United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

FUTURE AFRICA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Ver. February 2024

Brown Bag Seminar on *mapping STI capacity for implementing STI roadmaps for the six transitions*

27 February 2024, 13:00 p.m. – 14:30 p.m. ET

Concept Note

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be achieved without effective means of implementation, including radical improvements in the utilization of science, technology and innovation (STI). In response to the evolving landscape of STI skills, capacities and activities, and the imperative for aligning these efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), DESA and Future Africa are developing common guidance, principles and frameworks/ methodologies. These can support countries to assess the landscape for using STI to accelerate the six transitions for sustainable development at national and local levels. These key transitions identified by the UN Sustainable Development Group include 1) food systems, 2) energy access and affordability, 3) digital connectivity, 4) education, 5) jobs and social protection, and 6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. The STI mapping exercise will feature STI partnership models at different levels and highlight important STI skills and capacities to support the six transitions. The mapping exercise also links to science-policy recommendations in the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report.

UN DESA, IATT and Future Africa are organizing a brown bag seminar to present preliminary findings of the mapping exercise, primarily using case studies from Africa which will be further integrated into other initiatives and activities from the global north and south as part of the guideline contributions. The discussion during the brown bag seminar intends to highlight the activities, skills and capacity challenges and opportunities in Africa which can be leveraged to build regional and global STI partnerships to contribute to enabling the six transitions. The insights from Africa will show how various African countries and sub-regions, in collaboration with various stakeholders, are revising their STI policies and reconfiguring their institutional arrangements to make them relevant and effective for the six transitions linked to the SDGs. Of particular relevance in Africa is the role of various STI ecosystem stakeholders through pan-African global STI steering mechanisms such as the AU-EU STI Agenda and partnership platforms (e.g., the Science Granting Councils Initiatives (SGCI)) in building capacity and skills to support STI for the SDGs – despite the fragmented and competitive nature of some of these initiatives. The seminar will also utilize these insights to build awareness and understanding of how to build effective and transformative capacities and skills across government, civil society, private sector through appropriate conceptual tools for transformative STI policy design. Evidence in preparing these guidelines reveals the required capacities and skills across all stakeholders which include STI policy analysis, formulation, monitoring and evaluation capacity, establishing multisectoral platforms for science-society-policy dialogues, and strengthening national parliaments and other policy bodies to engage actively in STI policy processes, particularly in ensuring the allocation and effective use of public funds for STI, regulatory oversights, and monitoring STI policy implementation.

The presentation will be followed by an interactive discussion where colleagues are invited to share knowledge about their own work on understanding the landscape of STI skills, capacities, and activities. This brown bag seminar takes place in advance of the 9th Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, 09-10 May 2024, New York, UN HQs, Trusteeship Council Chamber (STI Forum). To register for participation in the brownbag seminar, click (here).

Programme

I.	**Introduction by Moderator (Wei Liu, DESA)**	**5 minutes**
II.	**Presentation of STI mapping exercises, tools and initiatives (Dr Heide Hackmann, Director of Future Africa)**	**25 minutes**
III.	**Comments from Discussants (Morgan Seag, International Science Council, and Ana Persic/Kornelia Tzinova, UNESCO)**	**10 minutes**
IV.	**Discussion**	

PROFILE OF PRESENTERS

Dr. Heide Hackmann | Director, Future Africa, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Dr. Heide Hackmann is the Director of Future Africa and Strategic Advisor on Transdisciplinarity and Global Knowledge Networks at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. She has extensive international experience in science and technology policy, global science strategy, and systems development, spanning over 20 years. Dr. Hackmann holds an MPhil in Contemporary Social Theory from the University of Cambridge and a PhD in Science and Technology Studies from the University of Twente. Prior to her current position, she served as the CEO of the International Science Council in Paris from 2018 to 2022, and as the Executive Director of its predecessor organisations, the International Council for Science (2015-2018) and the International Social Science Council (2007-2015).

Dr. Hackmann has advised the United Nations and serves on the advisory boards of several international scientific organisations and initiatives. She has led the production of significant research-based reports, including the World Social Science Reports in collaboration with UNESCO (2010, 2013) and the OECD (2013). She is a Fellow of the International Science Council and a member of the Council's Global Sustainability Commission.

Dr. Morgan Seag | ISC Liaison to the UN System, International Science Council

Dr. Morgan Seag is the ISC Liaison to the UN System, working with New York-based intergovernmental organizations and countries' UN Missions to advance evidence-informed decision-making on critical global issues. In addition to representing the ISC in UN meetings and supporting collaborations with New York-based organizations and actors, Dr. Seag leads the ISC's work around the Summit of the Future, serves as the ISC's focal point for the Group of Friends on Science for Action, and facilitates scientific brokerage and advice by the ISC and its global membership to New York-based UN actors.

Prior to joining the ISC, Dr. Seag worked with a variety of governments, multilateral organizations, and NGOs to support evidence-informed policymaking, with expertise around climate change, polar science, institutional change, and gender equity. She holds a PhD in Geography from the University of Cambridge and a BA in Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania, and she has been a visiting scholar at the University of Colorado Boulder and the University of Tasmania.

Dr. Ana Persic | Programme Specialist for STI Policies and Open Science, UNESCO

Dr. Ana Persic is Programme Specialist for Science Technology and Innovation Policies and Open Science at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. Ecologist by training with a PhD in Ecotoxicology, Dr. Ana Persic joined UNESCO in April 2006 in the framework of the UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere program within the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences in Paris. She has then served as a Science Specialist at the UNESCO Liaison Office in New York from 2011-2018. Her work relates to strengthening the science-policy interface and promoting science, technology, and innovation in implementing the United Nations 2030 agenda for sustainable development and sustainable development goals (SDGs). She coordinated the development of the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science and is currently working towards its implementation.

Dr. Wei Liu | Coordinator and Sustainable Development Officer, UN DESA

Dr. Wei Liu is the Coordinator of the UN Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA from 2016 to present. In his role, Dr. Liu provides both substantive and organizational support to the implementation of the science, technology and innovation (STI)-related decisions contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other related global processes. He has also developed effective partnerships with main partners in the STI field and advancing the implementation of STI roadmaps/actions and strengthening partnerships including the Coalition on STI for Africa's Development.

Dr. Liu joined the United Nations in 2005 through the National Competitive Exam. He has mainly worked in the development policy area and contributed to various United Nations publications. Before working at the UN HQs, Dr. Liu worked in UN-ESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Birmingham.

Annex I: Participants' Feedback and Questions

Comments from the *International Atomic Energy Agency*:

- Leveraging Nuclear Science and Technology:
    - Addressing socio-economic challenges in countries of the Global South.
    - Utilizing nuclear-derived techniques for effective solutions.

Question: How are you leveraging nuclear science and technology and nuclear-derived techniques to address the socio-economic challenges facing countries of the Global South?

Comments from *FAO*:

- Capacity Development of Innovation Systems:
    - Promoting innovation through enhanced innovation systems.
    - Fostering growth and sustainability.

***UNESCO's* Intervention**:

- Focus on UNESCO's STI Role.
- Highlighting implementation of national STI roadmaps for six transitions.
- Scheduled for a 10-minute intervention during the programme.