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FOREWORD: THE NEXT TEN YEARS OF AGWA

A temptation with our annual report is to make a list of what happened over our first decade: it would be easy to simply celebrate our shared achievements with the UNFCCC, development banks, finance, engineering and infrastructure, cities and eco-hydrological resilience, and governance. We could also celebrate our shift from 30 people in a windowless Stockholm hotel’s meeting room in 2010 to almost 2000 water and climate professionals globally in 2020. We have a small secretariat, but the network has a highly visible footprint in water, in policy, and in climate.

Yet a footprint tells us about where we have been, not where we are heading. Where do we want to go? Where are our next steps? What do we keep and what do we change?

We believe that the most important message we have offered to date is that climate change is not a war or a fight; climate change is a "condition" we need to live with — more like diabetes than cancer. While major long-term changes will certainly occur, we can find ways to live with those impacts and still ensure that we give our children a message of hope for a better future. We know that hope is realistic because water unlocks and enables resilience.

With many groups — finance, engineering, development banks, aid agencies, resource managers, cities, the UNFCCC — AGWA has made enormous progress with this message. The next decade will surely see us amplifying and articulating technical and policy programs with these same groups.

But some key voices are still missing or feel quieter, a fault of ours as much as anyone. Business and corporations, rural and peri-urban communities who need reliable water, irrigation, and wastewater treatment, and the full spectrum of infrastructure planners and designers who are interacting with a changing water cycle but are unfamiliar with water resilience: these are the people we need to reach now and in the coming years. In part because of Covid-19, water resilience is now understood to be comprehensive system resilience, as more individuals and institutions clearly visualize interdependent networks and supply chains, and how water runs through all parts of our economies, ecosystems, and communities.

Policy engagement will remain critical too, even as the SDGs and UNFCCC become more operational and project oriented as we approach 2030 and complete our first cycle of NDCs. Water resilience is a growing policy issue essential to facilitating and financing a broad range of climate, development and DRR solutions.

Climate change is a terrifying problem, but we are now developing solutions that are also comparably large and effective. Solutions that as individuals, institutions, and nations we can develop, drive, and implement, and that the water community is uniquely positioned to lead.
The first decade is past. AGWA’s time is now. And our best decade is ahead of us. Let’s keep walking together.

John Matthews
August 2020
Corvallis, Oregon, USA
INTRODUCTION

AGWA continues to work primarily across two complementary and synergistic workstreams: developing technical approaches to resilient water management and driving the global water-climate policy agenda to support and enable more water-wise decisions, actions, and investments. And substantive, measurable progress has been made on all of these fronts. Throughout the following Annual Report, you will see how we as a member-driven network have become one of the global leaders for resilient water resources management and governance. Highlights from the last year include:

- The *Watering the NDCs* policy report was launched in November by crowdsourcing with national, sectoral, and civil society partners from more than 100 countries. AGWA synthesized a short set of recommendations to guide countries in the choices they make in recognizing the water embedded across sectors and climate targets.
- IWMI and AGWA served as co-leads on a water background paper for the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA), which was launched at COP25. The report will feed into the long-term action track on water guiding future work of the Global Center on Adaptation.
- Continuing our work with UNFCCC around adaptation training, AGWA has been developing an Adaptation Academy with three global academic institutions that will offer month-long training courses to national adaptation decision makers through 2025.
- Mainstreaming approaches that AGWA has supported to assess and reduce water-climate risk such as Climate Risk Informed Decision Analysis (CRIDA), published by UNESCO in 2018, and the World Bank’s Decision Tree Framework, published in 2015, have grown in scope and range. CRIDA alone has been deployed in over 20 countries and institutionalized in several major governance frameworks globally. A major DTF project in Mexico City and the Valle de Mexico may be one of the most ambitious and complex adaptation projects globally.
- Similarly, the Eco-Engineering Decision Scaling (EEDS) framework for assessing and implementing ecosystem-based adaptation has been mainstreamed in Mexico’s water management guidelines for 300 basins through work led by CONAGUA, WWF-MX, IADB, and UNESCO.
- AGWA was again a vital voice for water at COP25. We helped organize the MPGCA Water Action Event as well as in some 18 other events that mobilized a broad cross-section of governments, NGOs, and UN agencies, including high-level sessions at the Spanish Pavilion, MDB Pavilion, and elsewhere.
- Our main website was completely redesigned and relaunched in May 2020. The overhaul included the addition of some new features, including an enhanced resource database in an effort to consolidate (and make more visible) the large volume of publications, videos, and other useful material that’s been crowd-sourced through AGWA over the years.
- With the support of GIZ, AGWA and Wetlands International co-authored a report for policymakers describing how wetlands can contribute to climate mitigation efforts — with particular guidance on incorporating wetlands in NDC revisions. The report is being released in August 2020 with promotion from the NDC Partnership and others.
AGWA Annual Report 2019-2020

- AGWA was chosen by The Resilience Shift as its Strategic Partner for water. This new partnership will help to grow a global resilience community of practice at the interface of water and resilience.
- AGWA’s ClimateReady Podcast finished its third season, spreading a positive, actionable “story” of climate and water. Episodes cover a wide range of climate-water topics, with each episode reaching 1000+ listeners worldwide.
- AGWA is working with FAO to develop a quantitative framework for evaluating water-related trade-offs between three key SDGs for the Asia-Pacific region: hunger, water, and climate change.
- AGWA has been working to develop a mechanism for mainstreaming nature-based solutions within ADB’s project development cycle, touching on cities, water, environment, and climate change.
- A high-level scoping workshop on private sector adaptation was held at Microsoft in February. Through multiple processes, AGWA is engaged in developing guidance and decision support for businesses around water-centric climate resilience.

History & Evolution

Founded in September 2010 during World Water Week by about 30 individuals, the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA) began as a network to catalyze expert knowledge, practical action, and effective global policy for climate adaptation. That mission continues now with more than 1900 members located worldwide and initiatives divided broadly into technical and policy areas. AGWA has expanded to serve as a platform for new perspectives on a wide variety of water and climate change issues, spanning both climate mitigation and climate adaptation. We strive to disseminate knowledge and advocate on critical technical and policy aspects of water and climate. To date, our technical programs have emphasized connecting thought leaders to develop a coherent set of guiding elements, processes, and methodologies for implementing robust and flexible long-term water management. Our policy work has defined a core set of issues, targeted relevant processes and policy frameworks, identified motivated and supportive policy and decision making actors, and developed approaches for communicating these issues to make changes in behavior.

In January 2019 AGWA took the next step in its organizational evolution and became a formally registered not-for-profit organization. AGWA is registered as a member-based charitable organization in the U.S. state of Oregon. As of May 2020, AGWA gained official 501(c)(3) status in the U.S. as a nationally-recognized tax-exempt NGO.

Mission

The mission of AGWA is to provision tools, partnerships, guidance, and technical assistance to improve effective decision making, action, governance, and analytical processes in water resources management, focusing on climate adaptation and mitigation.
Purpose

To serve the needs of our Members. These needs are conceived as falling into two broad categories:

1. Core network support, which includes sharing knowledge, connecting individuals and institutions to enable collaboration on water and climate projects and issues, identifying potential partners and growing the network; and promoting and advocating on the basis of existing tools, insights, and approaches.
2. Extended network support and outreach beyond the network, which includes technical assistance for project development and implementation; direct policy support; tool and methodological development; creating capacity building, educational, and training materials, programs, and workshops; and identifying and provisioning new programs and needs to reflect shifting conditions.

In addition, AGWA also values two cross-cutting purposes:

- To contribute to water and climate policies and practices to ensure they connect with, reach, and enable resilient communities and institutions.
- To foster and encourage dialogues between individuals and entities working on adaptation and mitigation of climate change, recognizing that water resources bridge these bodies of work.

Membership

AGWA enables adaptation to climate change by closing the gap between existing knowledge and policies and practical application. The members of AGWA are dedicated to supporting efforts within governmental, civil society, development banks, research, and private sector institutions to develop knowledge and skills that can address issues of water-based climate change adaptation by promoting collaboration between emerging areas of expertise and translating the next generation of best practices into operational reality. Members are willing to join efforts and capacities, within their own fields of action, to attain AGWA’s objectives.

Governance and Structure

AGWA is a registered not-for-profit members-based organization guided by a community of practice charter. AGWA is governed by two co-chairs, who also have seats on the Board of Directors. AGWA is led by its Executive Director, John Matthews, who reports to the Board of Directors. The current co-chairs are Maggie White (Stockholm International Water Institute [SIWI]) and Diego Rodriguez (World Bank). The work of the Executive Director and Board is supported by a small Secretariat currently composed of an Executive Director, Network Director, and Policy Director. Other support such as consultancies, internships, and various paid positions are utilized based on finances and project load.
Beginning in 2019, a Strategic Advisory Council (SAC) was also created to provide topical and thematic expertise for AGWA’s Executive Director and Board. As of this writing, the SAC is made up of eight individuals from across the AGWA network. No additional voting rights are accorded to these positions.

