WELCOME TO THE AGWA ANNUAL MEETING!

Dear AGWA friends

We are now getting close to the World Water Week in Stockholm. In conjunction with this, the AGWA annual meeting will also take place in Stockholm on 27 August at 1-5 pm CET.

We very much hope to see many of you there. This is an important opportunity to take stock on the progress of AGWA and to discuss next steps and measures.

AGWA has seen some remarkable achievements as well as rapid growth during the past year. For instance, the number of subscribers to our newsletter has grown 70% compared to last year, to over 900 individuals. At the same time, AGWA has seen a rapid differentiation and expansion of its policy activities, the elevation of its policy capacity and the achievement of a number of significant policy goals, the delivery and adoption of a number of major new technical initiatives; the award of several new grants to support AGWA-informed programs and activities; and the publication of many high-profile AGWA documents and press around our activities.

Much of this is reflected in our Annual Report. We have a great deal to be proud of but we need to maintain this momentum and reflect on where we take our network in the coming years.

At the same time we have faced severe financial constraints jeopardizing the proper functioning of our Secretariat. While the funding for projects has really taken off this year, it has proven difficult to identify long term sustainable financing options to support the core functioning of the Secretariat and its networking activities – i.e., the glue that keeps us together. It is fair to say that our coordinator John Matthews, his Research Associate, Alex Mauroner, as well as the SIWI office have been pushed very hard to maintain necessary networking service and to keep AGWA going. We are facing immediate budget constraints and in the long run, AGWA will not have the capacity to sustain itself and a solution must be found with urgency.

Therefore the Steering Committee (SC) has discussed alternative models for financing of AGWA core functions. These include setting aside a certain percentage of project income, starting membership fees, and identifying sponsors/donors for core funding. This year’s annual meeting will decide how to pursue this challenge.
Another vital issue for AGWA is the steering committee engagement. The annual meeting will decide on the steering committee for the next period. Please let us know if you would like to suggest a candidate or if you would be interested yourself.

We very much look forward to your participation in the annual meeting. If you are not able to travel to Stockholm but want to put forward your ideas and suggestion – please write an email to John and let us know what you think. Indeed, AGWA is its membership.

AGWA is a fantastic, effective, and promising network. We have already done so much, and what we have accomplished is amazing. But we are now at a crossroads – and what we will decide will be decisive for the development. Join us in Stockholm and help us chart the future.

Karin Lexén, Director, World Water Week and International Policy, SIWI and Diego Rodriguez, Senior Economist, Latin America and Caribbean Region, the World Bank, Co-Chairs of AGWA