

Australia – water partners for development

HELPING to MANAGE WATER SCARCITY in the INDO-PACIFIC



THE
**AUSTRALIAN
WATER
PARTNERSHIP** | waterpartnership.org.au

PARTNERING PROSPECTUS FOR AUSTRALIAN ORGANISATIONS

An Australian Government aid initiative bringing together public and private organisations from the Australian water sector with development partners in the Indo-Pacific region.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Water security in Asia and the Pacific is under threat¹. Improving agricultural water productivity, achieving energy needs, maintaining the resilience of cities in the face of rapid urbanisation and climate change, satisfying growing industrial water requirements, and protecting water quality and natural ecosystems all continue to pose deep challenges for development. The social, economic and political consequences of water shortages are real, as are the effects and impacts of worsening climate-related water extremes.

The Australian Water Partnership (AWP) offers a unique opportunity to bring together the Australian development and water sectors under a long-term strategic engagement framework. By sharing its experiences from three decades of water reform, and from learning to manage water as a scarce economic good, Australia can help international partners to develop a better understanding of their sustainable water resource base, implement robust basin-scale planning, enact governance reforms supported by innovative policy and legal frameworks, strengthen institutions and build professional capability, develop water sensitive cities, improve water quality and ecological health, and manage demand and improve water use efficiency, in a variable and drying climate.

¹ ADB Asian Water Development Outlook 2013

² Covering all government, non-government and commercial water-related organisations, including universities and sole-traders

VISION

Water resources managed effectively and equitably in the Indo-Pacific region to:

- support inclusive economic development
- improve water security for all, and
- reduce environmental and social impacts and regional tensions.

MISSION & GOALS

We will build an open, effective and enduring partnership that facilitates and supports:

- strategic, long-term engagement of the Australian water sector² with governments in the region, multi-lateral development organisations, water sector institutions, water use industries, and civil society
- sharing between Australian and international partners of water reform experiences, expertise and technologies to underpin sustainable water use and management, and
- enhanced capability and capacity to deliver effective and equitable water security outcomes, enhancement of private sector development and trade outcomes in water-related industries.

FORMATION OF THE AWP

In September 2014, the Minister for Foreign Affairs agreed that DFAT should establish an initiative to support public and private partnerships for sharing Australia's water sector expertise in the Indo-Pacific region. Initially funded through the Australian aid program, the AWP will provide more efficient access to Australian water sector experience and expertise in response to growing demand for collaboration from governments and multilateral agencies in the region.

Deeper engagement in regional water issues will also open opportunities for Australia to learn from different approaches and enable participating professionals to explore water management issues of mutual interest and benefit.

The AWP was established in May 2015 with an initial DFAT investment of \$20 million over four years. The AWP will seek co-investment collaborations with its international partners and may also incorporate fees for service activities where appropriate.

eWater has been contracted by DFAT as the AWP's implementing partner, and operational governance—including partnering, investments and activity selection—will be overseen by an AWP Committee.

A DEMAND-DRIVEN INITIATIVE

AWP activities will be developed in response to requests and proposals from Indo-Pacific countries and priority international development organisations. To formally identify demand, priority prospective international partners will be engaged directly by AWP management, during the May-September 2015 establishment period and beyond, and requests for Australian collaboration will be sought, proposals developed and funding arrangements agreed.

PARTNERING APPROACH

The AWP will have both international and Australian partners who are countries and development organisations, or organisations and businesses from the Australian public and private water sector.

International Partners

Priority International Partners are:

- Country government (working with Australian overseas missions and DFAT programs)
- The World Bank

- The Asian Development Bank
- UN agencies and initiatives.

As noted above, it is these International Partners who will propose the work to be undertaken by AWP.

Australian Partners

All Australian public and private organisations (including government departments and authorities, consultants, water service and technology providers, universities and research institutes, industry associations and NGOs) will have the opportunity to join and participate in AWP activities.

The process and requirements for joining the AWP are set out in the 'Request for Expressions of Interest for Australian Organisations and Businesses' at: www.waterpartnership.org.au/partners

Partnering roles

Roles for partners within the AWP will include:

- submitting requests for assistance and proposals for funding (if an International Partner)
- delivering activities under approved international proposals (if an Australian Partner), and
- building and sharing water reform knowledge (all partners).

COLLABORATIVE OFFER

AWP's core offer to International Partners will be centred on the sharing of Australia's experiences in reforming water policy, management and use. This has been a three decade long journey, undertaken in response to prior periods of over-allocation, an increasingly variable and drying climate, the needs of rapidly-growing cities, declining source and receiving water quality, and growing water scarcity.

Where requested, the AWP will contribute to the integrated planning and allocation of available water resources, improving water supply and water use efficiency, and the management of water quality and ecological condition – all of which are key constraints to sustainable livelihoods and economic development.

It will help build institutional and technical capacity for water governance and management across the region. Improved policies, institutions, legal frameworks and tools will enable water managers to better deal with competing demands for surface waters, build resilience for climate extremes, reduce

the unsustainable use of groundwater, and better manage pollution and protect aquatic ecosystems. In each of these areas, the Australian public and private sector can offer collaborative skills, experience and technology.