Major decisions and programs are ratified during an annual meeting, held in conjunction with World Water Week (with 2020 being an exception due to COVID-19).

**The Virtuous Circle: Convergence between Practice and Policy**

AGWA continues to promote integration between its technical and policy work — operational knowledge of resilient water resources management and national and global policies and plans need one another in fundamentally novel ways. Frameworks such as the SDGs and the UNFCCC’s Paris Agreement represent new models of development, and policymakers need to ensure they implement, while implementers need policies to support and fund best practices.

Contributors to the AGWA Policy Group are largely technical practitioners and water management professionals whose professional and personal interest has drawn them into engagement in the climate-water policy sphere; their expertise provides scientific merit to the policies and recommendations we develop and support. Conversely, many of AGWA’s technical programs are led by individuals and institutions whose main emphasis or directive includes creating evidence- and science-based policies. Such has been the goal of AGWA’s policy work for the past ten years — to systematically integrate resilient water management into global policy agendas, to improve outcomes for both mitigation and adaptation, and to reduce the increased risks to water resources brought on by climate change. These efforts have emerged from our broad network, a clear sense of need, and our technical grounding to gather, synthesize, and advocate for how to define and implement resilience across a wide range of audiences and contexts.

Our technical credibility and interaction across the full water and climate communities have led us to serve as the interface between practitioners and national / global policymakers, translating needs, trends, language, and actions between both groups. As you will see from our ongoing and emerging engagements over the past year, this credibility has led to some exciting new partnerships and opportunities with a wider range of actors in the climate and water space.

**An Overview of Recent Challenges and Emerging Opportunities: The Year of COVID-19 and Beyond**

The programs and initiatives described throughout the report would certainly not be possible without the contributions of AGWA members. We are truly a member-driven network. AGWA maintains a small secretariat of a handful of paid staff. As such, there will inevitably be missed opportunities from time to time. We are constantly mindful of making the best use of our members’ and staff’s time and resources. AGWA will continue to work with and through its members to maximize its impact. That said, we see a number of significant issues for the coming year:
1. COVID-19 proved to be a global disruptor, with AGWA not being immune to its effects. Essentially from March 2020 and well into 2021, all in-person events have been cancelled. In some regards, this has meant missed or delayed opportunities. However, the climate and water communities have unsurprisingly adapted to the times, with many events shifting to online and virtual platforms to maintain a high level of productivity throughout the year. Perhaps the biggest deferral is for COP26 from its November 2020 date to November 2021. But COVID-19 has not been completely negative in impact either. As many observers have pointed out, a global pandemic that disrupted companies, politics and governance, supply chains, and educational systems may have served as a global stress test for climate change. Resilience is part of the global governance lexicon now, not just with the climate community. The virus has certainly made all of us aware of the systems we interact with in quite visceral ways.

2. AGWA doesn’t require an enormous amount of money to be productive, but we do require some — for activities, some partnerships, for travel, and for our staff. We’ve gradually increased and diversified our sources of funding in recent years (see below), even as we seek to align existing and new sources with our priorities and programs.

3. Increasing our avenues for leadership and diversity in our governance has also been important in the past year, even as we seek to do better. After approval at last year’s annual meeting, AGWA’s Board and Secretariat are now supported by a Strategic Advisory Council. The small group of active AGWA members has already been a valuable source of input and connections, and we will continue to draw upon their expertise to help solidify funding relationships and open doors to new institutional and policy connections.

4. This year has been marked by the emergence of several new long-term opportunities. In addition to the necessary and important short-term projects involving the Secretariat and AGWA members, areas of potential multi-year engagement are beginning on a number of fronts. We will continue development of a five-year UNFCCC Adaptation Academy, with the potential to impact dozens of countries through training each year. With industry partners, we have begun to explore water-centric adaptation for a variety of businesses and corporate audiences, commencing with a workshop at Microsoft’s office in Redmond, Washington, working to provide guidance on reducing climate risk and negotiating trade offs around water and climate change. Other work around this theme is also commencing, including the Water Resilience Assessment Framework through the Pacific Institute and CEO Water Mandate. New opportunities are also emerging around the resilience of critical infrastructure, as AGWA has entered into a strategic partnership with The Resilience Shift to serve as its water sector lead. Exciting and cross-cutting initiatives are being planned.

5. Developments expanding the network in new areas are also on the horizon. AGWA and partners are exploring opportunities to build new communities of practice for specific topics and regions...
based loosely on the AGWA network. As a global network, we are cognizant of the fact that climate change impacts vary greatly across geographies and landscape types; institutional and adaptation needs are equally diverse in different regions. Using some of the principles around crowd-sourcing and stakeholder involvement that are central to AGWA’s network, we are exploring levels of interest and capacity to build smaller, more specific networks within our membership to address regional/thematic needs.

6. An ongoing issue is media engagement: adaptation remains poorly understood by many in the news media, and AGWA needs to find more effective ways to partner with media organizations, journalists, and — as we have done with ClimateReady — even generate our own media voices to help drive, educate, and frame topics.
Part 1
Year in Review: September 2019 – August 2020

Activities Since the Last Annual Meeting
Over the past year, AGWA has continued to expand in both its membership and influence. Core thematic activities have been continued, while new partnerships and areas of engagements have also emerged. In addition to programmatic advances, AGWA has taken another step forward in institutional formalization, as described below.

Updates on AGWA’s NGO Status
For many years, AGWA functioned largely as an NGO even though it was not registered as a legally independent entity when it was formed. In January 2019, AGWA became organized as a U.S.-based charitable members-based NGO. In May 2020 AGWA gained official 501(c)(3) status in the U.S. as a nationally-recognized tax-exempt not-for-profit organization, further solidifying its structure as a formal and accredited NGO. Though registered in the U.S., AGWA is an international organization.

AGWA is still governed by the same Community of Practice Charter, in addition to a new and legally binding set of bylaws. The World Bank (through Diego Rodriguez) and SIWI (through Maggie White) serve as co-chairs of the Board of Directors.

Policy Group Activities
Over the past twelve months, AGWA’s policy activities have continued along the expansive trajectory of the past several years, reaching new audiences at a pivotal moment when the “big three” global compacts (Paris Agreement, Agenda 2030, and the Sendai Framework) enter their implementation phases. As countries shift from commitments to action, we have diversified efforts to demonstrate the tangible benefits of resilient water management and governance to key decision makers. While we remain active in the UNFCCC’s Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action (MPGCA), we are expanding our engagement with other parts of the UNFCCC to help our messages reach farther than ever before. At COP25 last year, AGWA organized or participated in nearly 20 different events, interviews, or workshops. We’ve certainly come a long way since the 2010 COP16 in Cancún, where water had no official place within the proceedings.

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Just prior to COP25, we released two new policy publications: Watering the NDCs: National Climate Planning for 2020 and Beyond and, along with colleagues from the International Water Management
Institute (IWMI), *Adaptation’s Thirst: Accelerating the Convergence of Water and Climate Action*. These publications represent the culmination of several years of concerted group effort and it is truly rewarding to see our hard work paying off in the revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) now being submitted — such as those of Rwanda and Jamaica — that have explicitly expanded their water commitments for the post-2020 period. We look forward to working with countries through initiatives such as the Watering the NDCs coalition for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to help ensure better climate and development outcomes for their citizens and the world.

Throughout 2019 we once again served as focal point for the water thematic group within the MPGCA. Having served in this capacity for three annual COP cycles, we agreed it was time for us to pass the leadership baton to other water colleagues within the MPGCA. While we are no longer leading the water group for 2020, we remain committed to contributing to the work of the MPGCA, in particular developing the revised Climate Action Pathway for water and helping set the agenda for water under the new (2021-2025) MPGCA mandate. In addition, we will be contributing to the November 2020 “Race to Zero” virtual dialogues organized by the MPGCA High-Level Champions Gonzalo Muñoz (Chile) and Nigel Topping (UK).

With COP26 postponed until November 2021, the usual rhythms of the year — with preparation ramping up in early September — have been disrupted. Nevertheless, we remain busy with virtual meetings and workshops aimed at maintaining and even accelerating momentum towards achieving the critical goals of the Paris Agreement. We continue to deepen our relationship with key UNFCCC groups such as the Adaptation Committee and the Consultative Group of Experts. At the same time, we have forged new strategic relationships with organizations like The Resilience Shift and WaterAid, as well as government agencies such as the UK’s Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (formerly known as the Department For International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office), where we are serving as an expert advisor on the UK Government’s COP26 strategy. We’ve accomplished a lot over the past year and have much to look forward to in the latter half of 2020 and 2021.

