



**The AWS at Large in Africa:  
African stakeholders embrace the AWS  
concept at our Kenya Case Study high  
level discussion meeting**

Over 40 delegates from across Kenyan government, business and civil society gathered at Lake Naivasha on the 10<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the value of the AWS effort in Africa. The meeting represents the finale of our six month collaboration with GIZ and Marks and Spencer to pilot draft regional standards from Europe and Australia with African water users. Pilot sites included high quality cut-flower and vegetable farms and a smallholder coffee cooperative supplying UK supermarkets.

At the meeting senior representatives from stakeholder groups including the Kenya Flower Council, the Water Resource Management Authority, the National Environment Management Council, the Water Resource Users Associations, pastoralist, community and wildlife conservation organizations, producers, marketing groups and the development community were invited to reflect on the results of the pilots and to suggest how a future international water stewardship standard could bring maximum benefit to water users in the Lake Naivasha Basin and Kenya more widely.

The complex water challenges facing Lake Naivasha are a microcosm of those seen in river basins the world over. The lake is an internationally important wetland ecosystem and also provides irrigation for agriculture which generates over 10% of Kenya's export revenue, contributes 2.1% of the national GDP and provides employment for 75 000 people. Growing demand and pressure from multiple water uses exist against a difficult biophysical, socio-economic and institutional backdrop of a changing climate, vulnerable ecosystems, poverty, and weak governance and regulation. The lake basin is a perfect place to explore the potential benefits of an international water stewardship standard.

All meeting delegates agreed that the AWS effort would be beneficial in Kenya and would help to drive equitable water management. They also made insightful suggestions on how a future standard could handle some difficult issues, such as sparse data and capacity constraints, to ensure it is applicable in developing countries.

Benjamin Langwen, Director of Enforcement and Compliance with Kenya's National Environment Management Authority said, "This is an excellent initiative that will definitely benefit Kenya and Africa. It will compliment our national laws and policies and anything which encourages business to comply with the law and use natural resources in a sustainable way is very welcome. NEMA's resources are limited and Kenya's environmental problems are many, so the self monitoring and self regulation which the AWS standard promotes will help us a great deal."

Dr. Dorice Agol who coordinated the Kenya case study for the AWS said. “The level of interest, input and support for the concept of a water stewardship standard from Kenyan stakeholders has been phenomenal. They very quickly see the potential benefits and I think their interest demonstrates a real appetite to get water management right in Kenya and to make a contribution to the global effort. Exploring the business case for the AWS and the international standard here in Kenya has created a lot of interest across Africa and will help us ensure that the standard brings maximum benefit in the challenging contexts of African river basins.”

Full details of the Kenya case study and its key findings will be made available shortly.