Summary of EU STI roadmap event

6th May 2025

The EU-hosted side event, “**Harnessing Science, Technology, and Innovation for Sustainable Development in Africa**,” co-organized by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre, UN DESA, and the Permanent Missions of The Gambia, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, and Seychelles, highlighted the experiences of African countries in **co-developing STI4SDGs roadmaps as strategic tools for sustainable development**.

Representatives from the countries engaged in STI for SDGs roadmap development within the context of the European Commission’s project shared lessons on the **multidisciplinary** **and localized approach**, as well as key challenges encountered during the process, including **coordination gaps and fragmentation**, **funding limitations**, and the need to **scale local innovations**. The Gambia emphasized among the lessons learned the need to strengthen **systems thinking**, **policy coherence**, and **inclusive stakeholder engagement** when addressing multidisciplinary sustainability challenges, such as food security. They stressed the need for **partnerships and investment in STI infrastructure and skills** to ensure the implementation of the roadmap. Namibia highlighted how the STI roadmapping process to improve the climate resilience of rural communities revealed weaknesses in policy coherence, which can be addressed through a **nexus approach** and by **leveraging Indigenous knowledge**. Mauritius focused its roadmap on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), emphasizing how digital health, behavioural innovation, and financing for NCD research have been identified as key areas for investment. Mauritius also highlighted that the roadmapping process inspired initiatives supporting its implementation and stated that the STI for SDGs roadmap is not just another document but a **national commitment to sustainable development**. Rwanda presented its STI roadmaps aimed at agricultural transformation, highlighting how the process was a **learning opportunity** that improved stakeholder consultations and inspired, among other initiatives, the establishment of financing programs for researchers.

The EU highlighted its Global Gateway framework, which includes transformative investment packages. Including STI in Global Gateway initiatives is essential for its implementation. The EU also called for investors and political actors consider using the **roadmaps as STI investments compass**. Latvia stressed the need to align development finance with local and private efforts, noting that frameworks must be backed by **education, skills, and community engagement**.

Towards the upcoming **4th International Conference on Financing for Development** (FfD4), the event concluded with a strong call for **political commitment**, **private sector engagement**, and **capacity-building** to ensure that STI4SDGs roadmaps serve as catalysts for **systemic transformation** aligned with the SDGs and Agenda 2030.