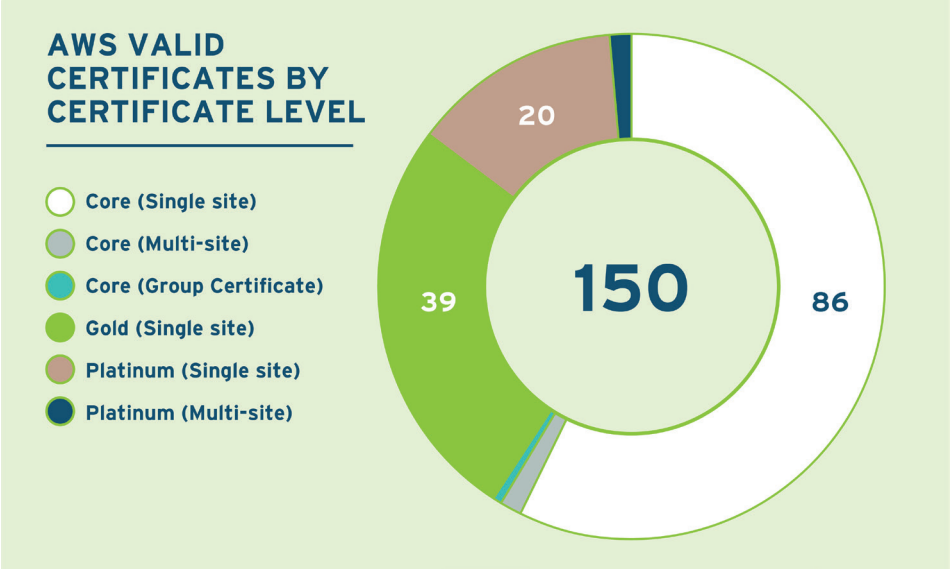
[24] AWS Funding Members are organisations which AWS publicly recognises and thanks for their commitment of additional resources to help further the development of the Alliance for Water Stewardship. Further information please visit https://a4ws.org/membership/apply-aws-membership/

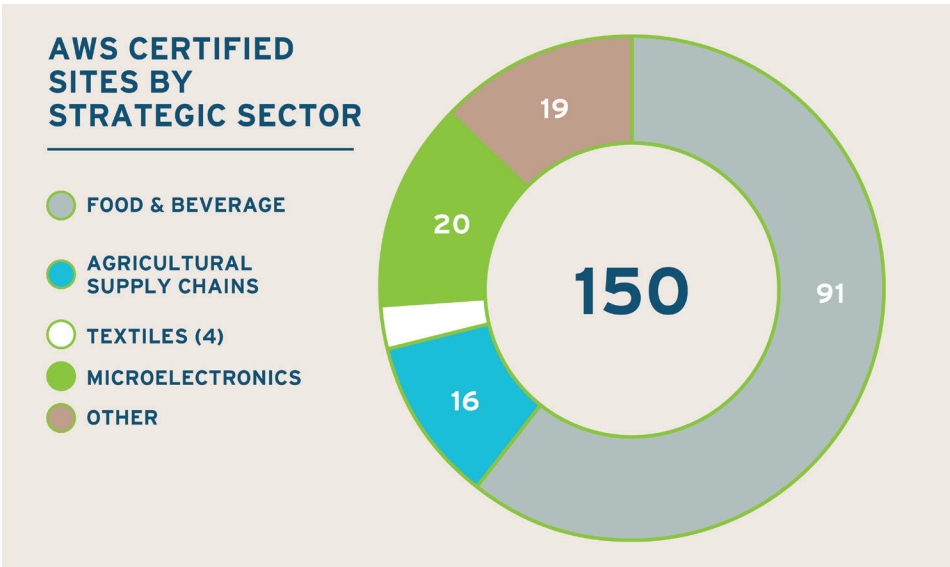
STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 2 - NUMBER OF AWS SITE CERTIFICATES

In 2015, Ecolab's new Taicang Technology site in China was the first AWS site to be certified in the world. In March 2019, we launched V2.0 of the AWS Standard. By the end of 2019, the total number of certificates was 65. At the end of 2020, total number of certificates grew to 134. As of 31 March 2021, the total number of AWS valid certificates reached 150.

In addition to the three levels of AWS Standard Certification Core, Gold and Platinum (see box on Continual Improvement), certificates can be awarded to a 'Single Site Operation', a 'Group Operation' or 'Multi-site Operation'. Because one certificate may cover more than one site (in the case of a Group Operation[25] or Multi-site Operation[26]); it stands to reason that the number of certified facilities can be greater than the number of certificates. For consistency and clarity, we report on total number of valid certificates. AWS Certificates are valid for three years. Figure 7 below shows the total number of valid AWS Certificates by the Certificate Level and Site type.

AWS certificates represent all four AWS Strategic Industry Sectors: Food and Beverage Manufacturing; Textiles and Apparel, ICT and Microelectronics and Agricultural Supply Chains.[27] The Food and Beverage Manufacturing sector accounts for the highest number of sites, that is 91 (60%). This is followed by the ICT and Microelectronics sector with 20 (13%) and 'Other'[28] also with 20 certificates (13%). The Agricultural Supply Chains sector has 16 certificates (11%), and the Textile sector accounts for four certificates (3%). See Figure 8.





CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT: CORE, GOLD AND PLATINUM

There are three levels of AWS Standard certification that a site may achieve: Core, Gold and Platinum. All core criteria must be met as a minimum requirement for certification. Additional points are awarded for performance against the advanced criteria. The greater the number of points achieved the higher the level of water stewardship performance and AWS certification. It is anticipated that over time, a site will adopt these advanced actions in the spirit of continual improvement.

The Scoring System for these three levels is called the AWS Advanced Criteria Scoring Rubric and is available at: a4ws.org/resources/aws-system-documentation

TOP - Figure 7: Total number of AWS Certificates by Certificate Level and Site Type (Data as of 31 March 2021).
BOTTOM - Figure 8: AWS Certificates by our four Strategic Sectors (Data as of 31 March 2021).

[25] See definition in Glossary in Annex C
[26] See definition in Glossary in Annex C.
[27] AWS 2019-2021 Strategy can be found here: https://a4ws.org/resources/aws-publications/
[28] 'Other' includes sectors such as: Pharmaceutical, Health Care, Chemical & Other Material Production, and Tobacco.

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 3 - NUMBER OF AWS REGISTERED SITES

Prior to certification, sites are required to register their intent to implement the AWS Standard, and to seek certification. This information is collected using an online form on our website. A report of all registered sites is updated every two weeks and made publicly available at a4ws.org/certification/registered-sites/.

This process enhances transparency while also providing a key indicator on expected levels of uptake of certification in the short to medium term (six months to two years). When registering a site, organisations are asked to give an indication of their intended audit timeframe and are asked to indicate: 'within 6 months', '6 – 12 months', '1- 2 years', or 'not sure'. The most frequent response is 6-12 months.

