



UNITED NATIONS
Office for Outer Space Affairs

Workshop on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs
Meeting of the IATT and 10-Member group under the TFM in preparation of the Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs 2020

Room C1, Vienna International Centre, Vienna, Austria, 3 – 5 February 2020

Co-organized by DESA, UNCTAD, UNOSD, OOSA, and UNIDO.

Draft Concept Note

Summary

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), in collaboration with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD), the UN Office of Outer Space Affairs (OOSA), and the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), is organising a three-day Workshop on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to help prepare for the 5th STI Forum in May 2020. The meeting will be attended by about 50 STI and SDG experts from academia, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, governments, and the UN system.

The meeting will focus on how best to structure the 2020 STI Forum, so as to make an effective contribution to the 2020 HLPF, and more broadly to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. The meeting will be structured along the six “entry points” and four “levers” for action as proposed in the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2019, in line with current plans for the structure of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2020. In addition, and in keeping with previous years, cross-cutting meeting themes will include the role of traditional knowledge, potential impacts of emerging technologies, barriers for scaling-up solutions, and ways to ensure that STI benefits all, leaving no one behind. Most importantly, the meeting will also identify key lessons-learnt from the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) since its inception in 2015, in order to support strategic planning for the work of the TFM in the coming years.

Context

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development established the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) to support the achievement of the SDGs. The TFM comprises an annual, collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum), an online platform, and the UN Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (IATT) together with a Group of 10 High-Level Representatives from Civil Society, the Private Sector and the Scientific Community (10-Member Group). The IATT is tasked to prepare the sessions of the STI Forum in collaboration with the “10-Member Group” appointed by the Secretary-General. The IATT is also tasked to support the development and operationalization of the TFM Online Platform. At present, UN DESA and UNCTAD serve as the co-

conveners and Secretariat of the IATT and provide logistical support for the organization of the STI Forum.

The 5th STI Forum will be held from 12 to 13 May 2020. Co-chairs of the Forum, appointed by the President of ECOSOC are the Permanent Representatives of Ghana (Ms Martha Pobee) and Israel (Mr Danny Danon) to the United Nations.

The Forum will provide inputs for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) to be held from 7-16 July 2020. The theme of the 2020 HLPF has been decided as 'Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.' This connects the HLPF to the political declaration of the 2019 SDG Summit, which called for a decade of action to deliver the SDGs by 2030.

As in previous years, the theme of the STI forum would mirror that of the HLPF. Further, current discussions around the structure of the 2020 HLPF are converging towards a model that draws from the GSDR 2019, in particular its discussion of “entry points” and “levers” for action to capitalize the interlinkages across goals and targets.¹

The GSDR presented four levers of change (governance, economy and finance, individual and collective action, and science and technology) which can catalyse change across multiple SDGs by working through in six entry points: strengthening human well-being and capabilities; shifting towards sustainable and just economies; building sustainable food systems and healthy nutrition patterns; achieving energy decarbonization and universal access to energy; promoting sustainable urban and peri-urban development; and securing the global environmental commons.

These entry points also indicate key areas for STI action in support of the achievement of the entire range of SDGs, in particular through addressing trade-offs, realizing synergies and accelerating progress towards the overarching objective of ‘leaving no one behind’.

As a further point of reference, resolution A/RES/74/229 on “*Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development*”² was adopted by the Second Committee of the General Assembly on 26 November 2019. The resolution contains guidance for the work of the TFM.

Objective

The objective of the meeting is prepare for the STI Forum 2020 by mobilizing stakeholders to review progress and share insights on science, technology and innovation for SDGs, including specific solutions and achievements, state of the art expertise on specific issues and practice areas, emerging issues, critical knowledge and innovation gaps, as well as their views on how to better mobilize science, and technology communities to address these gaps. The meeting will also take stock of IATT and 10-Member Group work progress. The meeting will discuss key lessons-learned from the TFM since its inception in 2015, in order to support strategic planning for the work of the TFM in the coming years.

Structure

The Workshop will be organized around the theme of the STI Forum 2020 of “*Accelerated action and transformative pathways of science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals*”:

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalsdreport/2019>

² <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/229>

realizing the decade of action and delivery” (tbc), in support of the related HLPF 2020 theme. The Workshop will follow the themes expected to be taken up at the HLPF 2020, being modelled around the “entry points” and “levers” for action proposed in the GSDR 2019 (see Table). Following a short opening session, the remainder of the meeting will be held in a highly interactive roundtable style, moderated by members of IATT and 10-Member group.

