Second Annual
Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

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DRAFT Concept Note for the STI Forum

Prepared by the Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs ('IATT') and the 10-Member Group appointed by the Secretary-General as representatives of civil society, the private sector and scientific community ('10-Member Group').

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Context

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development established a technology facilitation mechanism (TFM) that Member States agreed "*… will be based on a multi-stakeholder collaboration between Member States, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders and will be composed of a United Nations inter-agency task team on science, technology and innovation for the sustainable development goals, a collaborative multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the sustainable development goals and an online platform.*"

The collaborative multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the sustainable development goals ("STI Forum") will "*discuss science, technology and innovation cooperation around thematic areas for the implementation of the sustainable development goals, congregating all relevant stakeholders to actively contribute in their area of expertise.*" It will "*provide a venue for facilitating interaction, matchmaking and the establishment of networks between relevant stakeholders and multi-stakeholder partnerships in order to identify and examine technology needs and gaps, including with regard to scientific cooperation, innovation and capacity-building, and also in order to help facilitate development, transfer and dissemination of relevant technologies for the sustainable development goals*".[1]

Agenda 2030 tasked the IATT to work with the 10-Member Group to organize the meetings of the STI Forum. Reflecting this mandate, this concept note is jointly put forward by the IATT and 10-Member Group for the consideration of the Co-Chairs of the STI Forum.

Theme for the STI Forum 2017

The theme of the 2017 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) is "*Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world*", and the Member States have decided that the HLPF 2017 shall focus on six SDGs (1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14) in addition to SDG 17 that will be considered at each HLPF. In this context, the following topic may be considered for the STI Forum 2017: "*Science, Technology and Innovation for a Changing World – Focus on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14*".

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[1] See Paragraph 70 of the Post-2015 Development Agenda Outcome Document, A/RES/70/1.

Objectives

In line with its mandate, the STI Forum will address the following objectives:

(1) STI cooperation: *"Discuss science, technology and innovation cooperation around thematic areas for the implementation of the sustainable development goals":*

    a. *Congregate all relevant stakeholders to actively contribute in their area of expertise;*

    b. Open new fields of dialogue between stakeholders and promote the sharing, exchange and scaling up of ideas, technologies and innovations for the SDGs;

    c. Share success stories and challenges in scientific collaborations, innovation, technology transfer and diffusion, and promote the development of accessible repositories of 'best practices'.

(2) Needs and gaps analysis: "*Identify and examine technology needs and gaps, including with regard to scientific cooperation, innovation and capacity-building":*

    a. Support the development of gaps and needs analysis at the national and regional levels, and act as an observatory for STI needs for SDGs.

    b. Identify the key elements of a workable roadmap for STI development at the national level, and to enable STI collaboration at the international level; and

    c. Determine how the STI Forums (2016-2030) can contribute to design of roadmaps for the use of science, technology and innovation (STI) for sustainable development.

    d. Consider means of measuring progress in implementation of the SDGs in terms of the role of STI, including technology development, transfer and diffusion, and take stock of progress made.

(3) Networking: "*Facilitate interaction, matchmaking and the establishment of networks between relevant stakeholders and multi-stakeholder partnerships"*

    a. Suggest new initiatives and partnerships to be developed to help promote new solutions for the SDGs.

    b. Organize a Networking Forum to profile exceptional innovators who are already delivering solutions to one or more of the SDGs, and to illustrate the breadth of diverse sources of innovation (both geographic and sectoral);

    c. To explore potential for inter-disciplinary approaches to innovating solutions for sustainable development challenges, including open and collaborative innovation;

    d. Provide regular reporting on thematic topics via a multi-stakeholder approach;

(4) Technologies for the SDGs: "*Facilitate development, transfer and dissemination of relevant technologies for the sustainable development goals"*

    a. Identify practical means and solutions to foster science, technology and innovation geared towards the target SDGs (1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14);

    b. Enhance enabling environments for STI development and the removal of obstacles to the scaling up of the development of and access to technologies.

    c. Explore innovative approaches to leverage human and financial resources for STI;

    d. Support the collection and dissemination of best practices and solutions, as well as case studies of actual experiences in STI development, transfer and diffusion;

    e. Identify means of employing technologies and technological know-how and information in the public domain.

Modalities & Participation

The STI Forum should be collaborative and multi-stakeholder in nature, including Member States, United Nations entities, civil society and NGOs, private sector, philanthropic sector, scientific community, academia, youth, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholder groups. The two-day meeting should mobilize decision-makers, practitioners and experts, as well as users of technologies and the private sector that invests in technological R&D and innovation. It is important to secure participation from the broad range of communities along the STI continuum. It is important to work closely with Member States to secure the participation of high-level STI experts from capitals, and to include young scientists and innovators in national delegations.

The STI Forum should be open to participation by all accredited delegates and representatives through an open call for registration to ensure a wide range of participation. The STI Forum will be webcast, and the proceedings recorded and made available for open viewing.

Proposed structure of program and organization of work

It is proposed that the STI Forum program take into account the following six SDGs, in line with the goals on the agenda of the HLPF in 2017:

Goal 1   End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2   End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3   Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 5   Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 9   Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 14   Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

The opening session should set the general tone for the STI Forum, while the concluding session should discuss recommendations and key messages for the Co-Chairs' summary and set out expectations for the STI Forum in future years.