Data on the site's geographic region, the industry sector and GPS coordinates are also collected. By the end of 2020, there were 155 registered sites. This number tends to fluctuate as registered sites' status[29] changes as they progress through the system to become certified while at the same time more new sites are added to the total as they register online. As of 31 March 2021, there were 133 registered sites. See Figure 9.

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 4 - NUMBER OF PUBLIC COMMITMENTS BY AWS MEMBERS

Leadership is central to our mission and an increasing number of our members are demonstrating water stewardship leadership by making public timebound commitments to certify their sites against the AWS Standard.

The aim of this indicator is to collect and assess the text of these commitments. Currently, these data are collected using desk-based research. Starting in May 2021, AWS members will be annually surveyed to collect further data and monitor their commitments.

Corporate commitments come in different shapes and sizes. It is not a requirement for members to make a commitment, so this is entirely of their own volition. As of 31 March 2021, we have identified 18 AWS Member companies whose commitments can be categorised in one of three ways:

i. Commitment to apply the AWS Standard (6 of 18)

ii. Commitment to certify sites to the AWS Standard (7 of 18)

iii. Commitment to certify type of site or a certain number of sites to the AWS Standard by a specific date (5 of 18)

This comparison is nuanced as some AWS members do not have sites per se, rather they work through their supply chains, requiring their suppliers with production sites to become AWS certified.

The earliest commitment identified thus far was made in 2018, and the most recent in 2021. Overall organisations have committed to certifying over 120 sites. This is an area AWS will continue to develop and report.

Integrating water stewardship into corporate strategy to drive standard uptake has increased significantly recently. Our work on monitoring the type and extent of corporate commitments is an important early step. Working with members and partners over the coming year, we will continue to be active in this space.

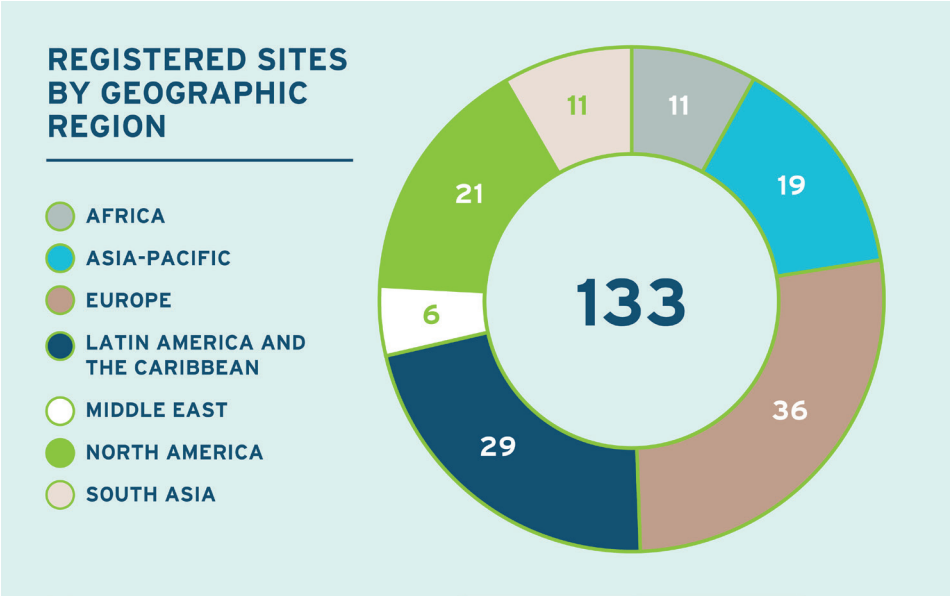


Figure 9: Total number of AWS registered sites by geographic region (data as of 31 March 2021)

[29] In the AWS System, sites can be Registered, 'Registered pending Audit', Certified or Withdrawn.

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 5 - NUMBER OF CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT BODIES (CABS)

The aim of this indicator is to report on the total number of AWS-accredited CABs by calendar year.

At the end of 2020, there were 10 AWS accredited CABs providing audit services to sites seeking certification against the AWS Standard. However, as AWS transitions to the new AWS Assurance Model, and when it has been fully implemented, this indicator will be reviewed and revised accordingly. As noted above, by the end of the transition period there will be one single AWS-accredited CAB.

SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 6 - NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALLY CREDENTIALED INDIVIDUALS

The aim of this indicator is to report on the total number of AWS Professionally Credentialed Individuals (in good standing[30]) trained across three levels: Foundation, Advanced and Specialist.

In January 2020, AWS launched its new Professional Credentialing (PC) Program. The PC Program operates via the AWS PC Portal online platform and is the means through which Professionally Credentialed Individuals engage with AWS and maintain their credential. As of 31 March 2021, there are a total of 275 Professionally Credentialed Individuals across three levels of Credential: Foundation, Advanced, and Specialist.

Over the course of 2019 - 2020, AWS was already developing significant online learning resources to support the implementation of the AWS Standard and add value to AWS Membership. With the onset of Covid-19, AWS redoubled its efforts by moving all its AWS Standard System Training courses and tailored training courses online with great success.

From January to December 2020, we delivered 22 Standard System Training courses around the world. This was a mix of face-to-face trainings during the pre-Covid-19 period and online trainings from March 2020 until the end of the year. In 2020, AWS Standard System Training courses were delivered in five languages: English, Chinese, Bahasa, Spanish, and French.

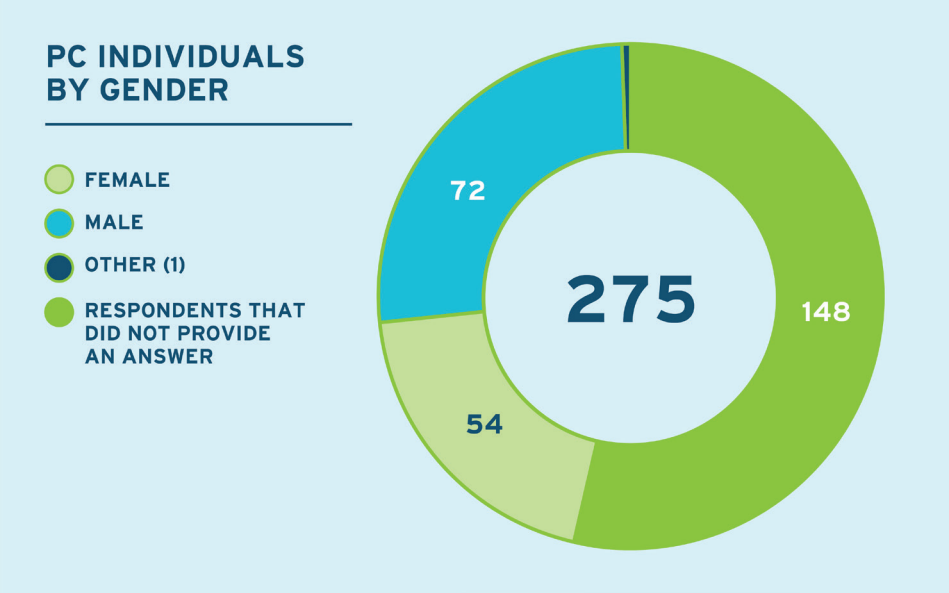


Figure 10: Total number of Professionally Credentialed Individuals by Gender (data as of 31 March 2021)

22 AWS STANDARD SYSTEM TRAINING COURSES DELIVERED IN 5 LANGUAGES

THERE ARE 275 AWS PROFESSIONALLY CREDENTIALED INDIVIDUALS

[30] Paid annual fees and signed Professional Credentialing Code of Conduct

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 7 - FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN AWS'S PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALLING PROGRAMME

The aim of this indicator is to understand the extent to which females participate in AWS Professional Credentialing (PC) Programme. It measures total number of females who are AWS Professionally Credentialed Individuals (in good standing[31]) combined from across all three levels: Foundation, Advanced and Specialist.

