



**Inaugural Stakeholder Engagement Meeting**  
**The National Press Club, Washington, DC**  
**Monday, December 3, 2018**  
**Meeting Highlights**

The inaugural meeting was attended by 53 participants representing various stakeholder organizations from across the environmental sector including corporations, federal, state, and local governments, peer nonprofit and member organizations, and investors.

The meeting opened with a Welcome and Introduction including an Overview of the Alliance for Environmental Markets and Investments (AEMI), established to Connect, Convene, and Collaborate across environmental markets. This included a presentation on funding and finance opportunities for environmental markets. AEMI is building a strong alliance of all stakeholders across the environmental sector (wetlands, water, air, land, species) to support sustainable preservation, restoration, and protection of the environment through increased private/public efforts. AEMI leads with connecting entrepreneurial sustainable environmental solutions with resources. Increased investment will result by formalizing shared resources, best practices, education, and other priorities across environmental markets, providing momentum, continuity, transparency and better data for sustainable environmental solutions for everyone.

AEMI is independent, transparent, and balanced, and is setting priorities in cooperation with stakeholder representatives who participated in pre-meeting conversations or in the inaugural meeting.

Meeting invitees were asked to participate in a Pre-Meeting Survey and the results of the survey were shared with attendees. Meeting participants then worked in assigned smaller breakout groups to discuss and make recommendations on **four top challenges identified in the survey:**

Funding / Finance

Standards

Good Data and Research

Education, Training & Awareness

Themes that emerged from the report outs of the small group discussions included:

**Funding (Finance)** - Participants reporting for this key challenge commented that the term Funding should be broadened to Finance. Discussions ensued on the challenges of finding funding/financing resources as well as investor frustration in identifying opportunities to invest in/fund. There is consensus that bringing scale to this effort would bring more impact, with dialogue about how the sector and investors would benefit from linking existing investment pipelines into a larger, consolidated pipeline (economy of scale). There was also conversation related to the aggregation of environmental funds that could be organized by different environmental issues (similar to mutual funds).

**Standards** - There is consensus that it would be beneficial to develop best practices across the sector including standards and compliance verification processes. Standards should quantify Impact by Identifying benefits, efficiency, resiliency. Themes included transparency and information sharing including examples (water and air) of transparent standards and carbon was identified as an example of standard rigor. Transfer of liability was discussed and identified as a risk, as well as the need for clear and transparent standards to attract more investment.

**Data and Research** - There is a need for credible "real time" data and for research that is current and available with outcomes clearly identified, measured, and validated, at the local, regional, and national level. Challenges included conversations about data being available but getting the data sets and the aggregate of the data is difficult as is the lack of resources for keeping the data current. There were many examples of preferred sources of research and data and a conversation about funding needed for a higher level of sophistication and consistency of data across the sector. The conversation also included dialogue related to the need of data to ensure environmental outcomes and identify cost and risk.

**Education, Training, and Awareness** - There is consensus that there is need across all environmental markets for more education and training. All stakeholders were identified as needing more education and training - regulators, policy makers, providers, impactors, investors and students. Continuous and available quality education and training will also address employee turnover and educate students -- the next generation. Educating the public was identified as beneficial but may be initially combined with education and training and through other priorities. Many agreed there would be benefit from standardized continuing education on processes, standards, compliance, financial and business practices. A central repository of alliance-certified training programs was thought to be beneficial, and that information for knowledge sharing was very important for all sectors.

**Other discussions** identified a need for supply and demand transparency, a need for the identification and analysis of national trends, and the difficulty in discerning true cost. There was conversation focused on the need to develop a Return on Investment for the private sector (light rail was provided as an example). Finally, there was discussion on the overlap with all four challenges identified, and the difficulty of determining the best approach to address them.

*The inaugural stakeholder engagement meeting provided an opportunity for AEMI to identify top priorities for 2019.*

AEMI believes that by working with partners, the Alliance can develop and share a comprehensive Finance and Funding Pipeline, compare common and consistent best practices and standards, and increase the focus on the quantity and quality of education, onboarding and training.

We sincerely appreciate the participation of everyone who contributed to the Pre-Meeting survey and who attended the meeting and engaged in helping AEMI set our immediate priorities - thank you!

AEMI is pleased to share these priorities along with our proposed strategies for addressing them in **AEMI's Impact Priorities Outline**. We invite all stakeholders to participate in building a strong alliance and execution of the priorities Identified.

If you are Interested In supporting our efforts and/or serving on a working group or participating in another way, please contact one of the founding board members:

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For additional information, and to stay connected please visit our website at [www.aemi.org](http://www.aemi.org).