

29 May 2023

Ref: Candidature for GWP Steering Committee

Dear Dr. Bynoe,

Through this letter and the attached summarised CV, I am pleased to submit by candidature for the GWP Steering Committee (intake December 2023) for your consideration. I do so out of a strong belief in vital role GWP has to play in the water 'architecture' and a desire to contribute to maximising the effectiveness of GWP in our collective pursuit of a water secure world. I am confident that my participation on the Steering Committee would be beneficial in this pursuit.

Since 2011 I have served as Chief Executive of the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS), a global organisation whose mission is very much aligned to GWP's. Especially in my current position, but also through previous professional and academic pursuits, I have accumulated capabilities that I believe will be of value to the GWP Steering Committee. Having carefully reviewed the call for nominations, I expect that my contribution could be most valuable in three areas:

1. A global network with strong connections to the private sector
2. Significant experience in governance and strategy setting for networked organisations
3. Expertise in partnerships

I have therefore structured this letter around these three areas and trust this will give you a good indication of my suitability for the GWP Steering Committee.

I am confident that AWS is held in high regard for its clarity of purpose, wide reach and focus on impact in pursuit of a water secure world. Under my leadership we have built a strong, global community based on multi-stakeholder principles. This community can be useful in several ways. Of particular interest to GWP would be our experiences on linking major water users from the private sector with water governance at catchment scale (noting that contributing to good water governance is a required outcome of the AWS Standard). Indeed, creating stronger links between the user-focused approach of water stewardship and the policy-focused approach of IWRM will create benefits for the communities served by AWS and GWP.

During my 12-year tenure as Chief Executive of AWS, I have built a strong global network of businesses which are committed to water stewardship which, under the right circumstances, could be engaged to support GWP objectives. AWS has around 170 member organisations and nearly 500 water-using sites are currently certified or seeking certification to the AWS Standard.

In addition to my personal network, I can bring to the Steering Committee significant experience and interest in networked organisations, including designing and implementing change in complex organisational structures. AWS is a global network with governance arrangements that reflect the both the interests of different stakeholder groups and the need for the organisation to operate effectively at a global scale and respond to a rapidly changing environment. I have led the design and implementation of two significant improvements in our organisational structure, learning valuable lessons about implementing change along the way. We now have what I would consider to be a structure that balances inclusion and innovation, with a widely understood clarity of purpose.

Since 2019 I have also served on the board of directors of the Sustainable Rice Platform, another complex global network organisation. In this capacity I have been active in supporting much-

needed changes to the organisation structure and governance arrangements. As with the example of AWS referenced above, this is driven by a need to balance needs and preferences of global and local stakeholders, always with the aim of enabling effective execution in pursuit of the overarching mission. My contributions to organisational structure and governance design are supported by a keen interest in systems thinking and how this can enhance strategy and organisational design.

AWS was originally structured around regional partnerships as the means of program delivery. Although we have moved away from this model in the restructuring referenced above, my experiences in building and maintaining regional partnerships has been invaluable. Rather than regional implementation partnerships, our focus is now on thematic partnerships (e.g. organisations with expertise in climate and water policy) or partnerships to enable impact in supply chain hubs (e.g. connecting brands, suppliers, development finance and local policy actors).

Principles of effective partnerships apply in all cases, including clear roles and responsibilities and transparency over resources. These also underpinned by work prior to joining AWS, including as Head of Strategic Relationships and Partnerships with Fairtrade International where I led the development of a partnership strategy for global federation of Fairtrade member organisations.

In addition to the input above I would like to emphasise my strong business acumen, having developed AWS into a robust group of organisations (including a commercial subsidiary and a Representative Office in China), and my strong affinity to development objectives of GWP (I previously spent seven years working with grass roots development organisations in Bangladesh and Nepal).

The summarised CV on the following page outlines my recent and relevant professional experience. I thank you for the opportunity to submit my interest in joining and Steering Committee and remain available for any related queries you may have.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AS' or similar, written in a cursive style.

(Adrian Sym)

Longniddry, Scotland

Adrian Sym. Summarised CV for GWP Steering Committee Candidature

July 2011 – Present

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS)

In this internationally high-profile position, I lead the pre-eminent multi-stakeholder global body for water stewardship, dedicated to igniting water leadership through an innovative market-based system. This role demands in-depth knowledge of sustainable development, excellence in working with diverse stakeholders to achieve consensus-based outcomes, and an ability to develop and implement strategies connect global drivers with local impacts. I lead an internationally-dispersed team of professionals, and oversee the performance of two subsidiary organisations.

Led the development of a global Water Stewardship System, taking it from concept to reality through global collaborative processes.

- Oversaw the development of the AWS Standard, while designing and implementing assurance system, capacity development program and membership structure.
- Built a global network of members and partners from all sectors and regions, including multi-lateral agencies, governments, businesses and NGOs.
- Developed a robust business model for AWS, including designing and establishing an innovative approach to assurance through a mission-driven subsidiary company.

Led high-level engagement with key stakeholders, including negotiations with governments, international agencies and major corporations.

Led the design of an innovative multi-stakeholder governance regime.

June 2008 – June 2011

HEAD OF STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS, Fairtrade International, Germany

Led twenty-four member organizations of a global federation to a single approach to strategic partnerships and resource mobilization.

Led the development and implementation of the strategic framework for Fairtrade's work with partnerships and other alliances.

- Represented and promoted Fairtrade with government agencies and with other key development actors, and at international events.
- Developed the Strategic Fairtrade Funding Program, a high-level business plan for global Fairtrade movement, securing €20 million in funding commitments against this program.

November 2001 – May 2008

Various assignments with disability-focused organisations in Nepal and Bangladesh.

Education

MA, International Policy and Diplomacy (Merit), Staffordshire University, UK

BSc (Honours) Degree (First Class), International Studies, Open University, UK

LinkedIn profile: www.linkedin.com/in/adrian-sym-97031944

Noémie Apollon

From: Adrian Sym <adrian@a4ws.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 31, 2023 4:21 PM
To: GWP Nominations Committee
Cc: Noémie Apollon
Subject: Attn: Dr. Paulette Bynoe: Candidature for GWP Steering Committee
Attachments: GWP_SC_candidature_Adrian_Sym.pdf

External email: Check before opening links or attachments.

Dear Dr. Bynoe,

Please find attached my candidature for GWP Steering Committee. I trust the information provided will be sufficient for your committee's consideration. If not, please do not hesitate to request any additions or clarifications.

Note that I have submitted this candidature in my personal capacity but my organisation, the Alliance for Water Stewardship, is also supportive of this submission.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this email.

With kind regards

Adrian

--

Adrian Sym
Chief Executive Officer
Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS)
Mobile: +44 (0)790 042 8828
www.a4ws.org

--

AWS is registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC045894)