These data are self-reported. When individuals have completed the AWS Standard System Training and passed the relevant exam(s), they are invited to join the Professional Credentialing Program. When they open a new account on the PC Portal[32], individuals are asked to answer a number of questions including a question on gender. The four options are: 'female', 'male', 'other' or 'prefer not to say'. As of 31 March 2021, the data reveals that 54 people (20%) in the PC Program identified themselves as female.

At present 62%, that is 8 out of 13 AWS staff trainers that deliver the in-person and online AWS Standard System Training courses are female. With the significant increase in online AWS Standard System Training offerings this has reduced barriers for many participants (as trainees no longer have to pay for travel, meals and accommodation). The training programme is under review and other ways to reduce barriers and encourage participation for all will be explored.

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 8 - NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TRAINED IN AWS WATER STEWARDSHIP

The aim of this indicator is to measure the reach of the AWS Training Programme. Training is one of our prioritised strategies. It is often the first point of contact between AWS and organisations wishing to implement the Standard.

Training transfers water stewardship knowledge and increases adoption of good water stewardship practices. Through training, implementers develop a keener sense of what will be required from sites and site owners and are able to network and build relationships with other sites and AWS Members pursuing AWS sometimes in the same region or sector.

We have formalised our AWS Standard System Training® offering and require trainees to undertake a total of 18 hours of training and to pass all three exams to qualify to be credentialed to the highest level (Specialist). The total number of individuals trained in the AWS Standard System from January 2015 – 31 March 2021 is 1,214 across all three levels. Trainees represent diverse roles from site managers, individuals from corporate sustainability team, quality assurance, consultants, implementing partners, to NGOs and auditors.

AWS also offers custom or tailored training courses for organisations or companies. These training sessions are delivered by AWS Staff using formal AWS Training curriculum but customised for the local context. Tailored training that conveys the benefits of AWS Standard implementation to operations staff is good practice.

Since 2015, AWS has delivered over 30 tailored training courses around the world.

Between January 2015 and March 2021, more than 1,200 Individuals participated in AWS Trainings at all levels

62% OF AWS STAFF TRAINERS ARE FEMALE

20% of AWS Professionally Credentialed Individuals identified themselves as female

[31] Paid annual fees and signed Professional Credentialing Code of Conduct
[32] PC Portal http://pcportal.a4ws.org

STANDARD SYSTEM LEVEL INDICATOR 9 – NUMBER OF AWS STANDARD DOWNLOADS

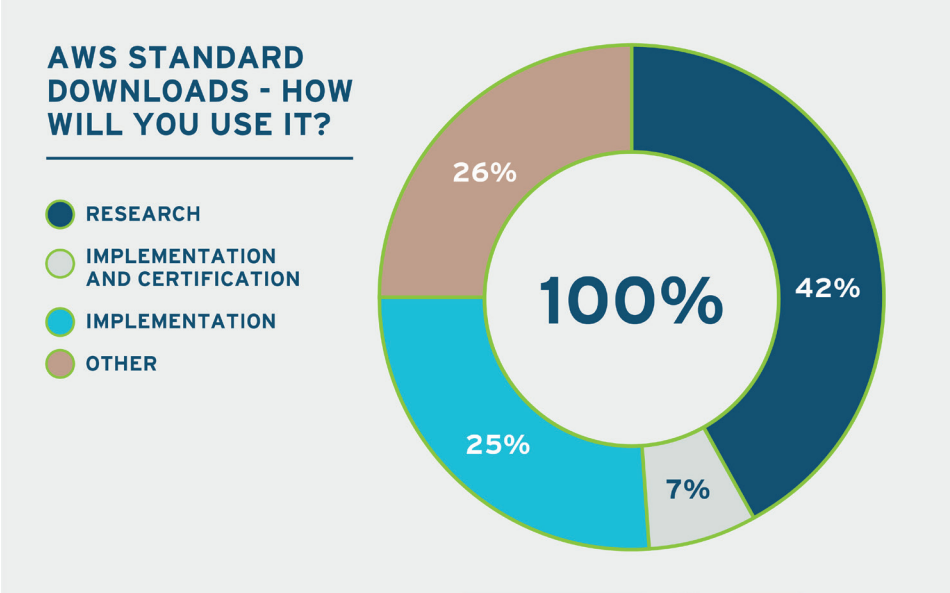
The aim of monitoring the number of AWS Standard downloads from the AWS website is to understand the level of interest in the system, as well as geographic regions and industry sectors of respondents, their intended use and other variables.

Specific to the M&E System, the aim is to understand the intended or actual use of the Standard by an organisation. This is important as some organisations 'apply' the AWS Standard's requirements but do not seek to certify against it. This means that not all uses of the Standard result in certification. This situation is not unique to AWS as it happens in other sustainability standard systems. There are a number of possible explanations for this. For example, some companies may choose not to pursue certification because of perceived cost, while others use the standard at a few sites to pilot test before rolling out across a company's wider operations and eventually seeking certification. Of course others download the standard for research or to support others with implementation.

Since data collection began in 2017, a total of 5,115 standard downloads have been recorded. Beginning in June 2020, with the introduction of a new online form to collect this data, 1,958 individuals have provided a response on their intended use (see Figure 11). To obtain an indication from individuals as to their intended use of AWS Standard, four options are:

- Implementation
- Implementation and Certification
- Research
- Other

The data on how respondents of 1,958 Standard downloads intend to use the Standard is as follows: Implementation (25.6%); Implementation and certification (26.1%); Research (41.7%) or Other (6.61%). More than half (51.7%) intend to implement, with a majority intending to certify also. Meanwhile, those intending to use the Standard for 'Research' constituted the largest single category. We realise that the term 'Research' can include different kinds of intended use. Thus in future the way the data is collected will be refined so that research for 'planning to implement the standard' is not combined with other types of research such as academic. Another aspect will be to discern those downloading the standard to support others in implementation. A further point is that the number of respondents who answered they downloaded the Standard for 'Implementation and Certification' provides an indication to AWS to understand future demand for audit services.



There were over 1900 downloads of AWS Standard from June 2020 until 31 March 2021.

