



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

NEW YORK
22-24
MARCH
2023

UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Common good outcomes through water stewardship

23 March 2023, 17:00 – 18:15 EDT, UN HQ Side Event

Organized by: Alliance for Water Stewardship

Background

The Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) convened an event at the UN 2023 Water Conference on Thursday, March 23 2023, to discuss the power of a multi-stakeholder standard to drive effective, verifiable collaboration between business, civil society, and government.

Co-conveners of the event were: the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Global Water Partnership (GWP), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), WaterAid, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Apple, Diageo, Dole, and H&M Group.

Water Action Agenda

Our goal is that by 2030 adoption of the AWS Standard, the water-focused sustainability standard, is the norm in several business sectors, creating a global network of tens of thousands of sites making meaningful, verifiable contributions to the sub-targets within SDG 6.

Water Action Agenda commitment: [Credible, verified private sector action on SDG6](#)

Key Issues discussed

- The AWS System helps corporations, governments, and NGOs achieve and verify progress against common water goals.
- AWS Members shared case studies of how they have engaged with the AWS System to drive verifiable progress at business sites and promote impactful collaborations with stakeholders in the catchment.
- Water stewardship enables private sector leadership to address shared challenges and achieve common good outcomes.
- Engaging with AWS to better understand stewardship may provide strategic benefits to national governments, multilateral agencies, businesses, and NGOs.

- Overall, the event highlighted the importance of water stewardship and the role of the AWS Standard in driving effective, verifiable corporate action on water.

Key recommendations for action

- Water stewardship is an opportunity for the private sector to take action to address shared water challenges and achieve progress in meeting the targets outlined in SDG 6.
- The AWS Standard provides a systematic approach to implementing water stewardship.
- Implementing the AWS Standard enables business sites to become ‘collective action ready’, creating opportunities for collaboration between business, civil society and government.
- Certification against the AWS Standard enables credible claims by major water users.
- This process provides validation that actions are meaningful and have been implemented successfully, guarding against ‘bluewash’.
- Government incentives for credible and verified water stewardship can build confidence and help to scale common good outcomes.

For more information, visit: <https://a4ws.org/un-water-2023/>