2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
Position Paper by the Scientific and Technological Community (STC) Major Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scientific and Technological Community (STC) Major Group, co-organized by International Science Council (ISC)[1] and World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO)[2] actively contributes to the implementation of the SDGs and supports the 2019 theme "*Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*".

International science and engineering organizations are well placed to foster equality and inclusiveness within the global society via enabling solutions-oriented knowledge for the benefit of all. The STC reaffirms the role of science (including natural, and social and human sciences) and engineering in sustainable development, as will also be discussed in the **2019 Global Sustainable Development Report.**

The STC highlights the importance of actions to "*advance **science as a global public good and for enhancing engineering and technology in pursuit of sustainable development, and for the benefit of all**. Scientific knowledge, data and expertise must be universally accessible and its benefits universally shared. The practice of science must be inclusive and equitable, also in opportunities for scientific education and capacity development*"[3].

Key messages and recommendations:

1. **The integrated and interdependent nature of the SDGs, requires a significant increase in collaboration across disciplines and sectors, and engagement with policy-makers and stakeholders**, as also shown in international initiatives such as *Leading Integrated Research for Agenda 2030 in Africa* (LIRA 2030)[4] and the *Transformations to Sustainability* (T2S)[5], supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and follow-up work to the 2017 ISC report on SDG interactions. The STC also calls for an enhanced science/technology/policy interface in the UN System.

2. **Inclusiveness and equality are enabled also by making knowledge more accessible in order to support decision-making, innovation and benefit-sharing.** The STC calls for Open Science and Open Innovation, and works towards effective operationalisation of the concept, as in the African Open Science Platform supported by the South African Department of Science and Technology, and directed by ISC CODATA[6].

3. **The STC calls attention to the importance of strengthening critical skills and capacity in science and engineering and technology to design and implement solutions to advance the SDGs.** This is also required for promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and effective institutions, as demonstrated by WFEO's Committee on Anti-Corruption[7] which contributed to the ISO 37001 Anti-bribery management system standard[8].

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[1] ISC Website at https://council.science/

[2] WFEO Website at https://www.wfeo.org/

[3] From the High Level Strategy of the International Science Council, accessed at https://council.science/publications/high-level-strategy

[4] For further information, see https://council.science/what-we-do/funding-programmes/leading-integrated-research-for-agenda-2030-in-africa

[5] For further information, see https://council.science/what-we-do/funding-programmes/transformations-to-sustainability

[6] For further information, see http://www.codata.org/strategic-initiatives/african-open-science and http://africanopenscience.org.za/

[7] For further information, see https://www.wfeo.org/committee-anti-corruption-sdgs/

[8] For further information, see https://www.iso.org/publication/PUB100396.html

4. **Assessing the opportunities and implications of rapid technological change for science and for society**, **in particular with regards to digital transformations, the STC also addresses how wellbeing is impacted**, as addressed in the Report on "*Understanding wellbeing in the context of rapid digital and associated transformations – implications for research, policy and measurements*" developed by the International Network of Government Science Advice[9].

5. **Aligning priorities and leveraging actions by connecting international agendas** (e.g., Agenda 2030, Sendai Framework, and Paris Agreement) requires strong and effective partnerships, mobilising data and information and science advisory capacities in integrated ways, in particular to address systemic and cascading risks. The STC with its global membership based organizations stands ready to contribute to the STI Forum, CSDT-22, UN SDG Summit, UN Climate Action Summit, and related international endeavours such as the upcoming UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

6. **The STC MG thematic paper provides examples of activities by academies, scientific unions as well as international science organizations towards the implementation of the SDGs under review by highlighting relevant best practices and studies.**

7. **The STC MG recalls the importance of furthering the HLPF 2019 message to the upcoming UN Climate Action Summit and the UN SDG Summit which will also include the launch of the Global Sustainable Development Report; and the STC MG stands ready to contribute to these processes.**

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[9] For report, see https://www.ingsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/INGSA-Digital-Wellbeing-Sept18.pdf ; for information on INGSA, see https://www.ingsa.org/.