Figure 11: Total number of 1,958 standards downloads from June 2020 – 31 March 2021

SITE LEVEL INDICATORS

This section reports on site certificates by country; geographic identifiers; and financial improvements at site level.

SITE LEVEL INDICATOR 1 - AWS SITE CERTIFICATES BY COUNTRY

The aim of this indicator is to understand the geographic reach of the AWS System. As of 31 March 2021, AWS Certified sites are located in 48 countries across seven geographic regions (See Figure 12) , demonstrating the relevance and applicability of the AWS Standard as a universal framework to drive contextually appropriate actions on water stewardship. The United States has the highest number of certificates at 28 followed by China with 21 (data as of 31 March 2021).

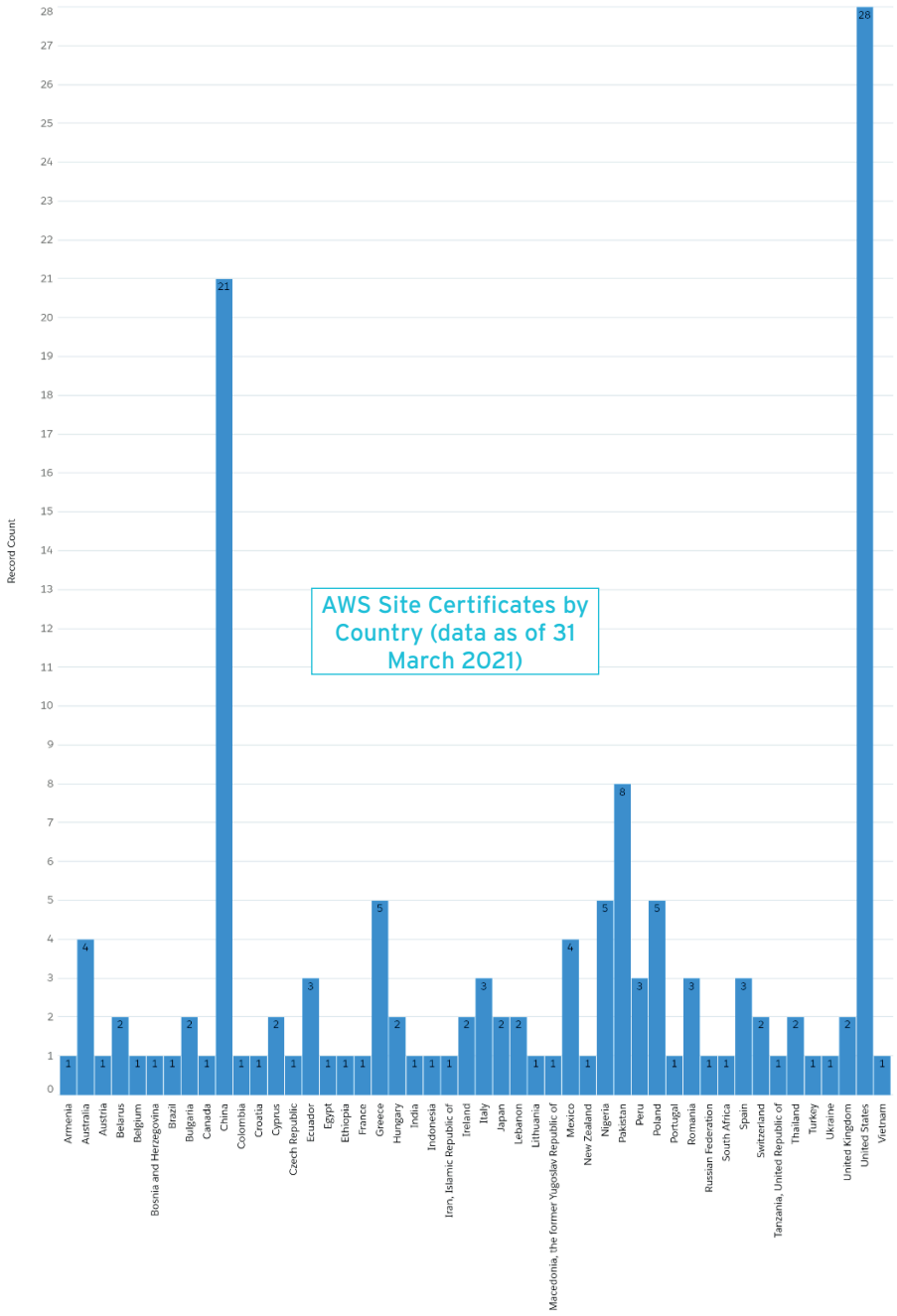


Figure 12: AWS Certificates all types (Core, Group and Multi-site Operations) and all levels (Core, Gold & Platinum) by Country.

SITE LEVEL INDICATOR 2 - GEOGRAPHIC IDENTIFIER – GPS COORDINATES OF SITE

The aim of collecting GPS Coordinate data is two-fold: first, to confirm the location of sites; and secondly to be able to map precisely registered and certified sites globally. In addition, it is important to note that in many rural areas, GPS Coordinates are critical to find and verify the location of sites.

GPS Coordinates are collected as the Centroid of each individual site whether registered or certified. This data collected also applies to all individual sites whether it is a Single Site Operation, or part of a Multi-site Operation or Group Operation.

GPS Coordinates are reported as latitude and longitude as Decimal Degrees and are collected on Site Registration Form via website; verified and held in Salesforce database.

In the future, AWS will explore further ways to capture other geospatial data on sites. For example, polygon layer data for Multi- site Operations' boundaries; or polygon layer data for individual sites that are members of an AWS Group Operation; or a single centroid point for a Group Operation. This is not so much as to report on total area (for water stewardship this is not always relevant as compared to other commodity standard systems) rather to show where in a given country and catchment sites are located for transparency, to support collaboration, and data sharing.

SITE LEVEL INDICATOR 3 - FINANCIAL IMPROVEMENTS AT SITE LEVEL

Users of the AWS System are interested in understanding its benefits. The aim of this indicator is to measure the total amount of financial improvements (for example, cost savings) by a site as a result of AWS certification reported in USD by calendar year.

This M&E indicator also corresponds to AWS Standard V2.0 compliance indicator 5.3.1: "A summary of the site's water stewardship performance, including quantified performance against targets shall be disclosed annually at a minimum." At present this information is 'disclosed' to auditors. Refinements are underway to allow the collection of this financial improvements data through the "Aligning AWS M&E System and Assurance Pilot Project" (see box to the right).

We have started to collect financial improvements data but the dataset for 2020 is incomplete. Nevertheless, four AWS certified sites have reported financial cost savings. These four sites alone total: USD 617,600.00 of cost savings as a result of of AWS Certification. The four sites are located in China and USA and are categorised "Chemical and other Materials Production" sector.

In the future, it will be possible to collect the results from each Certified Site for other criteria such as Criteria 1.3.7: "Annual water-related costs, revenues, and a description or quantification of the social, cultural, environmental, or economic water-related value generated by the site shall be identified and used to inform the evaluation of the plan in 4.1.2."

Financial improvements data in terms of cost savings will also be included in our case studies on Standard implementation mentioned earlier.