**Highlights from the Policy Group in 2019-2020:**

**UNFCCC (COP25, Adaptation Committee, MPGCA)**

- **Status:** Ongoing
- **Brief Description:** COP25, hosted by the Chilean government, was held from 2-12 December 2019 in Madrid, Spain. Originally scheduled to take place in Santiago, Chile, the venue was changed five weeks prior to the conference due to ongoing civil unrest in Chile. This last-minute change made planning for last year’s COP particularly challenging; nevertheless, AGWA was able to make a significant showing at the conference, convening or participating in 18 events over the two-week period.

For 2019, Ingrid once again served as the focal point for water within the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, meaning AGWA attended all MPGCA meetings throughout the year.
and led the coordination of the annual MPGCA COP25 water event. While this event has served as the “flagship” event for water at the COP since 2016, this year there were several other events which helped to raise the profile of water well beyond the Marrakesh Partnership. In particular, thanks to strong leadership from the Spanish, Dutch and German governments, we were able to co-convene a ministerial dialogue in the Spanish Pavilion focused on water in the global climate change agenda and what is needed to help integrate the two.

In addition, events with the NDC Partnership and other partners including GWP, IWMI, Arup, the World Bank and Wetlands International expanded the scope of our interventions – from pure policy recommendations to a greater emphasis on technical solutions for climate change adaptation and mitigation. For the first time, AGWA was also asked to speak in the thematic event of the Oceans group – and given the theme of a “blue COP” this year, many events echoed the need for integrated freshwater, coastal and marine management. This is a real shift from past years, and it is encouraging to hear our messages echoed in events outside our own.

Leading the execution of these events has cemented AGWA’s role as an integral player within the Marrakech Partnership. However, the initial Marrakech Partnership mandate under the UNFCCC expires in 2020. The mandate has been renewed for another five-year term but there is some question as to if / how the MPGCA will reconfigure itself to become more effective over this new term. This uncertainty over the future of the Partnership is just one of the reasons why AGWA has been expanding its engagement with other UNFCCC sub-committees, including the Adaptation Committee (AC), the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP), and the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE).

**Watering the NDCs Guidance and Initiative**

- **Status**: Ongoing
- **Brief Description**: NDCs are national statements about how countries plan to contribute to UNFCCC mitigation and adaptation goals in five-year increments. Water of course is central to meeting these goals in every country, but very little guidance for national focal points exists to guide the development and implementation of the NDCs in any way, much less water’s role. Starting in early 2019, we began working on a new initiative to create a crowd-sourced guidance document and body of work around why and how to integrate water more effectively within climate policies and plans. The full document was finalized last November and released online just prior to COP25. We held an official launch event at the COP, and have been soliciting edits and additions for a revised version that was issued in April 2020. Our intention is for the guidance to be a living document and repository of new guidance materials for practitioners working on national climate planning. We have since developed a standalone webpage.
and have started to form regional working groups, based on user demand. The first of these regional groups, focused on small island developing states (SIDS), is in the process of forming now.

**Input for the High-Level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP)**

- **Status:** Ongoing
- **Brief Description:** Working with our colleagues from the Netherlands Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, AGWA prepared a briefing document on droughts for the 15th meeting of the High-Level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP15). The short document examined the hidden risks of drought and their intersectionality with water, DRR, and climate change. The resource was used during HELP15 on 29 May and is based upon a longer report on the same subject led by AGWA, likely to be published in early 2021.

**Stockholm World Water Week**

- **Status:** Complete
- **Brief Description:** At 2019’s Stockholm World Water Week, AGWA co-organized two sessions and one seminar, while participating in over a dozen other sessions, side meetings and other events. As we did the previous year, we also organized an AGWA Policy Group breakfast for network members working on or interested in our policy work. The first session we coordinated was a follow-up to our 2018 session on climate, water and DRR entitled “Don’t Waste Good Catastrophes: Aligning DRR, Water, and Climate Agendas.” This session featured a series of case studies from Southern Africa, India, Mexico, and Moldova followed by break-out groups where participants further discussed key aspects of how to better integrate water, climate change and disaster planning.

The second session we co-organized centered on the mitigation benefits of natural infrastructure such as peatlands. Entitled “Locking Carbon in a Water Vault: Wetlands as Ecosystem-based Mitigation,” this event featured several wetlands experts from around the world highlighting how wetlands work to store carbon and the challenges and opportunities related to both protecting these endangered ecosystems and accounting for them in our climate plans. This session is part of our ongoing technical work on the same subject. The wetlands paper we co-authored with GIZ and Wetlands International stems from this session, as well as a related event on the mitigation potential of peatlands AGWA participated in at COP25.

**DRR and Climate Change (HELP paper on drought)**

- **Status:** Ongoing
Brief Description: Late last year, in response to a request from our institutional partners at Deltares, the AGWA Secretariat began putting together a short briefing paper on drought, highlighting how interventions needed for drought alleviation, management and recovery often differ from managing floods and storms, which have historically received the bulk of the attention from the DRR community. Given the potential for drought to have a sustained impact on communities, entire regions, economies and ecosystems, we feel this is an area of water management deserving greater attention from the DRR and climate communities. This paper was initially prepared for the High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP); we are now working to revise the document for a broader audience to be released in the second half of 2020. In addition, we have prepared additional drought materials for the most recent HELP meeting, which took place on 29 May 2020.

SIWI / UNDP Water Interactions Checklist and Cap-Net Webinar series

Status: Final stages

Brief Description: Early in 2020 AGWA was contracted by UNDP and SIWI to prepare a checklist of major water and climate interactions for climate policy specialists engaged in national climate planning. The resulting series of sectoral checklists was initially meant to be used for a series of regional workshops between May-August this year, but due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, have instead been used as the basis for a webinar series, hosted by Cap-Net, on water and climate change. We will also participate in a (virtual) World Water Week @Home session on the same topic in August. The finalized set of checklists was released in July 2020. It’s likely we will participate in a second series of webinars in the second half of 2020.

Global Commission on Adaptation Water Strategy

Status: Middle stages

Brief Description: In 2018 the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA) was formed to help communities, cities, and countries proactively prepare for the disruptive effects of climate change. As part of this initiative, IWMI and AGWA were asked to prepare a background document on water and adaptation to inform both the Commission as well as the resulting Action Tracks that are now being developed to guide future adaptation action (and finance) across a range of sectors. The resulting document, *Adaptation’s Thirst: Accelerating the Convergence of Water and Climate Action*, was published in November 2020 just before COP25. This paper informed the flagship Commission report and is being used to help guide the work of the Water Action Track, which kicked off its 10-year plan of action in early 2020. AGWA will continue to engage with the Water Action Track, serving as an advisory organization for its basin adaptation goal.
Technical & Capacity Building Programs

AGWA continues to develop, promote, and build capacity around approaches to climate-resilient water management. We work directly with practitioners, decision makers, planners, and water managers to mainstream best practices for addressing climate risk and uncertainty, as well as the means to institutionalize and finance these types of approaches. Through various projects and initiatives — nearly always in collaboration with AGWA partners — we work to provide guidance around climate finance, resilient infrastructure, vulnerability and assessment (V&A) methodologies, NBS, DRR, urban resilience, and cross-sectoral (e.g., food-water-energy) challenges.

Over the years, AGWA has developed and published new methodologies for incorporating and addressing uncertainty in water resources operations, design and planning. Through frameworks such as CRIDA and EEDS, AGWA and partners have advanced the technical approaches to resilient (i.e., robust and flexible) water management. To ensure that these “bottom-up” approaches are mainstreamed, AGWA works to build understanding with relevant technical and policy audiences. We engage directly in capacity building through training workshops, webinars, and online courses. In other instances, we work directly with practitioners who are expanding the body of work through pilot projects and upscaling of “bottom-up approaches” to climate adaptation in new contexts.

Climate Risk Informed Decision Analysis (CRIDA) Implementation

- **Status**: Ongoing
- **Brief Description**: Currently, CRIDA has been deployed in some 20 countries. UNESCO has launched a broader CRIDA effort in Southern Africa that will include 16 projects across multiple countries at national parks and key biosphere reserves. AGWA and UNESCO are in early discussions about the logistics of expanding the CRIDA community of practice, with the potential of a standalone CRIDA website.