AWP will encourage the sharing of knowledge and capability, dealing with complexity, trade-offs and opportunities in connected water systems in a holistic manner, across four core water reform themes:

- Understanding the water resource base, with integrated assessment of water availability and quality, catchment condition and ecosystem health
- Integrated basin-scale planning, including building resilience for climatic extremes
- Governance reform, including robust water entitlements and allocation frameworks, and institutional strengthening
- Managing urban and rural demand and improving use efficiency, including use by ecosystems.

It will also seek to build economic, environmental and societal value across four water use domains:

- Water-sensitive cities
- Modern irrigation systems
- Environmental water quantity and quality
- Catchments and river basins.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Guiding considerations for AWP-funded activities, especially in the initial phase, will be to reflect:

- the development outcomes described in the AWP vision and mission
- Australia's unique experiences and expertise in managing water scarcity and climatic extremes
- engagement by a cross-section of water management and use sub-sectors, and International and Australian Partners
- Australia's strategic interests across the Indo-Pacific region, and
- strategic choices that offer productive long-term engagement and relationship building.

The AWP will work in collaboration with international partners in aid-eligible countries in South Asia, South-East Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, and with other Indo-Pacific countries on a selective basis.

CHANNELS FOR ASSISTANCE

Country partnerships

Direct engagement with priority partner countries, brokered through DFAT overseas missions and programs or under bilateral MoUs. Proposals for AWP activities and funding support will be developed collaboratively by AWP, DFAT and country partners.

Development partnerships

Strategic country and regional engagements brokered through the World Bank, Asian Development Bank or UN organisations. An open and simple means of submitting proposals (in priority countries) and accessing Australian experts and teams will be implemented, on a funded or co-investment basis.

Assisted access

Introductory assistance to countries or organisations, with support beyond initial exchanges or referrals to Australian partner expertise being limited or on a fee for service basis.

Knowledge networking and exchange

Strategic AWP activities focused on building and sharing Australian and regional water reform experiences and knowledge. Supported activities may include study tours, workshops, training courses, web-based learning, and staff exchanges.

AWP ACTIVITIES

AWP activities will be demand-driven, with support for international requests and proposals being focused on:

- developing strategic relationships and exchanges
- sharing professional experiences and knowledge
- brokering and supporting access to Australian expertise and capability, and
- facilitating private sector engagement and development.

Specific AWP-funded activities provided by Australian partners may include expert advice and technical assistance, pilot demonstrations of Australian approaches or technologies, facilitated delegations and study tours, professional staff exchanges and knowledge sharing, and participation in important regional dialogues, workshops and events.

PARTNERING CYCLE

The proposed AWP cycle of (1) international partner engagement, (2) investment and activity approval, (3) Australian partner selection and contracting, (4) activity delivery, and (5) shared learning is as follows:

Each stage in the partnering cycle will consist of the following steps:

Stage 1: Proposals received

- a. Strategic engagement with target International Partners – the World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), priority UN-entities and with countries via DFAT missions and programs.
- b. International partnership MoUs developed and recommended to the Committee for approval.
- c. Collaborative proposals developed, including co-investment arrangements where agreed, and formally received by AWP.

Stage 2: Investments approved

- a. Proposals from international partners reviewed for alignment with AWP strategy and priorities.
- b. Funding allocations recommended by Management and approved by the Committee.
- c. According to approved proposals and funding allocations, required AWP activities are identified, costed and Proposal Activity Plans (PAP's) developed.

Stage 3: Australian partners selected

- a. Calls to Australian Partners, as and when required, to deliver approved activities (as per PAP's).
- b. Australian delivery partners selected according to Committee-approved selection process, consistent with Commonwealth 'value for money' and competition and transparency principles.
- c. Contracts issued, according to pre-agreed terms and conditions.

Stage 4: Activities delivered

- a. Australian Partners engage and collaborate with International Partners to deliver agreed activities.
- b. Contract performance monitored and reported.
- c. Contract deliverables and outcomes reviewed and assessed at completion.

Stage 5: Learnings shared

- a. Important learnings captured through activity contracts reporting.
- b. Knowledge and information 'stored' in a flexible and user-friendly knowledge platform, along with existing information from Australia.
- c. Knowledge shared with all partners through channels to be agreed – likely to include via AWP partner networks and communities of practice.

BENEFITS FOR PARTNERS

Beyond contributing to the essential 'water for development' vision and mission of the AWP (p1), benefits for Australian and International Partners participating in funded AWP activities will include:

- building new business collaborations, industry networks and professional relationships
- positive, professional learning experiences for staff who are supporting water development outcomes in developing and emerging countries, or learning about water management in Australia
- the opportunity to meet key influencers, prospective trade partners and clients, and
- the development and sharing of a body of knowledge arising from AWP activities that will be of great value to its partners beyond the life of the current program.

MORE INFORMATION

More information on the Australian Water Partnership can be found at: www.waterpartnership.org.au

ENQUIRIES

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