PILOT PROJECT: ALIGNING AWS M&E SYSTEM WITH ASSURANCE PILOT PROJECT

Some of the monitoring data that we use for M&E purposes can be collected during the assurance process. In 2020, AWS developed a project to better align its M&E System with its Assurance System.

The first step in this new alignment process has already been taken with the inclusion of two new Clauses 2.11.1.1 and 2.11.1.2, which were added to the revised AWS Certification Requirements.

The second step was to decide which indicator data to collect and to develop a template for auditors. Six site level and four catchment level indicators are proposed.

The third step is to undertake a pilot to test the data collection template and indicator protocols during audits with AWS Certified Sites.

This process will be aligned with the new Assurance Model. Pilot testing is planned for Q4 2021.

CATCHMENT LEVEL INDICATORS

Water is complex, with a diverse range of stakeholders that can only be understood and addressed at the level of the catchment. An accurate understanding of a site's catchment is crucial for effective and optimal good water stewardship. Knowing the catchment is relevant to assessing risks to the site and risks from the site to others.

Use of the terms: catchment, river catchment, sub-catchment, river basin and watershed varies throughout the world. The AWS Standard uses the term catchment. Note that it is beyond the scope of this report to explain the complex topic of defining a site's catchment. For more information please see AWS Guidance page 47 Guidance on Special Subject: Catchments (**a4ws.org**).

A catchment is a geographical zone in which water is captured, flows through and eventually discharges at one or more points. The concept includes both surface water and groundwater catchments.

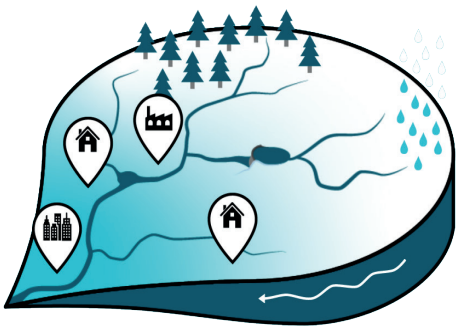
Catchments vary in size from small surface areas to large expanses holding huge volumes of water. They can range from a few square kilometres to many thousands of square kilometres. The larger it is, the more likely it is to include smaller catchments or subcatchments.

CATCHMENT LEVEL INDICATOR 1 - CATCHMENT LOCATIONS OF REGISTERED AND CERTIFIED SITES

The aim of this indicator is to measure the total number of catchments containing one or more AWS sites. This serves to measure the 'cluster effect' where more than one AWS certified and/or registered site exists within a catchment. Knowing the catchment locations of sites serves a multitude of other purposes including to encourage collaboration (for example, data sharing or identifying stakeholder groups) and to attract investment in water stewardship actions at and within the catchment.

Site catchment name data are collected using an online form when an organisation registers a site on the AWS website. The data are uploaded to Salesforce database. However, because there is no one internationally agreed standard convention on catchment naming this can be challenging. As such, AWS has decided to align with the naming convention adopted by the WWF Water Risk Filter (WRF).[33] This will also support future GPS coordinates data that will be transposed using an application on the WRF platform. This will support our geospatial mapping plans mentioned earlier.

Preliminary data collected and held in Salesforce for 2020 shows that there are seven catchments with more than one AWS Certificate. The data below is 'as reported' by the organisations registering the site and cross-referenced with the audit or certification report. It is acknowledged that the catchments listed in Figure 13 are of significant total area. In the future, when this data is mapped it will be possible to zoom in to determine if sites are in the same catchment and sub-catchment.



NAME OF CATCHMENT	NUMBER OF AWS CERTIFICATES
Wusong River Catchment, China	8
Vistula River Basin, Poland	3
Dongjiang River Catchment, China	2
Ica River Catchment, Peru	2
Indus River Catchment, Pakistan	2
Malir River Catchment, Pakistan	2
Taihu Lake Catchment, China	3

Figure 13: Preliminary data on number of catchments with more than one AWS Certificate (data as of 31 March 2021).

[33] WWF Water Risk Filter waterriskfilter.panda.org

CATCHMENT LEVEL INDICATOR 2 - GOOD WATER GOVERNANCE AT CATCHMENT LEVEL

Water governance encompasses all aspects of how water is managed by governments, regulators, suppliers and users. It includes water resources management, protection, allocation, monitoring, quality control, treatment, regulation, policy and distribution. Good water governance ensures responsible sharing of water resources in the interests of users and the natural environment in line with the principles of water stewardship.[34]

Thus, monitoring credible water stewardship should therefore include some indicators that assess the degree to which catchments are sustainably managed – and how the AWS certificate holder organisation is participating in these multi-stakeholder processes. Having said that, measuring governance is not an easy task. It is a complex concept open to several interpretations and its measurement is not straightforward. Measurements across countries and or over time are not always possible.[35] Nonetheless, this M&E indicator aligns to AWS Standard requirements.

The aim of this indicator is to document the existence, contribution and extent of a site's water governance mechanisms and actions (for example, participation and contributions to water stewardship committees, water resource policies; conducting M&E of water resources at catchment level; and other water stewardship roles and responsibilities) taken within or at catchment level in the last calendar year.

For example, below are three AWS Standard Indicators with which the M&E indicator aligns:

- AWS Standard Indicator 1.5.1: Water governance initiatives shall be identified, including catchment plan(s), water-related public policies, major publicly-led initiatives under way, and relevant goals to help inform site of possible opportunities for water stewardship collective action;
- AWS Standard Indicator 3.1.1: "Evidence that the site has supported good catchment governance shall be identified."
- AWS Standard Indicator 5.4.2: "Efforts made by the site to engage stakeholders and coordinate and support public-sector agencies shall be identified."

Preliminary monitoring shows a range of evidence provided by sites during audits of good water governance at catchment level:

- Signatory to a public Catchment Management Declaration
- Support for a Natural Flood Mitigation Project that works alongside a government agency and university
- Support government agency in relation to pollution reduction project in site's catchment
- Development of a Knowledge Network so site workers and internal stakeholders can easily access catchment plan(s), water-related public policies and major publicly-led water related initiatives
- Site has track record of participation with Environmental Protection Bureau to pilot water-related projects
- Collaboration with a University on a hydrogeological and replenishment study in the site's catchment
- Site promotes an environmental and hydrogeological protection policy in accordance with the municipality and regional governments.

Work to refine what constitutes tangible contributions, for example: level of effort, financial contributions, data, technology or human resource investment is underway. Some desk research is ongoing but the dataset for 2020 is incomplete. This work will continue and is included in the Pilot Project on Aligning AWS M&E and Assurance System (mentioned earlier).

[34] AWS Standard V2.0 March 2019 a4ws.org
[35] 2018 (OECD). Implementing the OECD Principles on Water Governance. Read.oecd-ilibrary.org

INSIGHTS & LEARNINGS

The growth, effectiveness and positive impacts of AWS water stewardship are dependent on our ability to incorporate the latest knowledge and learnings into the ongoing development of the AWS System.