Knowledge Platform on Bottom-Up Approaches

- **Status**: Ongoing
- **Brief Description**: AGWA launched a technical knowledge platform in late 2017 as part of a World Bank funded project to highlight bottom-up approaches, increase understanding and capacity around the topic, and support individuals and institutions who wish to reorient towards these methods. The KP continues to
serve as our hub for resources around technical approaches to adaptation ([https://AGWAguide.org](https://AGWAguide.org)). Over the past year, changes include additions of new publications, the latest season of the *ClimateReady* Podcast, training opportunities/resources, and better integration of resources through AGWA’s redesigned main site (alliance4water.org). In addition, we continue to distribute a quarterly *AGWA Guide* newsletter on technical approaches to adaptation as supplemental material to the KP.

**Mainstreaming Nature-Based Solutions with Asian Development Bank**

- **Status:** Final stages
- **Brief Description:** AGWA has been working to develop a mechanism for mainstreaming nature-based solutions (NBS) within ADB’s project development cycle through a Working Paper. NBS elements will touch on projects on cities, water, environment, and climate change. The project has involved multiple meetings with the ADB in Manila. The publication was delayed somewhat due to COVID-19. The work should result in a report in early 2021.

**SDG Trade-offs Around Water, Climate, and the Environment**

- **Status:** Final stages
- **Brief Description:** AGWA’s Secretariat will work with FAO to develop a framework and pathway for making national and subnational recommendations about the role of water for SDGs 2 (hunger), 6 (water), and 13 (climate change) for the Asia-Pacific region. In-person workshops were planned for mid-2020 but pivoted to a series of virtual events due to COVID-19. The project explores how we operationalize the SDG agriculture production targets while also staying mindful of the two parts of the "utility" that influence agricultural water: ecosystems and the climate.

**UNFCCC Climate Action and Transparency Training (CASTT) Adaptation Academy**

- **Status:** Middle stages
- **Brief Description:** Led by the UNFCCC with support from AGWA, the CASTT Adaptation Academy is the first-ever training program for adaptation focal points to implement and report on NDCs to the Paris Agreement. The courses will include training around vulnerability and adaptation assessments as well as transparency reporting on measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) arrangements of the UNFCCC and the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) of the Paris Agreement. Attendees will be selected via a competitive process to attend a 4-week residential training program at one of three academic institutions involved in the Adaptation Academy: Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (IHE Delft), and Oregon State University (OSU). Currently, AGWA is helping coordinate curriculum development and logistics while all parties address fundraising. The plan is for courses to begin in August 2021 and run for five years.

**UNESCO Bottom-Up Approaches Conference and Webinar Series**

- **Status:** Middle stages
● **Brief Description:** As an evolution of partnership for CRIDA and World Bank–AGWA Knowledge Platform, UNESCO-IHP has taken a leading role in training/expanding for bottom-up approaches, especially CRIDA. IHP, with input from ICIWaRM, has asked AGWA to help organize a three-day conference in November 2020 on policy implications of climate-resilient water management approaches. COVID-19 uncertainty has impacted the potential dates and backdrop for the proposed in-person conference. To build capacity and raise interest in the conference, the same set of partners has organized a monthly webinar series on bottom-up approaches and relevant case studies. The first webinar took place in mid-July 2020. The series is set to (potentially) last a year. Content feeds into the Knowledge Platform and UNESCO’s work around e-learning.

**Climate Bonds Standards**

- **Status:** Near-final stage
- **Brief Description:** AGWA began supporting the development of resilience criteria for water-related green and climate bonds in September 2014. These efforts led to the release of Water Infrastructure Criteria as part of the Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI) Standard and Certification Scheme. The criteria cover built, green, and hybrid water infrastructure. To date over US $9 billion have been issued using these criteria. Our work with CBI has now shifted to exploring new criteria for climate bonds around hydropower.

**International Coalition for Sustainable Infrastructure (ICSI)**

- **Status:** Early stage
- **Brief Description:** ICSI is a coalition of engineers and other infrastructure professionals working to drive practical, sustainable and resilient solutions for infrastructure through innovations around financing, standards, and other action tracks. AGWA is taking part in two action tracks: “Funding and Financing” and “Guidance, tools, and standards.” Work for both tracks ties into other AGWA projects including climate bonds standards, bottom-up approaches, and more.

**SNAPP: Assessing the Water Quantity Benefits from Source Water Protection**

- **Status:** Near-final stage
- **Brief Description:** AGWA is on the core team for SNAPP, along with TNC, Conservation International, and Forest Trends. SNAPP intends to develop a knowledge synthesis to improve water quantity and resilience by focusing on source water protection activities. The design is twofold: assess the opportunity for source water protection to reduce flooding risks associated with land use and climate change and 2) integrate principles and guidance into decision support. The AGWA Secretariat has served as part of the principal investigators team leading the effort. In addition to a journal article submitted to BioScience, the team may look to write a high-level white paper on water, resilience and NBS approaches, building on the basis of a large meta-analysis of NBS and water.

**NAture Insurance value: Assessment and Demo (NAIAD)**
● **Status:** Complete

**Brief Description:** The goal of the EU Horizon2020 project is to operationalize the insurance value of ecosystems to reduce the human and economic cost of risks associated with water (floods and droughts) by developing and testing — with key insurers and municipalities — the concepts, tools, applications and instruments (business models) necessary for its mainstreaming. As part of SIWI’s NAIAD delegation, AGWA and SIWI contributed to policy & mainstreaming, communications & dissemination, and basins models & financing instruments work packages of the larger project. Project began in Dec. 2016. Our involvement concluded in January 2020.

### City Water Resilience Approach

- **Status:** In transition
- **Brief Description:** The CWRA framework was published in Oct. 2019 and its work was presented during multiple sessions at COP25. CWRA released two publications in January 2020: resilience profiles for both Cape Town and Greater Miami. AGWA’s role in the project focused on the engagement strategy and building the community of practice. While the project is still ongoing, we are in discussions with Arup, the World Bank, the International Water Association, The Resilience Shift, and others to determine how best to move forward with this work.

### Outreach

*Completed publications and resources are available in AGWA’s searchable database at [https://www.alliance4water.org/resources](https://www.alliance4water.org/resources).*

### The ClimateReady Podcast

- **Status:** Ongoing
- **Brief Description:** AGWA has successfully completed its third season of the ClimateReady Podcast. The show is led by the Secretariat, with involvement and interviews from numerous AGWA members. Season 3 featured a recurring segment in partnership with the World Youth Parliament for Water. A fourth season is in preparation with a planned launch in late 2020. The podcast originally launched in November 2017 as a tool to increase capacity around climate adaptation and water through diverse stories and expert interviews. Episodes receive over 1,000 listens each. The free podcast is available on all major podcast services and hosted on AGWA’s Knowledge Platform.

### #ClimateIsWater Initiative

- **Status:** Ongoing
- **Brief Description:** We continue to sit on the steering committee for the World Water Council-hosted #ClimateIsWater initiative. #CIW is a communications campaign designed to amplify shared messages around climate change and water. The long-term aim of #ClimateIsWater is to strengthen the position of water within the climate negotiations and the
UNFCCC processes. We helped develop a series of key messages for COP25.

**Climate Risk Informed Decision Analysis (CRIDA) Training**
- **Status:** Ongoing
- **Brief Description:** UNESCO has been active in conducting training on the CRIDA methodology ([https://en.unesco.org/crida](https://en.unesco.org/crida)), with several workshops held in 2018 and 2019 in S. Africa and Uganda, among other locations. In the past year, this work has continued. A regional training workshop for the LAC was scheduled to take place in Chile in conjunction with COP25. When the COP shifted locations, the workshop was postponed. COVID-19 further impacted plans. Instead, UNESCO — with contributions from AGWA, Deltares, ICIWaRM, and others — is developing an online training course. The first iteration will be geared towards LAC, with more to follow. In addition, AGWA has been involved in the UNESCO-led CRIDA initiatives in southern and eastern Africa, with 16 new projects in the works through the “Be Resilient” program. A one-day virtual training event took place in July 2020 with follow-up webinars being planned as well.

**Water Resilience Accounting Framework (WRAF)**
- **Status:** Intermediate stages
- **Brief Description:** The Pacific Institute, CEO Water Mandate, and WRI are leading an initiative to develop a common language for water, including water accounting terminology and metrics, to create a Water Resilience Accounting Framework (WRAF) for building basin resilience. AGWA became involved in the second phase of the project in May 2020. Outcomes will include production of a report outlining the framework sometime in 2021.