Potential sessions include: (1) Towards a common vision on STI for the SDGs (2 keynotes); (2) Technology challenges and solutions in selected SDG areas; (3) Technology roadmaps and policies; (4) TFM champions including young innovators; (5) rallying support for the TFM and STI for the SDGs; and (6) Next steps and the STI Forum work programme. Regarding (2), the sessions focusing on the six specific goals could be held in parallel, in order to allow sufficient time for each of them. The SDG-specific sessions will also consider cross-cutting issues where appropriate. Crowdsourcing could complement expert inputs to identify the five biggest challenges that impact the most people and the technology solutions available for each. These sessions could also feature winners among the technology solutions submitted to the STI Forum, continuing last year's call for solutions.

In addition to these formal sessions for which simultaneous interpretation will be provided, other events in more informal settings might include: (a) Ministerial lunch and dialogue, continuing last year's practice; (b) a networking forum to feature submitted innovations; and (c) a "speakers corner".

The STI Forum and its sessions should be as interactive as possible; exploring innovative seating arrangements, use of different media (videos, and visualizations) and potential for breakout sessions or workshop-style arrangements on specific topics. Limits could be set on the number of traditional

speaker panels, and the number of speakers, and didactic and interactive set-ups could both be programmed. While logistic constraints may apply, there are successful examples that can be followed from other UN meetings.

The Secretariat will be responsible for overall coordination and preparation of the STI Forum, and for planning the opening and closing sessions. Members of the IATT and the 10-Member Group will self-nominate to join sub-groups to organize the sessions (see Annex). The organizers of each session will prepare a concept note, identify and issue invitations to potential speakers, and plan the use of different media and discussion formats. The co-chairs of IATT and of the 10-Member Group will ensure coherent approaches across sessions.

Speakers

A list of potential speakers and moderators will be provided by the IATT and 10-Member Group for the Co-Chairs' consideration on the basis of their expertise in different facets and sectors of STI, bearing in mind geographic and gender balance, as well as balance between producers and users of technologies (i.e., those who innovate and those who need innovations).

Session panels should aim to mix Ministers, high-level STI experts from government, representatives of the development community, science and knowledge institutions, technology companies and entrepreneurs/ innovators. Panels should include speakers with on-the-ground experience and case studies of successful deployment of innovations for sustainable development.

Networking and matchmaking

The STI Forum 2017 should include a Networking Forum to fulfil the function of networking and matchmaking at the STI Forum, as mandated in the TFM and with the following characteristics:
- A global Call to Action will invite submission of innovations geared towards solutions to any of the six focus SDGs. The Call to Action should be held over a one-month period, commencing two months before the STI Forum, and the IATT and 10-Member Group will use their network of STI contacts to ensure that the reach of the Call is global and inclusive of diverse knowledge systems.
- The Call to Action site could be based upon the pilot site developed for the STI Forum 2016 in collaboration with the Global Innovation Exchange (GIE), a global online marketplace for innovations, funding, insights, resources and conversations.[2]
- The Call to Action should aim to identify practical and already existing solutions, and create a community of innovators in the field of STI, and will feed into the STI Forum discussions. Innovations submitted in response to the Call to Action will be reviewed and some 10-15 strong innovations illustrating the wide diversity of solutions, approaches and sources of innovation would be featured at a Special Event (lunchtime or evening) during the STI Forum 2017.
- The Networking Forum may also feature during the plenary discussions on the potential for various matchmaking and networking mechanisms to support innovation, and play a facilitative role in incentivizing, funding, commercializing and scaling up innovative solutions for the SDGs.

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[2] The call for innovations is accessible at: http://stisolutions4sdgs.globalinnovationexchange.org

Substantive inputs

In line with STI Forum mandate, the organizers will organize a wide outreach for inputs and documentation from all relevant stakeholders, possibly including the following:
- Written overall statement by the 10-Member Group.
- Brief background notes prepared by IATT and 10-Member Group, synthesizing multi-stakeholder inputs, mapping results, key STI challenges and solutions for each of the six goals.
- Summary of responses to Call for Action.
- Summary of online discussions and policy briefs in preparation of the Forum
- List of written submissions by all stakeholders in response to open call, and possibly summary thereof.

Expected substantive outputs

Expected outputs of the deliberations of the STI Forum might, inter alia, include *elements* of the following:
- Framework for gaps and needs analysis;
- Roadmap for STI development at the national level;
- Guidelines for promotion of STI for SDGs for Member States;
- Profile of innovators

Summary of the Forum

The Co-Chairs of the STI Forum 2017 are mandated to prepare a summary of the discussions as an input to the meetings of the HLPF in the context of the follow-up and review of the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The IATT and the 10-Member Group will provide any assistance necessary to fulfil this task.

Follow-up Activities

Efforts will be made to establish the STI Forum as a continuum of annual events from 2016 to 2030, each building upon the last to progressively develop a roadmap of policy and practical initiatives to support the use of STI for the SDGs. Similarly, the IATT and 10-Member Group will seek to create links between STI-related activities taking place between each annual STI Forum, in particular those connecting to the theme of the subsequent Forum and thereby to draw input and from multiple sources and communities that can feed into the outcomes of the STI Forum. In this context, the development of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism will be explored to track implementation of the key outputs of the STI Forum.

Side events

Member States and all stakeholders will be encouraged to organize side events on specific topics and key initiatives that support TFM work. This will be an opportunity for more in-depth discussions. The side events will be closely linked to and support the official sessions of the STI Forum. Against this background, a fair and transparent selection process will be put in place to select a limited number of side events.