GROWTH

In 2020, eight out of nine of our Standard System indicators from AWS membership to number of site certificates increased. The one exception was the number of accredited CABs. This despite global concerns and economic impact of Covid-19 demonstrates our members and organisations see value in AWS membership and the AWS Standard System.

The strength of the AWS Standard System is that it applies to all types of freshwater used by an organisation, and it is applicable to any type, size of organisation or industry sector in any location around the world. This strength is also one of the greatest challenges in developing a robust M&E System with meaningful indicators that can measure the diverse range of implementations that will result in meaningful results. This is an area of ongoing work at AWS.

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF AWS

To support our continued growth, it is important that the public be aware of AWS and to learn what water stewardship is and the opportunities and benefits it provides. One way to monitor this is through conventional media coverage. Between January and March 2021, AWS was mentioned over 45 times by conventional global media (for example, The Guardian, Ooska News, CSRWire, Business Recorder, Sourcing Journal, The Irish Times). This data is derived from Google Alerts.

A second way to monitor this is through social media. In 2020, AWS started monitoring its social media presence across LinkedIn and Twitter. Data from May to December 2020 shows that AWS's channels gained 786 new followers on LinkedIn and 196 new followers on Twitter. The data are collected using each platform's own analytics. In addition, AWS's monitoring of social media in the lead up to and during our AWS Forum 2020 Online revealed over 32,000 social media impressions were captured. (See Figure 14). This area of work will continue with surveys planned for the coming year.

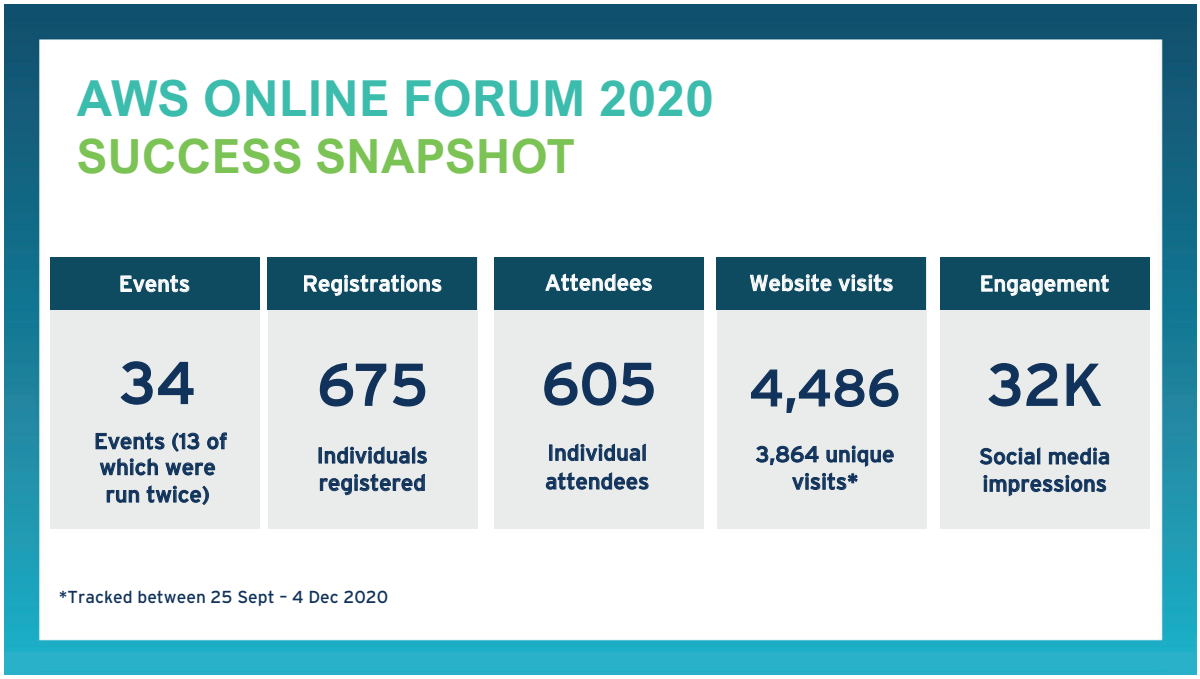


Figure 14: Snapshot of AWS Online Forum 2020.

FUTURE PLANS

MAPPING

AWS aims to map all registered and certified sites worldwide. AWS is already collecting GPS Coordinate site data. These will be transposed using an app on the WWF Water Risk Filter platform and using a common and aligned list of catchment names will allow a visual image of distribution and reach of the AWS sites. It will also support those organisations with registered sites who are just starting out on their water stewardship journey to see if there are other sites working in the same catchment or sub-catchment. Such geospatial data may in future be able to be combined with polygon data that can create the foundation for greater collaboration between different actors and stakeholders in their respective catchments.

REALTIME REPORTING

AWS already provides real time data internally using Salesforce dashboards for its staff. As AWS grows and learns, its ambition is to provide real time performance monitoring data in the form of dashboards in addition to lists of certified and registered sites on its website.

UNINTENDED EFFECTS

AWS recognises the importance of taking into account the potential for unintended effects of the AWS Standard System. This is also a requirement of ISEAL Impacts Code compliance. In the coming year, AWS plans to consult with stakeholders to identify any possible unintended effects (both positive and negative), including the most significant negative unintended effects of the standards system's activities; and to document and share the results of this consultation in future Performance Monitoring reports.

COMMISSIONING IMPACT AND OUTCOME EVALUATIONS

The number, regularity and extent of impact evaluations should be commensurate with the maturity, scale and intensity of the activities of the standards system and financial resources. Impact evaluations generally take a number of years to complete as the goal is to see change over time. Thus, standards systems are unlikely to have any fully completed independent impact evaluations until they have been operational for three to five years. Evaluation studies are costly. AWS is exploring funding and other options for such research work.

Conducting impact evaluation studies is not the sole jurisdiction of the scheme owner. Academics, research institutes and NGOs often independently carry out research and evaluations on sustainability standards such as AWS. This body of research is curated on ISEAL's Evidensia Platform.[36]

BUILDING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Central to all our work is the commitment to collaboration. Throughout 2020, we continued to take important steps to collaborate and build research partnerships.

AWS aims to continue to build partnerships and engage with the research community to explore as well as find effective ways to encourage others to carry out research on the AWS Standard System. AWS's participation in research networks and Data Innovation Working Groups convened by ISEAL are critical to this success. Six summaries show the range of projects with which AWS is currently involved are found in Annex A. We update our website regularly to keep stakeholders informed of this growing body of progress and learnings.

AWS encourages independent researchers in their studies on the AWS Standard System and will consider their findings in our AWS M&E System reporting.

LOOKING FORWARD

AWS's M&E System has been purposefully designed and developed to track our progress and support learning to deliver our vision and mission. It is a dynamic system. So to be at its most effective is regularly reviewed to consider if our existing approach needs to be adapted and whether the decisions we have taken will answer the right questions to allow AWS to contribute to the change we want to see in the world.