**UNESCO Policy Brief and Video on Bottom-Up Approaches**
- **Status:** Final stages
- **Brief Description:** The objective of this policy brief is to present hydrological application in the context of uncertainty, but also to prescribe solution-oriented tools towards the implementation of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, and to communicate the relevance and applicability of bottom-up approaches for risk assessment and reduction to senior water managers in order to scale up implementation and adoption. UNESCO IHP has organized and funded the project. AGWA will lead in writing the policy brief, with a proposed launch in September 2020. AGWA is also working directly with UNESCO to co-create a short video promoting the policy brief and its messages.

**Private Sector Adaptation**
- **Status:** Early stages
- **Brief Description:** While a high-level understanding of the risks of climate change to many industries appears well established, little general guidance exists to support most businesses in the practice of reducing climate risk or negotiating trade-offs around climate change. In February 2020 AGWA convened around 20 members and representatives from the private sector at
Microsoft’s campus in Redmond, Washington, USA to define a clear audience, operational framework, and set of subsequent actions (including time frame and potential funding) for systematic decision support for the private sector. A donor report has been prepared and a workplan for continued engagement is being developed.

Resilient WASH

- **Status**: Middle stages
- **Brief Description**: Especially over the last year-plus, AGWA has been working with a number of partners including WaterAid, the World Bank, DFID, and others to deepen understanding of the links between climate resilience and water security and sanitation, and to climate finance. AGWA participated in a Water and Climate Summit hosted by HRH Prince Charles and WaterAid in March 2020. We are also part of a Technical Group within a Water and Climate Finance Initiative led by WaterAid.

The Resilience Shift Water Sector Leadership

- **Status**: Early stages
- **Brief Description**: In June 2020 AGWA and The Resilience Shift joined in a strategic partnership, with AGWA set to serve as the lead for RS Water Sector engagement. The partnership builds on their desire to collaborate on mechanisms to advance resilience implementation and the level of understanding around water and resilience more broadly. The two organizations will co-create and deliver various projects, reports, media campaigns, events, and fundraising. In addition to its role as Water Sector lead, AGWA will be involved in cross-cutting projects with other RS sectors: energy, transportation, and digital technologies.

Island Water and Adaptation Network

- **Status**: Early stages
- **Brief Description**: At the suggestion of Fiji, AGWA has begun exploring the potential for a small island states community of practice loosely modeled on the larger AGWA network that can focus on sharing strategies, guidance, tools, and policy initiatives around the fundamental role of freshwater resources in enabling climate adaptation in an island context. This network would build on the high-level insights from *Watering the NDCs* and target working with and supporting national and local officials, bilateral and multilateral groups, and relevant NGOs and businesses focused on water-centric adaptation as a means of meeting national Paris Agreement and relevant SDG goals. First proposed in February 2020 with the first meeting of 30+ interested parties in July 2020.

Website Redesign for alliance4water.org

- **Status**: Complete
- **Brief Description**: In May 2020, AGWA launched a completely redesigned website (still located at https://www.alliance4water.org/). The overhaul includes the addition of some new features and reorganization, while maintaining key elements like AGWA’s *Resilient Waters* blog and
information on our wide-ranging initiatives. We have added a resource database in an effort to consolidate the large volume of publications, videos, and other useful material that’s been crowd-sourced through AGWA over the years. Standalone pages for *Watering the NDCs* and AGWA’s report on wetlands for mitigation are also featured prominently.

**Global Commission on Adaptation: Water Background Paper**
- **Status**: Complete
- **Brief Description**: IWMI and AGWA partnered to prepare a 42-page briefing document on the role of water in climate adaptation. The briefing document is meant to serve as a guide to GCA priorities and report critical needs on adaptation to global and national policy audiences, such as the UNFCCC. The report was launched at COP25.

**“Watering the NDCs” Paper for Climate Policymakers**
- **Status**: Complete
- **Brief Description**: With key partners in early to mid-2019, AGWA prepared a short guidance paper designed to help countries improve the effectiveness of their national commitments (NDCs and NAPs) by ensuring that water is accounted for in a robust and resilient way throughout their climate plans and activities. The paper lays out several guiding principles for managing water and climate, along with high-level recommendations for policy makers and resources and examples from several existing NDCs. The paper and associated policy recommendations document were launched at COP25. Updates were made to the text, including the addition of new resources and tools in May 2020. AGWA’s new website features a prominent page on the living document. As an evolution of this process, AGWA was approached by Fiji to look into creating a similar community of practice on the special water-climate needs of small island developing states (referenced earlier in this section).

**World Water Development Report (WWDR) 2020**
- **Status**: Complete
- **Brief Description**: Both of the co-chairs of AGWA’s Board were asked to lead chapters for the 2020 World Water Development Report (WWDR) under the theme of “water and climate change.” SIWI was the lead for chapters on international policy frameworks and governance. The World Bank led a chapter on climate finance. As a good example of multi-level engagement, the writing and review process involved members of the Board, the Secretariat, and general membership. The publication was launched on World Water Day 2020 (23 March).
Part 2
The Year Ahead: September 2020 – August 2021

Objectives for AGWA’s 2020–2021 work
A number of projects from the previous year are ending or going into a concluding phase, while some initiatives are shifting into less-intensive stage. For the coming year, we’ve proposed three key areas that we see as evolving priorities of our organization, our members, and the broader climate-water community:

**Water-Centric Private Sector Adaptation Guidance**
To date, AGWA’s work around assessing and reducing water-climate risks through the DTF, CRIDA, CWRA, adaptation pathways, and other bottom-up approaches has focused largely on the public sector, such as cities, water ministries, and sustainability NGOs that engage with these groups. The business community globally has lagged behind the public sector on climate adaptation issues, and we have found compelling evidence that there is a demand for neutral evidence- and expert-based crowd-sourcing initiatives to develop explicit stepwise guidance for a number of aspects of the business community. Indeed, beginning in early 2020, we initiated more engagement directly with several regional and global businesses and a number of NGOs and industry groups that focus on corporate sustainability. We asked a number of basic questions: can we define resilience for the private sector? what scales and operations (enterprise, facility, supply chain?) are most relevant for adaptation? who within businesses or the broader community (regulators, investors) is also relevant? what metrics should a business measure to track resilience? how might a resilient business function differently than a non-resilient peer? Over the coming year, we plan to explore these topics, with the ultimate goal of providing actionable frameworks by which corporations can develop more resilient supply chains and business models by addressing their specific stressors relating to water and climate change.

**Linking Policy to Resilience Best Practices and Capacity Building**
AGWA has always maintained dual workstreams around climate-water policy and technical approaches to resilient water management. These two workstreams have always complemented each other, with the advances around new approaches to resilient water resources management serving to inform the necessary policy and financial structures to achieve effective adaptation and mitigation. We see the coming year as an opportunity engage more directly in capacity building for policy and decision makers along a number of fronts — through webinars, global conferences, online courses, and in-person trainings — ultimately working to help mainstream the best climate actions possible in processes such as the ongoing NDC revisions and resubmissions.

**Resilient Infrastructure: Multi-Purpose, Multi-Function, Multi-Benefit**
The threats of climate change, combined with aging infrastructure, the integration of nature-based solutions and ecosystems, meaningful stakeholder engagement in planning and design, and transboundary/governance concerns, have placed infrastructure back in the global set of priorities.
COVID-19 has elevated these issues even more prominently, with many observers suggesting that ODA, investment, and planning in many countries will need to align with a broader definition of resilience than has been used in the past, inclusive of the systems thinking critical for resilience. AGWA has been working to address the uncertainties and risks facing infrastructure (particularly water-related infrastructure) for the past decade. Approaches like CRIDA, EEDS, and the World Bank’s Decision Tree Framework are designed to provide guidance around the planning, design, operations, and maintenance of critical infrastructure. Especially with many economies contracting and a heightened sense of concern over budgets and doing more with less (and building back better), we see the need for a broad paradigm shift in our conversations around infrastructure. In particular, we have identified room for AGWA to enable a larger transition away from single-purpose projects towards multi-purpose, resilient infrastructure that across the gray-green spectrum and includes aspects of adaptive, inclusive, and system-aware governance. New partnerships and initiatives offer a great entry point to reinvigorate a longstanding body of work on this front.

**Proposed Capacity Building & Technical Activities**

**Water, Adaptation, and the Private Sector**
Officially kicking off with a small workshop in February 2020, AGWA has begun working towards developing systematic decision support for the private sector around water resilience. Key partners include Alliance for Water Stewardship, Microsoft, Facebook, Pacific Institute / CEO Water Mandate, Gap, CDP, IUCN, and others. An initial scoping report was produced from the workshop outcomes (internal-facing). Later in 2020 and through 2021, AGWA will continue to crowd-source guidance to help businesses integrate resilient water awareness and management within their core business practices.

