

AGWA's Ninth Annual Members Meeting

Scandic Klara Hotel

Stockholm, Sweden

2–5 pm; Saturday, 24 August 2019

Meeting Chair: Mark Fletcher

Participants: John Matthews (AGWA), Maggie White (SIWI), Diego Rodriguez (World Bank), Torgny Holmgren (SIWI), Karin Lexén (Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature), Mark Fletcher (Arup), Alex Mauroner (AGWA), Ingrid Timboe (AGWA), Jonty Rawlins (One World Group), Guy de Silva (WWF), Chares Reeve (CRIDF), Caroline Brown (CRIDF), Jennifer Jun (SIWI), Josefina Maestu (Advisor to the Government of Spain), Monika Freymen (Ceres), Robin Miller (Ceres), Anil Mishra (UNESCO IHP), Robert Kranefield (GIZ), Marcel Servos (GIZ), Dieter Rothenberger (GIZ), Niels Vlaanderen (Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management), Richard Rapier (USAID WALIS), Sonja Koepfel (UNECE), Fred Boltz (GCA), Jason Fairbairn (Arup), Tracy Goodluck (US Dept. of Interior, Indian Water Rights), Kristine Smith (US Bureau of Reclamation)

MEETING SUMMARY

- **Brief welcome** from Mark Fletcher, Chair of the Annual Meeting
- **Round of introductions**
 - All attendees gave a self-introduction, moving around the room based on seating
- **Welcome and opening** – Diego, Maggie, Torgny
 - John, Torgny, Maggie, and Diego gave brief interventions welcoming participants and reflecting on the growth of AGWA.
- **Thanks to Karin Lexén for her service**
 - John reflected on Karin's long-time involvement with AGWA, especially her roles as Co-Chair then SC/Board member.
 - Karin gave a response thanking AGWA, praising its work, and expressing optimism for AGWA's future work. She will stay engaged as a member but decided to leave the Board once she was not able to dedicate as much time to it as she would have liked.
- **NGO process update**
 - John gave updates to the group on AGWA's transition from an informal network over the past eight years into a formally registered US-based NGO as of January 2019. Updates were also given on the application for non-profit status at a national level (i.e., 501c(3) tax status). Also covered the rationale behind the transition and implications for fundraising and project contracts, etc.
- **Vote on adjustments to Charter**

- Last changes to the Charter were approved at the AGM in 2017. Since AGWA changed status from an informal network to an NGO, some minor items needed to be updated in the Charter. Specifically, changing of titles (e.g., Steering Committee into Board of Directors) and removal of a section about a “host institution” as AGWA now handles its own finances. Additionally, it was proposed to remove term limits for Board Members. In 2014, text was added to the Charter to install a limit of two three-year term. Next year this would have impacted a small number of Board Members.
- Following discussion, AGWA members at the meeting voted unanimously to approve changes to the Charter. The updated version is hosted on AGWA’s website.
- **Vote on new Board Member**
 - Due to the departure of Karin from the Board, there was one open position to fill. AGWA had solicited nominations over the past three months leading up to the AGM. Only three nominees were proposed: James Dalton (IUCN), Vladimir Smakhtin (UN University Institute for Water, Environment, and Health), and AK Sinha (Institute for Community Development in Jaipur).
 - Meeting participants discussed each of the nominees. Voting was conducted via paper ballots. Votes were tallied by Mark Fletcher.
 - Dr. James Dalton was approved as the newest Board Member with a majority of votes.
- **Recapping the past year**
 - Alex gave a summary of the state of the AGWA network, covering membership numbers, growth of newsletters, social media engagement, website updates, and more.
 - Alex gave a brief summary of AGWA’s technical and capacity building programs from the past year, focusing on CRIDA, UNFCCC CGE efforts, climate bonds, new publications, the podcast, and other ongoing projects such as NAIAD and the City Water Resilience Approach.
 - Ingrid provided a quick overview of policy highlights from the past year, focusing on UNFCCC engagement at multiple levels (e.g., COP24, Marrakech Partnership, intersessionals, etc.) and the Policy Group’s expanded focus on DRR and climate.
 - Ingrid highlighted a number of major publications from the past year as well, including contributions to the GCA background paper on water, WWDR2020, the UN Water climate change and water policy brief, and several others.
- **Overview of the coming year**
 - John gave a high level intervention about strategic opportunities and clusters of engagement envisioned for the coming year. Broadly speaking, these fall under:

mitigation, nature-based resilience, private sector finance, climate-related disasters, and urban resilience.

- A list of planned and ongoing activities for 2020 was presented. John briefly discussed 3-4 of the 20+ projects. All of the activities are listed in the Annual Report.
- **Interventions from Niels Vlaanderen (Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management) and Dieter Rothenberger (GIZ)**
 - Prior to a short break, interventions from two strategic partners were given.
 - Niels stated how encouraged he was at the progress and maturity AGWA has achieved over the years. He also stated that patience is key when working on long-term engagement in policy areas, emphasizing that he has a sense of optimism in terms of AGWA's work.
 - Dieter gave a brief introduction as he is set to begin a new position within GIZ that will involve more active engagement with AGWA. He is happy to help contribute to new and ongoing processes with AGWA and partners.
- **BREAK**
- **Calibrating priorities: breakouts on specific areas.** Attendees divided themselves into smaller groups on three pre-determined categories of engagement based on their own interest.
 - **Policy priorities** – led by Maggie and Ingrid
 - During the break out sessions, Ingrid led a discussion on policy priorities for the coming year. Participants reflected on the staggering number of activities proposed for late 2019-2020 during the annual meeting, as well as the need to really focus and organize around one to two major themes. Following a short conversation, it was agreed that the primary workstreams for the coming year should be around influencing the NDC revision process and expanding AGWA's policy engagement with the private sector. In addition, it was agreed that we should continue to explore how to better engage with the global DRR community. We discussed AGWA's new role as an associate member of the NDC Partnership and how this might be a good strategic entry point into the NDCs for AGWA's technical support tools. We also started a discussion about how to better harness the network to crowdsource our work and the need for "AGWA ambassadors" to attend events that the AGWA Secretariat cannot cover.
 - **Technical priorities** – led by Diego and John
 - The technical group identified a number of potential areas for focus, including the need to develop more synthetic approaches to resilience in

economic analyses, including evaluating non-stationary resources and uncertainty. There was also active discussion about how to build more regional and/or thematic technical groups within the networks, such as a southern African group, water and adaptation approaches for businesses and corporations, more technical information on using nature-based solutions, and guiding strategic decision makers to support the adoption and implementation of more bottom-up methodologies.

- **Communications & membership, including fundraising** – led by Mark and Alex
 - Mark led the small group discussion on this topic with a focus on the intertwined relationship between membership and communications. Membership questions included how AGWA can serve better, what types of members exist, and where there are gaps in membership. AGWA membership is based around relationships, trust, mutual respect, and issue-based motivation. Communications should be seen as a tool to distill out AGWA’s common purpose and can serve as a great convening power, while remaining apolitical. Members also discussed how AGWA can communicate better and how to potentially curate thematic lists of members based upon interest/engagement. Funding conversation centered mostly around the current arrangements, with some attention given to areas for obvious improvement such as a “donate” button on websites and elsewhere.
- **Conclusions and thanks**
 - John gave a quick “thank you” to everyone attending as well as some high level reflections on the meeting. Members were encouraged to take a copy of the Annual Report.
 - As Chair of the Annual Meeting, Mark provided his own brief reflections based upon his observations, then concluded the meeting.