**Fifth Annual Multi-Stakeholder
Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals**

United Nations Headquarters, New York
12 and 13 May 2020

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") is convened by the President of ECOSOC and expected to "*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 2020

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

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

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, its discussion of "entry points" and "levers" for action to capitalize the interlinkages across goals and targets.

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[2] on "Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development" was adopted by the Second Committee of the General Assembly on 26 November 2019. The resolution contains guidance for the work of the TFM.

Objectives

In line with its mandate, as per A/RES/70/1 (supplemented by 72/242), the STI Forum will pursue the following objectives:

(1) <u>STI cooperation:</u> *"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) <u>Needs and gaps analysis:</u> "*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 and promote capacity-building efforts.
   b. Determine how the STI Forums (2016-2030) can contribute to the design of roadmaps for the use of science, technology and innovation (STI) for sustainable development.
   c. 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) <u>Networking:</u> "*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.

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[2] See https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/229

    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; and regional initiatives in line with the principles of the TFM.

(4) <u>Technologies for the SDGs:</u> "*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 SDGs;

    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.

(5) <u>Impact of rapid technological change on the SDGs:</u> *GA resolution 72/242 (OP4) mandates the third STI forum to include a session on "the impact of rapid technological change, including in cases in which changes may occur at an exponential pace, on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals"*

    a. In continuation with similar discussions in previous STI Forums, seek to identify ways in which recent developments in science and technology, especially those which have the potential for large-scale transformative impacts, can impact the SDGs;

    b. Explore policy options based on country practices to enhance the positive impacts across countries at different stages of development;

    c. Engage with the many communities and stakeholders impacted by these advances.

Modalities & Participation

The STI Forum is 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 experts and policy-makers from capitals, and to include young scientists and innovators in national delegations.

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

Proposed organization of work

The STI Forum and its sessions aim to be as interactive as possible, to explore innovative seating arrangements, use of different media (videos, and visualizations) and to feature side events, innovations exhibits and affiliated events contributing to the discussions.

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. 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 2020 will include opportunities to fulfil its function of networking and matchmaking, as mandated in the TFM:

- A global Call for Innovations in partnership with the Global Innovation Exchange[3] will invite submission of innovations geared towards solutions to any of the five focus SDGs. In the past, the Call for Innovations was 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 for Innovations 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 for Innovations 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 subject to availability of resources.

- Other opportunities for networking will include various side events all held at the UN HQ premises.

Substantive inputs

In line with STI Forum mandate, there will be a wide outreach for inputs and documentation from all relevant stakeholders, including the following:

- Brief annotation and guiding questions for each session prepared by IATT and 10-Member Group, synthesizing multi-stakeholder inputs, mapping results, key STI challenges and solutions.
- Summary of responses to Call for Innovations.

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

Summary of the Forum

The Co-Chairs of the STI Forum 2020 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 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The IATT and the 10-Member Group will provide any assistance necessary to fulfil this task.

Other outputs

Other outputs will include:
- Summaries of special events;
- Innovator profiles and match-making results, if available;
- IATT work programmes and outputs associated with STI roadmaps and capacity building.

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 inputs 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.