**Water Resilience for Economic Resilience**
Following the high-level impact of documents such as the Stern Report on Climate Change and the Global Commission on Adaptation’s series of reports on climate adaptation issues, WR4ER is intended to be an intensive exploration and source of evidence-based recommendations for water-centric economic resilience. WR4ER is intended to guide regional, national and global decision makers, investors, business and industry executives, and the broader finance community around the importance of placing water risks and solutions at the center of our decision making. The new initiative will take greater shape in 2021, potentially including a publication for COP26.

**UNFCCC-AGWA Partnership Global Adaptation Courses**
Following AGWA’s collaboration with the UNFCCC Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) in 2018, we began the development of an “Adaptation Academy” to deliver a series of month-long UNFCCC-branded training for implementing effective water-centric adaptation for national adaptation focal points. AGWA is serving a coordinating role while the regional training programs would be led by three academic institutions. MoUs have been signed between the UNFCCC and Oregon State University, the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), and IHE Delft Institute for Water Education. As of this
writing, curriculum development and fundraising are underway. The program will run five years, with the first courses set to take place in August 2021.

**UNESCO “Bottom-Up Approaches” Conference and Webinar Series**

CRIDA and other climate-resilient water management approaches continue to expand globally. UNESCO, AGWA, and ICIWaRM have planned a conference on the policy aspects of mainstreaming bottom-up approaches. The conference was originally scheduled for Nov. 2020 but, due to COVID-19, will either be delayed or shifted online. A complementary webinar series began in July 2020 to introduce both policymakers and practitioners to these approaches. The webinar series will continue through 2021, with the goal of having one installment per month with rotating topics, speakers, and case studies. Close consultation will continue on the conference and webinar with organizations like the World Bank, Deltares, Rijkswaterstaat, Millennium Challenge Corporation, GIZ, and many others.

**Island Water and Adaptation Network**

AGWA and Fiji have begun exploring a network or working group focused on sharing strategies, guidance, tools, and policy initiatives around the fundamental role of freshwater resources in enabling climate adaptation in an island context. Scoping calls took place in mid-2020. The specific objectives and deliverables of the group will be honed later in 2020, with potential engagement as: an informational / awareness raising body on the importance of water; direct policy engagement around National Sustainable Development Strategies, NDCs, and SDGs; strengthening regional climatic data; or influencing climate finance and funding. The group will look to collaborate with existing initiatives and organizations working around these topics. Direct engagement with governance institutions and local communities will be prioritized as well.

**SDG trade-offs around Water, Climate, and Environment**

AGWA is involved in a project designed by FAO to look at the intersection of food security and resilient water management at a national scale. In addition to a short study, the work will examine potential frameworks for how to negotiate trade-offs relating to water in SDGs 2, 6, and 13. Originally planning to hold in-person workshops in mid 2020, plans have changed due to COVID-19. AGWA will lead a series of three virtual workshops in late 2020 and produce a synthesis report based on the exercises and discussions.

**Resilient WASH**

Continuing a need identified in last year’s Annual Report, AGWA has been engaged with WaterAid and partners from the World Bank, the UK and Dutch governments, and others to deepen an understanding of the financial needs and flows going to the water sector, especially around climate resilience, water security, and sanitation. AGWA’s work is part of the WaterAid-led Water and Climate Finance Initiative that came out of the March 2020 Water and Climate Summit in London. Outcomes will include a set of recommendations for improvements to adaptation/resilience financial flows for water projects, and the WASH sector in particular.
Strengthening Climate Resilience in the ADB’s Water Sector

Beginning July 2020, AGWA has begun working to develop a knowledge and strategic directions product around Asian Development Bank (ADB) operational experience with climate change adaptation and mitigation and resilience across water-related activities (e.g., water supply, sanitation, wastewater treatment, irrigation and drainage, flood risk management, IWRM) and their nexus with other sector and thematic areas of ADB. The project is meant to identify trends in assistance, assess ADB corporate and client needs, analyze major challenges and opportunities, and make recommendations for upscaling and more effective mainstreaming of climate resilience in ADB’s water sector operations, by identifying options and facilitating a broader strategy. We also hope to work closely with the ADB and other MDBs on global policy issues as we move closer to COP26.

Resilience Shift Partnership and ICSI

AGWA continues its work around resilient infrastructure through its Strategic Partnership with the Resilience Shift. We serve as their water sector lead, with opportunities for cross-sectoral initiatives encompassing their energy, transportation, and digital technologies programs. In the coming year, we will work with RS to define innovative initiatives to bring resilience theory into practice. These activities may explore policy resilience risk and finance; guidelines, tools and standards; and education and capacity building for communities in the critical infrastructure value chain. One such early effort is our involvement in the International Coalition for Sustainable Infrastructure (ICSI). We will specifically engage around funding / finance and guidance, tools, and standards for resilient and sustainable infrastructure — bringing a water and climate perspective to the broader conversations. Potential outputs include white papers, standards for infrastructure resilience, and new financial models for implementation.

Expanding the CRIDA Community of Practice

The Climate Risk Informed Decision Analysis (CRIDA) methodology first published in late 2018. Since then, it has been applied in at least 20 countries in a variety of water management contexts. Momentum and interest continue to grow. Now, UNESCO is leading an effort to implement CRIDA for a number of biosphere reserves in the Southern Africa region to demonstrate and strengthen the role of biosphere reserves as observatories for climate change adaptation. Separately, a CRIDA-centered network is being set up by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in order to accelerate the implementation of adaptation strategies that will make California’s water systems more resilient.

Ongoing Policy Group Activities

As mentioned in the “Year in Review” section of this report, the AGWA policy group is coming off another strong year with record membership and several new initiatives. Given this exciting expansion of our work, we have also taken some time to evaluate our current commitments and modes of engagement in global policy processes to ensure that we are still reaching the right audiences. Our close engagement with the UNFCCC’s MPGCA over the past five years has certainly helped to secure water within the UNFCCC agenda. At the same time, the MPGCA is entering its second term in 2021 and will likely evolve somewhat in terms of structure and emphasis. Thus, our engagement strategy with the MPGCA platform is also undergoing an evolution. As of 2020, we are no longer taking a leadership role
with the group, instead focusing on several new opportunities to engage with a broader range of UNFCCC members and stakeholders interested in resilient water management. We are still committed to the work of the MPGCA and will support the new water leaders, helping to organize a series of virtual water events leading up to COP26, and contributing to the next round of Climate Action Pathway for water.

While in many ways this next year will follow the usual calendar of events, due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the second half of 2020 and 2021 will in other ways be somewhat unique. The Bonn Intersession Climate Change Conference (SB52) and all of the 2020 Regional Climate weeks have been postponed to mid-2021, with COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland pushed back to November 2021. Other annual conferences such as AGU and World Water Week have been moved online. Several of the workshops we had planned as part of the “watering the NDCs” initiative will instead take place as webinars. In many ways, this makes them more accessible to a greater number of participants. But it also means that the normal modes of conversation and connection — which typically take place outside of formal sessions — will not be possible until it is safe to once again meet in-person.

Thankfully, one of AGWA’s major strengths is our ability to be adaptive and flexible. Our policy work has become no less important during this unprecedented time of global uncertainty and if the past few months are any indication, our work is only becoming more visible. New collaborations with longstanding partners such as SIWI and WRI, as well as new relationships with others like the Resilience Shift and Facebook, offer exciting opportunities to deepen and expand our work. Thus we will continue to prepare a number of initiatives to bring to COP26 in November 2021, working closely with DIFD and the UK government to include water explicitly as a key component of their climate resilience agenda.

Policy Group Activities: New Frontiers

The year 2020 was designated the “year of water and climate change” by UN-Water. In preparation for numerous global events, including World Water Day (23 March) and World Water Week, we spent a good amount of time in 2019 contributing to new guidance materials including the updated UN-Water Climate Change and Water Policy Brief as well as the 2020 World Water Development Report. While these initiatives to raise awareness around the critical linkages between water and climate change are no less relevant, the AGWA policy group has now pivoted towards an increased focus on demonstrating tangible, water-centric adaptation options for countries that understand the importance of water and climate linkages, but may not know how to integrate the two. This means a greater emphasis on country-level advising, as well as convening working groups and webinars that blend policy, technical capacity, and finance for resilient water management.
In line with this evolution in our policy strategy, we are pleased to confirm that our existing partnership with GIZ will continue for the next two years, building on the work that we have done together in 2018-2019 on strengthening the NDCs, improving technical and policy coherence for capacity development and expanding our work on private sector adaptation. We are currently brainstorming additional ways to adjust our narrative around systems resilience to incorporate the global conversation around health and green recovery.