The developments, areas of growth and future plans shared in this report help to ensure that AWS will continue be in a strong position for the coming years.

[36] See ISEAL Alliance Evidensia website. Evidensia provides access to credible research on the sustainability impacts of supply chain initiatives and tools, including standards and certification. www.evidensia.eco

ANNEX A

PROJECTS: BUILDING COLLABORATIONS AND AN EVIDENCE BASE FOR THE AWS SYSTEM

The following section outlines a selection of projects with which we are currently involved.

AWS welcomes the opportunity to work and partner with research institutes and universities to build an evidence base on the AWS System.

AWS supports independent researchers and research institutes in their studies on the AWS Standard System and will consider their findings in our AWS M&E System reporting. We update our website regularly with case studies and project reports) and keep stakeholders informed of this growing evidence base of progress and learnings.

PROJECT 1
BANANA FARMS IN COLOMBIA & AWS GROUP CERTIFICATION

Main objectives and description: The German food retailer EDEKA is dedicated to making positive impacts on the environment and ensuring the sustainability of its food supply chains. EDEKA has partnered with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to achieve its environmental goals, including applying the AWS Standard to drive good water stewardship practices.

As part of this commitment, the partners decided to work with Dole Food Company, one of the largest producers of fruit and vegetables in the world and a key supplier to EDEKA, to implement the AWS Standard on 11 privately owned banana farms in Colombia managed by CI Técnicas Baltime de Colombia S.A (Tecbaco). The farms are located in the Rio Frio-Rio Sevilla catchment where high water demand from agriculture is causing pressure on water resources in the region, especially during the three months of the dry season, January to March. The Sustainability Consultancy, South Pole joined the project as a technical partner and helped farms to implement the AWS Standard and obtain the certification.

The 11 banana farms vary in size from 50-230 hectares, which are all considered large for Colombia. Due to the size of the operations, each farm is the source of hundreds of local jobs that are required to manage the plantation and the packaging facility installed in each of them. The farms are under the same management [Tecbaco] and worked together to achieve AWS Group Certification. It is the first AWS Group Certification in the world, making it a particularly exciting achievement for all involved. The farms are also the first sites in Colombia to achieve AWS certification, making them leaders in water stewardship.

Project Partners: EDEKA, AWS, WWF, Dole Food Company, Tecbaco, South Pole

Project Lead: Sarah Wade, AWS Sector Lead, email: sarah@a4ws.org

Start date/duration: 2019 - 2020

PROJECT 2
SCALING WATER STEWARDSHIP IN AGRICULTURAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Main objectives and description: In 2019, Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH (DEG) and NEDERLANDSE FINANCIERINGS-MAATSCHAPPIJ VOOR ONTWIKKELINGSLANDEN N.V. (FMO) (the Dutch and German development finance corporations) joined forces with AWS, EDEKA and WWF Germany to help scale water stewardship in agricultural supply chains in Latin America. DEG and FMO both invest in agricultural producers throughout the region, and they recognise that water poses a risk to those investments.

Together, we are building a network of water stewards throughout Europe and Latin America, who recognise the value of aligning around a common, independent approach to doing water stewardship at a site and catchment level. Through identification of high water risk sourcing clusters, AWS Standard System Training, the creation of knowledge products such as case studies and good practice guides, and local and global networks to enable collaboration, we aim to ensure that AWS becomes accessible to all who need it.

Project Partners: DEG, FMO

Project Lead: Sarah Wade, AWS Sector Lead, email: sarah@a4ws..org

Start date/duration: 2018 - 2022

PROJECT 3
PUTTING WATER STEWARDSHIP TO WORK: TACKLING WATER POLLUTION IN THE TEXTILE AND APPAREL VALUE CHAIN

Main objectives and description: The project will help to:

Scale the adoption of good water stewardship globally, leveraging:

- Improve policies, regulation and investment across the Ethiopian cotton and apparel sectors
- Ignite leadership from the global apparel sector to address water challenges faced by SMEs serving international supply chains.

Project Partners: The programme will be delivered by Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS SCIO), Aid by Trade Foundation, CDP, Solidaridad, and Water Witness.

Funding Partner: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

AWS Project Lead: Sarah Wade, AWS Sector Lead, email: sarah@a4ws.org

Start date/duration: 2020 - 2022

PROJECT 4
ENABLING ACCESS TO PREFERENTIAL FINANCE TERMS AS AN INCENTIVE FOR IMPROVING SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR.

Main objectives and description: The project is developing and testing methodologies and improved monitoring tools, which reduce financial institutions' lending risks in water risk areas by supplementing the current IFC Performance Standard guided environmental and social risk assessment mechanisms, with specific multi-sector sustainability standards, including Cumulative Impact Assessment and Management elements.

Funding Partners: Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) via the ISEAL Innovations Fund www.isealalliance.org

Project Partners: AWS; Bonsucro; SRK Consulting; Better Cotton Initiative (BCI); World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

AWS Project Contact: Dr Mark Dent, AWS Senior Advisor mark@a4ws.org

Start Date/Duration: May 2019 - May 2021

PROJECT 5
BOOSTING SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE AT THE LANDSCAPE LEVEL THROUGH GOOD WATER STEWARDSHIP.

Main objectives and description: Strengthening existing landscape and jurisdictional approaches to promote sustainable agriculture practices is essential due to the growing need for water. The project will focus on practical approaches to strengthen performance measurement and guidance for water stewardship implementation in the palm oil and natural rubber sectors. The project will build a community of practice to nurture water stewardship interest, understanding and mechanisms through webinars, online knowledge sharing, and training.

Project Partners: AWS SCIO, led by Yayasan Aliansi Wali Sumber Daya Air Indonesia (AWS Indonesia), are working with the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), Global Platform for Sustainable Natural Rubber (GPNR) and Lingkar Temu Kabupaten Lestari (LTKL) on the project.

Funding Partner: Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) via the ISEAL Innovations Fund www.isealalliance.org

AWS Project Lead: Basja Jantowski, Director - AWS Indonesia Asia-Pacific. Email: basja@a4ws.org

Project start date/duration: July 2020 – July 2022

PROJECT 6
UNIVERSITY OF LEUVEN, BELGIUM

Main objectives and description: The VSS 4 Food & Wood Project intends to provide insights on the sustainability outcomes of Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) in the cocoa, coffee, tea, banana, palm oil and wood sectors. More specifically, the project intends to:

i. Evaluate and quantify the socio-economic and environmental sustainability outcomes and trade-offs of various VSS, at the macro-level (global) and micro-level (Indonesia)

ii. Analyze how these outcomes and trade-offs are shaped by different design and governance attributes of VSS.

iii. Identify opportunities and challenges for optimizing the design and governance of VSS to more effectively contribute to sustainability and minimize sustainability trade-offs

iv. Stimulate the optimization process through communication with stakeholders in the food and wood sectors.

Following an invitation to contribute to this research project, AWS developed a data sharing agreement with KU Leuven to provide anonymised information on production areas, producers (or producer's organisations) for cocoa, coffee, bananas, palm oil and wood sites that are AWS certified by country, now and in the past.