	Sessions in this EGM	Entry points and levers proposed by GSDR 2019
Part I: Using science, technology and innovation for accelerating progress towards the SDGs through the GSDR entry points		Six entry points
	Session 1: GSDR entry points: (i) human well-being and capabilities, and (ii) transition to sustainable and just economies	Strengthening Human Well Being and Capabilities Shifting toward Sustainable and Just Economies
	Session 2: GSDR entry point: (iii) food and nutrition	Building Sustainable Food Systems and Healthy Nutrition Patterns
	Session 3: GSDR entry points: (iv) energy and (v) cities	Achieving Energy Decarbonization and Universal Access to Energy
		Promoting Sustainable Urban and Peri Urban Development
	Session 5: GSDR entry point (vi): global environmental commons	Securing the Global Environmental Commons
	Session 4: Reflections from related global, regional and sectoral initiatives	All six entry points
	Special event session: Space technology applications for the SDGs	
	Special event session: Nuclear technology applications for the SDGs	
Part II: Cross-cutting STI issues, levers of STI change and national level support		Four levers
	Session 6: STI for SDG roadmaps and capacity building	Governance
	Session 7: New and emerging technology clusters and the SDGs 7(a): Emerging technologies and their societal implications 7(b): Ethical perspectives and initiatives	Science and Technology
	Session 8: Financing and investing in Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs	Economy and Finance
	Session 9: Empowering underrepresented groups - youth, women – in STI for the SDGs	Individual and Collective Action
	Session 10: Open science and open knowledge systems for the SDGs	
	Session 11: Technology transfer for the SDGs	
Part III: Lessons-learnt and	Session 12: Lessons learnt (2015-2019), and planning for the STI Forum 2020	

Part I of the Workshop will explore issues and progress in STI in the six GSDR entry points, in order to highlight key areas for STI action in support of the achievement of the SDGs.

Part II of the Workshop will continue the exploration of cross-cutting STI issues from previous STI Forums which capture the areas outlined in the form of four levers of action by the GSDR. This part will also aim to take stock and collect information on national-level support, in particular in the form of STI roadmaps and capacity building, and stakeholder actions. Potential synergies will be explored with the proposed “VNR labs” where STI in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) could be explored. VNRs are a key element of the HLPF high-level segment. As of 10 October 2019, there were 50 Member States intending to present their VNR at the HLPF in 2020.

Part III of the Workshop will take stock and discuss lessons-learned and will include a special session on the full operationalization of the TFM online platform and next steps towards the STI Forum and HLPF 2020.

The last part of the Workshop will be dedicated to a closed meeting of IATT and the 10 Member Advisory Group to discuss joint work going forward, in particular practical planning for the STI Forum 2020.

At the sidelines of the workshop, selected IATT workstreams will convene informal working group meetings, in order to review progress and plan their work for 2020.

Please refer to the Agenda below and full programme for further details.

Expected inputs

In-depth substantive preparations for the Workshop will ensure effective use of time and optimal focus on products for the STI Forum. Written inputs may include, but will not be limited to:

- Concept note for the STI Forum 2020
- Participants’ written responses to questions for the sessions of the current meeting, as appropriate; or of presentations or written statements.
- Guidebook on STI roadmaps for the SDGs
- Informal TFM lessons-learned paper
- Financing proposal for the TFM online platform
- General Assembly resolutions A/RES/74/229³ and A/RES/73/17⁴
- Compilation of results/actions from related regional, sectoral and other STI forums and conferences
- Suggested papers by IATT and 10MG partners, such as the IATF chapter on science and technology, CSTD 2020 papers, etc.

Expected outcomes

The expected outcome of the meeting will be a set of recommendations that will assist the IATT and 10 Member Group in the preparation of the STI Forum 2020, and beyond. These recommendations should build upon lessons learned from the four STI Forums held since the TFM’s inception. They could refer to, for example:

³ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/229>

⁴ <https://undocs.org/A/RES/73/17>

- Further development of the concept note for the 2020 STI Forum;
- Suggestions on how to structure and organize the sessions;
- Potential key messages and recommendations that might result from the Forum;
- Important partners, stakeholders and communities that could be encouraged to get involved in the preparation of the STI Forum 2020;
- Specific voluntary contributions from IATT and the other TFM stakeholders;
- Information on inter-sessional activities by partners leading up to the STI Forum 2020; and
- Strategic reflections on the TFM's progress and suggestions for improvement, based on lessons-learned from the start-up phase of the TFM;
- Finalization of the lessons-learned paper, and a response to OP 28 of General Assembly resolution A/RES/74/229.⁵

The outcome of the meeting will be summarized in a report produced by the Secretariat with inputs from IATT and 10 Member Group, which will serve as guiding reference and inputs to the STI Forum and the HLPF. It will improve understanding of the priorities for the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

Participation

It is envisaged that about participants will attend the workshop. The meeting will be attended by the TFM's 10 Member Group, as well as selected experts, practitioners and major stakeholders of the TFM process. Similarly, all Members of the UN Inter-Agency Tasks Team on STI for the SDGs (IATT) are invited.