As part of our commitment to contributing to the work of the NDC Partnership (NDCP), over the next six months we will be working with colleagues at WRI and the NDCP on country-level guidance for water-related adaptation in their NDCs. In this role, we will be working with three to five countries who have indicated the need for water management to be included in their NDCs and other climate plans. We will be reviewing and/or assisting in the development of their detailed implementation plans, and offering suggestions for NDC enhancement. We are also contributing to a water sector guidance paper for WRI and UNDP’s “Enhancing the NDCs” publication series. This project is consistent with our overall shift towards providing greater country-level policy and technical support on resilient water management for climate change.

In addition, we are supporting IUCN’s work on financing adaptation in transboundary basins, looking at the role of natural infrastructure and NbS more broadly in helping basin organizations manage their shared resources in a more effective and climate-resilient manner. This project is part of a broader initiative focused on innovative financial mechanisms for water-related NbS, demonstrating a climate rationale for natural water infrastructure in a variety of contexts around the world.

This past year, AGWA was approached to prepare a briefing document on the current state of drought understanding and management for the High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP). Based on positive feedback from the initial report, we are working with key partners to develop a more sustained body of work on climate change and DRR, including drought, in order to address knowledge gaps and promote proactive drought planning and mitigation both within the DRR and climate communities.
Part 3
Financial Reports and Budget

Budget Overview

- The main costs to keep AGWA running refer to the following budget categories: remuneration of the AGWA Secretariat and consultants; travel expenses to participate in conferences and events; logistical costs related to organizing seminars and network activities; technical costs related to web sites and the podcast; printing of communications materials, and software subscriptions, etc. In addition, a great amount of support comes to AGWA from the in-kind contribution of Board members’ and AGWA members’ time.

- In 2020 AGWA began winding down its previous structure, a holdover from before AGWA became a registered non-profit organization in 2019. Through early 2020, we had open contracts that were still ongoing with the corporate entity, Johoma Services Inc.; however, now that those are closed, we are transitioning over fully to the AGWA non-profit. We expect to close Johoma Services Inc. entirely by the end of the calendar year.

- The overhead for AGWA has expanded to parallel the growing scope of engagement and activities. John, Alex, and Ingrid remain full-time staff members in the Secretariat. In addition to those three team members, two part-time hires were made in mid-2019. Nureen Anisha, based in Oregon, is a PhD student in a graduate water resources department with a strong background in engineering, water, and climate adaptation. She served as a part-time Research Fellow through May 2020. Kathryn Pharr, based in London, directly supports our policy engagement, particularly for European meetings. With already strong connections to the AGWA network, she is serving as a consultant on contract. More recently, we have hired a full-time Technical Director, Kari Davis who will work primarily with John Matthews on some of our more technically-oriented contracts.

- AGWA will undergo an independent audit of its financials for the fiscal years 2019-2020. As a newly established NGO, we believe it is important to have a clear grasp of our financial flows and demonstrate sound fiscal responsibility to our donors. Audited financial statements will be useful in pursuing additional sources of funding in addition to general reporting requirements, and will be available on our website starting in late 2021.
**Estimated secretariat expenses (Sept 2019 - Aug 2020)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost monthly (USD)</th>
<th>Cost annually (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs including: salary, taxes, retirement and healthcare contribution (John, Alex, Ingrid, Nureen [September 2019 - May 2020 only], Kari [August 2020 only])</td>
<td>$20,833</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultants (Kathryn Pharr, Ross Strategic)</td>
<td>$1,583</td>
<td>$19,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel for conferences, workshops, other events <em>(NOTE: no travel took place after 15/3/2020 due to COVID-19)</em></td>
<td>$3,613</td>
<td>$43,360</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office operational costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Expenses (computers, recording equipment, office furniture, etc)</td>
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<td>$3,500</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$27,341</strong></td>
<td><strong>$328,098</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Sources of Funding (2019-2020)**

AGWA has operated for the past ten years and continues to thrive thanks in large part to a few key strategic partners who share our vision and commitment to addressing climate change and water for this century and beyond. We could not do our work without their sustained financial support. On the technical side, we are particularly grateful for multi-year support from the World Bank, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme, and the Asian Development Bank. Our policy partners, including SIWI, the German government (BMZ / GIZ), the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and Deltares, provide equally critical programmatic support for our policy work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Work Covered</th>
<th>Amount (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIWI*</td>
<td>SIWI staff support; travel support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)</td>
<td>support for climate policy activities</td>
<td>$195,930</td>
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<td>World Resources Institute (WRI)</td>
<td>NDC enhancement consulting</td>
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<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N. (FAO)</td>
<td>“negotiating trade-offs” workshops and paper</td>
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<td>NAIAD (via SIWI)</td>
<td>Final payment for NAIAD project consulting</td>
<td>$14,950</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIWI consulting contracts</td>
<td>Source to Sea NDC analysis; water and climate checklists</td>
<td>$22,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In-kind Support 2019–2020

Non-financial support risks being invisible and unacknowledged — and perhaps more than for many organizations, AGWA’s in-kind funding may be our most important asset as a network. AGWA largely functions as a crowd-sourcing organization that mobilizes networks of motivated individuals and institutions, which means that the Secretariat’s most important roles are to coordinate, guide, and coalesce that in-kind work. Individual groups such as the USACE, SIWI and World Bank estimated their in-kind support for the past year at over 50,000 USD each; if anything, such estimates seem low. Leadership in all of our core partners have allocated significant staff time. From the perspective of the Secretariat, the motivation we see across the network often demonstrates joy and dedication. Indeed, this is what motivates us to serve.

We also see very tangible indirect financial support, and we have tried to estimate in-kind support in our budget, though the exact value of the staff time, travel support, and logistical assistance from AGWA members is impossible to fully account for. Categories of contributions are as follows:

- Board of Directors: Board members agree to provide a minimum of 40 hours per year towards AGWA. With nine current members, that equals at least 360 hours of in-kind contributions.
- Staff time and materials from members
- Members representing AGWA at events
- Members co-producing publications
- Direct funding for Secretariat travel

Fundraising Efforts

With no specific staff member dedicated to foundational outreach, many in AGWA have been actively engaged in fundraising for AGWA secretariat activities. These have spanned a number of categories: institutional core support from partner organizations, project-specific grants, travel funding for events, and in-kind contributions. Fundraising often requires investments of time in developing relationships with other organizations. We have been lucky enough to have a number of strong institutional partners and supporters over the past several years. This past year in particular saw major financial support from the
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Asian Development Bank and other key partners. Fundraising is a never-ending pursuit for an NGO, however. AGWA’s Board of Directors and Executive Director are always exploring new opportunities for funds through projects, grants, and institutional agreements. Time constraints always prove a hindrance, as the day-to-day work required of AGWA’s programs and activities can limit the time dedicated to fundraising. Until a dedicated staff member can more consistently prioritize fundraising, we must continue to be diligent, opportunistic, and engaged to demonstrate our unique (and incalculable) value.

Projected Sources of Funding (2020-2021)
We have an ambitious and far-reaching set of activities planned for the coming year — including a substantial project with the Asian Development Bank that necessitated the hiring of a new full-time staff member. At the same time, we are deepening our engagement with a number of partners including the Resilience Shift and GIZ / BMZ, as well as launching a global adaptation training programme in collaboration with the UNFCCC, convening working groups on private sector finance for climate, NbS for climate change mitigation, and producing a new season of the ClimateReady Podcast. This is in addition to our “core” activities promoting bottom-up approaches including CRIDA at a number of technical workshops and academic conferences and coordinating the work of the network on climate and DRR policy. We are fortunate to have already secured some funding for these activities; however, we will need substantial additional funding to meet the financial needs of running the Secretariat. Therefore, we will need to fundraise both from new sources as well as our existing partners to meet our budget for 2020-2021 — a process that is already underway. The AGWA Secretariat is always open to suggestions from members for potential funding. If you have ideas, please let us know!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Work Covered</th>
<th>Estimated Amount (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIWI</td>
<td>staff time; consultancies</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rijkswaterstaat (via Deltares)</td>
<td>policy support, COP26</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)</td>
<td>technical and policy work, travel, hosting workshops, COP26</td>
<td>$118,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUCN</td>
<td>transboundary finance for natural infrastructure contract</td>
<td>$4,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
<td>Strengthening Integrated Flood Risk Management - Water Resilience and Climate Change</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Bank Group</td>
<td>Technical program support</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>&quot;Negotiating SDG trade-offs&quot; report and workshop</td>
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<td>Private sector donors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Cost (USD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Institute</td>
<td>Water Resilience Accounting Framework; other projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Resources Institute</td>
<td>NDC enhancement consulting</td>
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<td>WaterAid</td>
<td>Resilient WASH</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>CRIDA policy brief; video; webinars</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$436,560</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secretariat proposed budget (Sept 2020 - Aug 2021)</th>
<th>Cost monthly (USD)</th>
<th>Cost annually (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic staff costs including salary, taxes, retirement contribution, healthcare (John, Alex, Ingrid, Kari)</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin staff salary</td>
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<td>$35,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultants (K. Pharr, Ross Strategic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel for conferences, workshops, etc.</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
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<td>Office operational costs, communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital expenses</td>
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<td>ClimateReady Podcast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debt service</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$40,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$480,000</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1
The AGWA Secretariat