Project Partners: KU Leuven University, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies.

AWS Project contact: Christine Carey, Chief System Integrity Officer email: christine@a4ws.org

Project Researchers: Prof. Dr. ir. Miet Maertens, Dr. Dalia Fadly, ir. Janne Bemelmans (Division of Bio-economics, KU Leuven); Prof. Dr. ir. Bart Muys, Dr. ir. Bruno Verbist (Division of Forest, Nature and Landscape, KU Leuven); Dr. Axel Marx, Charline Depoorter (Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, KU Leuven); Prof. Dr. ir. Nunung Nuryartono (Bogor Agricultural University, Institut Pertanian Bogor, Indonesia.

Project start date/duration: 2020 - 2023

PROJECT 7
AWS & UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE

Main objective and description: The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), USA has partnered with the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) to develop the first curricular program for an American university dedicated to training students in professional water stewardship planning according to the AWS Standard.

Through a pilot graduate course, students compiled site and watershed-related data, identified and interviewed local stakeholders to understand shared water challenges and risks, and drafted a Water Stewardship Plan for the School of Freshwater Sciences and Main Kenwood Campus sites. The curriculum will be adopted for subsequent semesters to tackle two additional campus sites, furthering UWM's goal of being the first higher education institution in the nation to house an AWS-certified site.

Project Partners: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and AWS

AWS Project Lead: Matt Howard, Director AWS North America matt@a4ws.org

Project start date/duration: 2019 - ongoing

ANNEX B GLossary

TERM	DEFINITION
CATCHMENT	The geographical zone in which water is captured, flows through and eventually discharges at one or more points. The concept includes both surface water catchment and groundwater catchment. A surface water catchment is defined by the area of land from which all precipitation received flows through a sequence of streams and rivers towards a single river mouth, as a tributary to a larger river, or to the sea. A groundwater catchment is defined by geological structure of an aquifer and groundwater flow paths. It is replenished by water that infiltrates from the surface. It has vertical thickness (from a few metres to 100s of metres) as well as area. Depending on local conditions, surface and groundwater catchments may be physically separate or interconnected. "Catchment of origin" refers to a catchment, distinct from the site's catchment(s), where a product or service is manufactured or sourced. It may be anywhere from an adjacent catchment to the other side of the world. Alternative terms are watershed, basin and river basin. See Guidance on 'Catchments' for more detail. Source: AWS Standard V2.0
GROUP OPERATIONS ALSO CALLED GROUP CERTIFICATION	Group Certification is designed to facilitate collaboration amongst group members and to help reduce the costs of certification. The cost per group member is usually lower than if each group member pursued certification individually. It provides a way for more than one operation to be certified under a single AWS Certificate, as long as all group members' sites are located in the same catchment.
GROUP AND MULTI-SITE OPERATIONS	Group and multi-site options help make AWS certification more efficient and cost-effective to sites which may be too small, or lack the capacity, to achieve AWS certification alone. In particular, it increases accessibility for smallholders or SMEs. Having the ability to certify as part of a group or multi-site operation can also encourage and facilitate multiple sites in a catchment to pursue AWS implementation together, thereby achieving an even greater impact. As we have seen, certification is an extra step following implementation. It also carries an additional cost. Therefore multi-site certification enables organisations with multiple sites to benefit from economies of scale. See AWS Certification Requirements a4ws.org/Resources
IMPACT EVALUATION	An impact evaluation is a systematic, objective and in-depth, ex-post assessment of the medium or long-term effects; positive or negative, intended or unintended, of the implementation of a standards system. Impact evaluations employ methodologies that are designed to enable evaluation users to understand the extent to which an observed change can be attributed to the standard system or another intervention. (Source ISEAL Impacts code and adapted from 3ie Impact Evaluation Glossary, 2012 and World Bank).
INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY ASSURANCE	Independent Third-party Assurance is a type of assurance activity that is performed by a person [e.g., an auditor] or body that is independent of the person or organisation [AWS SCIO] that provides the object of assurance [the AWS Standard V2.0] and of user [e.g., a site] interests in that object. Source: Adapted from ISO 17000.
IMPORTANT WATER-RELATED AREA (IWRA)	An area or feature of high value to humans or nature from an environmental, community or cultural perspective. In addition to formally recognised conservation areas, it includes such features as water wells and springs used for drinking water and features of cultural significance. It is similar to the High Conservation Value (HCV) concept, but more specifically focused on water. More detail is given in the IWRA section of the main Guidance. Source: AWS Standard V2.0
M&E INDICATOR	The ISEAL Alliance's Impacts Code defines a M&E indicator as quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement of outcomes, to reflect the changes connected to a standards system, or to help assess the performance of an organisation. (Source: Adapted from OECD Glossary, 2002).
SITE	AWS defines the site as the physical area over which the implementing organisation owns or manages land and carries out its principal activities. In most cases it is a contiguous area of land but may also include physically separated but nearby areas (especially if in the same catchment). For a factory, the 'site' is typically represented by the fenced area encompassing all its buildings, parking and storage areas. For farming, it encompasses its fields, buildings and storage areas. Where the organisation operates its own water sources and/or wastewater plant, these should be considered part of the 'site'. For example, for a bottled water factory that operates a physically separate water source (eg. spring or borehole), this should be considered part of the 'site'. Source: AWS Standard V2.0
WATER BALANCE	An assessment of all water flows and storage volumes of an entity. In the Standard, it is required to be applied to the site, and separately for the catchment. The assessment should measure all water inflows, throughflows, outflows, water storage volume and changes in storage. The first step is to identify and map each component, and then to quantify it. These are combined into the water balance equation, which should balance (at least approximately): {water outflow} = {water inflow} + {change in storage}. Sustainable water balance is the condition whereby ongoing water use in the catchment has no long-term negative impact on the natural environment and legitimate water users. It is typically assessed on an annual timescale. For a sustainable balance, total net water abstractions do not exceed natural replenishment of water bodies, while also ensuring water bodies maintain viable flows and water levels to sustain themselves, and the species that depend on them, in a healthy condition. A condition where outflows are consistently larger than inflows is a non-sustainable water balance. Source: AWS Standard V2.0
WATER STEWARDSHIP	AWS defines water stewardship as: "The use of water that is social and culturally equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial, achieved through stakeholder-inclusive process that involves site- and catchment-based actions." Source: AWS Standard V2.0

ANNEX C a4ws.org/impacts

DISCLAIMER

The monitoring data in this report are based on data collected by AWS SCIO and reported in some cases by organisations and site owners through online forms and the audit process and in other cases by other supply chain actors. AWS SCIO is not responsible for the accuracy of the data. The report has been compiled to the best of our knowledge and is provided for informational purposes only. AWS SCIO reserves the right to update the monitoring data as new information becomes available. The data are provided 'as is' and no warranty of any kind is given for the accuracy and reliability of the data. AWS SCIO will not be liable for any claims or damages related to the quality and completeness of the data, as far as it is permitted under law.

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