Date and venue

The meeting will be held at the Vienna International Centre, from 3 to 5 February 2020. The venue will be secured by IATT partners. Please note that the IATT work stream on capacity building will convene in the evening of 5 February and on 6 February.

Annex: note on the General Assembly resolution A/RES/74/229 of 19 December 2019 on “Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development”⁶ adopted by the Second Committee of the General Assembly. The resolution contains important guidance for the work of the TFM. For example, it takes note of the 2019 GSDR and its identification of STI as key lever for SDG progress. It furthermore emphasizes, strengthened coordination and synergies between CSTD and TFM and beyond (OP25, OP26); encourages mapping and capacity building work, formulating coherent advice to Member States, and the development of STI for SDGs roadmaps (OP27); calls for voluntary contributions for resources from both private and public sectors for the TFM (OP28); forging closer links with national science advisory bodies (OP31); underscores the need to adopt STI strategies as integral elements of national sustainable development plans and strategies (OP5); and encourages all stakeholders to explore conducting inclusive national, regional and international technology assessment and foresight exercises on existing, new and emerging technologies (OP9). It is important to note that it also requests the regular Secretary General's report to report back on implementation of the resolution, including recommendations on STI for the 2030 Agenda. It also recalled its resolution 73/17⁷ of 26 Nov 2018 on the impact of rapid technological change for the SDGs and its targets which has bearing for TFM work in 2020.

⁶ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/229>

⁷ <https://undocs.org/A/RES/73/17>

Agenda

Monday, 3 February 2020

Introductory segment [2 hours]

This segment opens the meeting and sets the scene.

- **Opening and welcome**
- **Introduction to the meeting**
- **Additional remarks**

Part I: Using science, technology and innovation for accelerating progress towards the SDGs through the GSDR entry points [one day]

The substantive sessions of part I follow a similar structure along the six entry points proposed by the GSDR. These entry points also indicate key areas for STI action in support of the achievement of the entire range of SDGs, in particular through addressing trade-offs, realizing synergies and accelerating progress towards the overarching objective of 'leaving no one behind'. The sessions will be structured as interactive panel sessions followed by Q&A and moderated discussion. A session on the outcomes of regional and other fora will expand on issues from a range of perspectives.

- **Session 1: GSDR entry points: (i) human well-being and capabilities, and (ii) transition to sustainable and just economies**
- **Session 2: GSDR entry point: (iii) food and nutrition**
- **Session 3: GSDR entry points: (iv) energy and (v) cities**
- **Session 4: Reflections from related global, regional and sectoral initiatives**

Tuesday, 4 February 2020

- **Special event session: Space technology applications for the SDGs (Space4SDGs)**
- **Special event session: Nuclear technology applications for the SDGs**
- **Session 5: GSDR entry point (vi): global environmental commons**

Part II: Cross-cutting STI issues, levers of STI change and national level support [one day]

The sessions of part II explore cross-cutting issues that represent continuing work-streams associated with the STI Forum and that relate to key "levers" of STI change for the SDGs. For selected cases, national progress and prospects will be assessed for the years until 2030. In view of the emerging national support activities, close linkages will be sought with the VNRs and similar national-level strategic plans.

- **Session 6: STI for SDG roadmaps and capacity building**
- **Session 7: New and emerging technology clusters and the SDGs (7a: societal implications; 7b: ethical perspectives and initiatives)**
- **Session 8: Financing and investing in Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs**

Wednesday, 5 February 2020

- **Session 9: Empowering underrepresented groups - youth, women – in STI for the SDGs**
- **Session 10: Open science and open knowledge systems for the SDGs**
- **Session 11: Technology transfer for the SDGs**

Part III: Lessons-learnt and next steps [2 hours]

- **Session 12: Lessons learnt (2015-2019), and planning for the STI Forum 2020**

The session will reflect on the informal background paper on lessons-learnt from the start-up phase of the TFM. It will also look ahead in terms of TFM work and its resourcing and strategic partnerships.

- **Next steps and closing**

Closed meeting of IATT and the 10 Member Advisory Group [1 hour]

Closed meeting of IATT and the 10 Member Group: Planning for the TFM work streams and division of labour.