Secretariat Roles and Responsibilities

John Matthews, AGWA Executive Director. John is the co-founder and Executive Director of AGWA, having previously used the title of Coordinator prior to AGWA’s restructuring as an official NGO. In consultation with the Board of Directors, John is responsible for the overall content and direction of AGWA’s technical work (CRIDA, Climate Bonds Initiative, etc.) and he advises our policy work along with Ingrid and SIWI’s Maggie White. He is routinely asked to organize, advise, and participate in water and climate adaptation conferences and events worldwide and he engages regularly with the media on AGWA’s behalf, be it through his column on climate adaption at OoskaNews, our newsletters, or through our co-authored white papers. In addition, John represents AGWA on various advisory boards with some strategic partners of the network.

Alex Mauroner, Network Director. Alex is AGWA’s Network Director, having previously served as a Research Associate until early 2019. Alex helps John coordinate the Knowledge Platform and supports our technical work and capacity building efforts, such as assisting with CRIDA initiatives and our work around finance and ecosystem-based adaptation, while working to coordinate the wide-ranging network activities. He managed AGWA’s Research Fellow during her tenure. He also maintains our websites and serves as a co-host and editor of the ClimateReady Podcast. In addition, Alex produces two newsletters for AGWA and manages our social media presence.

Ingrid Timboe, Policy Director. Ingrid serves as AGWA’s Policy Director. Working closely with Maggie and John, Ingrid is involved in all things policy at AGWA, coordinating AGWA Policy Group communications, producing the AGWA Policy Newsletter, helping prepare policy briefs and white papers, participating in the Water and Climate Working Group and on the #CIW steering committee. Ingrid manages AGWA’s part-time policy consultant in addition to serving as the water focal point for the Marrakech Partnership, coordinating our work with the UNFCCC. Since early 2018 she has co-hosted the ClimateReady Podcast with Alex. She also assists John with AGWA’s financial management of the AGWA Secretariat.

Nureen Anisha, Research Fellow. Nureen joined AGWA in May 2019 to provide specific support on a number of research projects around climate, water, and NBS. She also provided administrative support and grant management assistance for AGWA’s contract with GIZ for 2019-2020 in addition to task management and reporting. Having had prior experience in journalism as well, Nureen works on AGWA’s external outreach and some social media engagement. Her term as a research fellow concluded at the end of May 2020.

Kari Davis, Technical Director. The newest member of the Secretariat, Kari joined AGWA in August 2020 to support several new and ongoing technical water projects we coordinate, including the Asian
Development Bank’s “Strengthening Integrated Flood Risk Management” climate and water program, as well as our work on private sector adaptation and climate finance for NbS. She comes to AGWA having just completed a joint Master’s degree in Water Resources Policy and Management / Water Management and Governance.
Secretariat Core Functions

Secretariat functions have remained a vital part of AGWA over the past year. They cover a diverse number of activities:

**Newsletters**

The AGWA Updates newsletter has remained a consistent monthly publication. Currently, AGWA has just shy of 1000 individuals on its main mailing list — a number which has steadily grown since a big dip in 2018 due to GDPR regulations in Europe. In the past year, the mailing list has grown approximately 45%. We maintain two topical newsletters to supplement the main AGWA Updates edition: one for policy around climate and water and one for technical approaches to adaptation. The policy newsletter goes out approximately once per month and has 700 subscribers — a 49% increase over the past year. The technical approaches AGWA Guide newsletter goes out quarterly. Similarly, there are around 730 subscribers today — growth 46%. The embedded signup form on AGWA’s new website has noticeably resulted in more new subscribers. According to our mailing list service, around 25-35 percent of each issue gets opened by our members.

**AGWA websites**

The main AGWA website (https://alliance4water.org) has remained a critical way to reach our membership as well as a broader international audience. Notably, AGWA’s website underwent a major overhaul and redesign in 2020, with a launch of the new site in May. Prior to the launch, traffic had increased 12% over the same period the year prior. A new web analytics tool is being used, so comparisons to previous numbers are trickier. The new site has been well received and has already resulted in higher numbers of mailing list signups through the embedded form. AGWA’s companion site for more technical methods and capacity building for climate adaptation, https://agwaguide.org, was less often visited than the main website over the same period of time. The so-called “Knowledge Platform” has a more niche target audience and receives less widespread promotion than AGWA’s main site. The site does get new content periodically, but it doesn’t have the same regularly updated Blog or Events pages as the main website. AGWaguide.org experienced modest growth in site visits of 5% in the past year. With several new initiatives around CRIDA and the UNESCO bottom-up webinars/conference, it is expected that the KP will be more heavily utilized in the coming year.

**Communication and outreach**

AGWA functions as a network of far-reaching members. Communication and outreach are necessary and vital aspects of our day-to-day activities. The AGWA website serves as one means of communication. We use the Resilient Waters blog and an Events page to promote stories, publications, and events to our members and the general public as well as subscribers to our RSS feed. Our site is also connected with Apple News (an iOS app) to publish AGWA news to an incredibly large audience of iPhone and iPad users.
AGWA has also grown its social media presence this year. AGWA’s LinkedIn group has grown from 490 to 600 members (a 22% increase). Those members regularly receive updates and posts from the Secretariat and each other. We also maintain a separate LinkedIn group for young professionals with a slightly different purpose and a different audience. The page is used to promote scholarship or speaking opportunities as well as events and news specifically relevant to early career individuals and/or students. Our Facebook page was started two years ago in an effort to reach even more demographics. Anyone can follow or mention AGWA’s page using @Alliance4Water — the same handle as our Twitter feed and based on our website address. The Facebook page has grown organically as more people view, share, and follow our posts. While last year we only had 480 followers, we now have 700. Facebook is a good tool to communicate with both individuals and organizations through its tagging feature and ease of sharing posts. Facebook is not, however, the right platform for communicating complex or lengthy pieces of information; rather, it is a tool in the communications arsenal. Similarly, Twitter is a useful tool for AGWA to share short pieces of news, especially from events being attended. AGWA has 1060 followers on its main account (@Alliance4Water). We also maintain a separate account for the ClimateReady Podcast (@ClimateReadyPod) to help promote episodes and link up with guests and listeners. We use this account mainly around episode releases. We currently have 315 followers — a clear discrepancy from our show “listens” wherein each episode averages around 1,200 plays. Both Twitter accounts have feeds embedded on the homepage of AGWA’s redesigned website. All of the above Facebook and Twitter accounts would benefit if we shared more posts. Without a dedicated social media manager, we do the best we can to stay engaged and share periodic updates.

AGWA events
Event coordination has always been an important part of the Secretariat. This continued over the past year as AGWA was represented at many dozens of meetings, workshops, conferences, and webinars. COVID-19 very directly impacted the number and types of events we were able to engage in. Beginning in March 2020, all in-person events were cancelled, postponed, or switched to some sort of online format — essentially through the end of 2020. Many, such as COP26, opted instead to reschedule in order to maintain the in-person element.

Perhaps the largest meeting of all was COP25 in Madrid, though many other important conferences and workshops took up the AGWA calendar. The Secretariat helped prepare for a number of international events (not a complete list):

- UNFCCC Adaptation Committee Meeting in Bonn (Sept. 2019)
- MPGCA Workshop in Bonn (Oct. 2019)
- OECD Roundtable on Sustainable Finance in Manila (Nov. 2019)
- UNFCCC COP25 in Madrid (Dec. 2019)
- AGU Annual Meeting in San Francisco (Dec. 2019)
- Private sector adaptation workshop in Redmond, Washington (Feb. 2020)
- UNFCCC MPGCA workshop in London (Feb. 2020)
- HRH Prince Charles & WaterAid water-climate summit in London (March 2020)
● SNAPP final workshop (online, April 2020)
● American Society of Civil Engineers resilient infrastructure summit (online, April 2020)
● HELP15 Meeting (online, May 2020)