



**-MINUTES OF THE FIFTH INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE 17TH COMMITTEE
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY –**

18 FEBRUARY 2026 (ONLINE MEETING)

1. The fifth intersessional meeting of the Bureau of the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST17) took place virtually on Wednesday, 18 February 2026, from 14:30 – 15:30 (CET) via Zoom.
2. Four CST17 Bureau members attended the meeting (see Annex I). The meeting was chaired by Mr. Nicholas Webb, CST Chair.
3. The meeting was convened to discuss and adopt the provisional agenda of CST17 to be held within the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP17) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 17 to 27 August 2026. The CST Bureau reviewed the proposed agenda items, considered their alignment with the mandate of the CST and the priorities for COP17, and exchanged views on the organization of work.

I. Adoption of the Agenda

4. The agenda of the CST Bureau meeting was adopted without any amendments (see Annex II).

II. CST17 Agenda for consideration at COP17

5. The secretariat, through the CST Secretary, informed the CST Bureau that the Chief of the Science and Technology Unit is currently on extended leave and that the Chief Scientist is serving as Officer-in-Charge of the Unit, while also taking over coordination of STI Unit work on capacity building and innovation and other matters which fall under the work programme of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, due to the retirements of the substantive officers previously leading both of these areas of work.
6. The secretariat briefed the CST Bureau on the proposed agenda for CST17 (see annex III), noting that the CST17 will convene from 18 to 21 August 2026 at COP17. The secretariat presented the indicative schedule of work and outlined the key agenda items for consideration. It was highlighted that CST17 would comprise plenary meetings, a joint CRIC–CST plenary meeting on 19 August 2026, and contact groups to negotiate eight draft decisions through 21 August 2026. The election of new officers is scheduled to take place on 21 August 2026.
7. The CST Bureau was guided by the secretariat through the provisional daily programme of work. On 18 August 2026, the CST will consider organizational matters, including the adoption of the agenda and organization of work. On 19 August 2026, the CST will address items related to interfacing science, policy and knowledge sharing; consider the reports and outputs of the Science–Policy Interface (SPI), including the synthesis report for the third edition of the Global Land Outlook; and engage in discussions on the future functioning of the SPI and the provision of adequate technical support. A joint CRIC–CST plenary meeting is also scheduled for 19 August 2026. On 20 August 2026, the CST will deliberate on matters related to land and soil degradation in agricultural lands, as well as procedural matters, including the SPI work programme for the period 2027–2030. On 21 August 2026, the CST will conclude its consideration of outstanding matters, including the election of officers.



8. The secretariat then guided the CST Bureau through the annotated agenda and outlined the proposed working methods for the session, including the use of interactive dialogues for agenda items related to the work of the SPI.
9. The secretariat next informed the CST Bureau of the ongoing internal coordination efforts undertaken to ensure the timely delivery of CST and SPI contributions to the COP17 process. The secretariat further underscored the importance of clearly communicating that the third edition of the Global Land Outlook (GLO3) is being developed through a formative and consultative process, with multiple opportunities for Parties to provide input and feedback.
9. Members of the CST Bureau sought clarification regarding the arrangements for the presentation of the synthesis report of the third edition of the Global Land Outlook (GLO3) and the synthesis report on supplementary technical guidance to support aridity and drought planning and adaptation across the Rio conventions and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as the number of draft decisions anticipated for consideration at CST17 and the respective roles of the Vice-Chairs in relation to the election of the incoming CST18 Bureau.
10. The secretariat further informed the CST Bureau that the Science–Policy Interface (SPI), in collaboration with the Global Policy Advocacy and Regional Cooperation (GPARC) unit of the UNCCD secretariat, is advancing preparations to deliver the GLO3 synthesis report at COP17. It was further indicated that the above-mentioned agenda items are proposed to be considered in an interactive dialogue format during the CST session, with a view to facilitating substantive and inclusive exchanges.
11. At present, eight draft decisions are foreseen for consideration by the CST.
12. The secretariat further indicated that it will provide support to the CST Chair and Vice-Chairs in the discharge of their responsibilities at COP17, including with respect to the conduct of the elections of the incoming CST18 Bureau. It was noted that nominations for incoming officers will be undertaken at the regional level, in accordance with established practice. Detailed information on the roles and responsibilities of CST Bureau members will be presented by the GBLA officer during the CST Bureau meeting tentatively scheduled prior to the COP17 session in Mongolia.
13. The secretariat outlined its proposed strategy for managing the CST17 agenda, noting that, due to financial constraints at the United Nations level, reductions in translation services have been introduced, accompanied by a request to limit the number and length of official documents. To comply with this request, the secretariat is working to integrated some previously stand-alone official documents and will emphasize the preparation of concise draft decisions focusing on fewer, more targeted and concise recommendations. The secretariat also informed the CST Bureau of ongoing efforts to streamline the outcomes of work on the future functioning of the SPI, including the formalization of future procedures that will ensure scientific integrity as well as political consultation while remaining budget neutral.

III. Any other business

14. The CST Bureau members agreed to review the annotated CST17 agenda document by close of business on Friday, 27 February 2026, 18-00 CET, and to provide written confirmation of their agreement or any proposed amendments/comments via email to the secretariat. The CST Bureau agreed that the draft CST 17 agenda would then be considered approved under a tacit approval (silence) procedure, whereby the absence of objections from its members by the specified deadline would constitute approval.



15. The secretariat also confirmed it would coordinate with the CST Chair in the following week regarding the COP Bureau meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 24 February 2026.

IV. Next meeting

16. The CST Bureau agreed that its next meeting would be tentatively scheduled for early June 2026, at which time the draft decisions for CST17 are expected to be available for consideration. It was further agreed that the exact date of the meeting will be confirmed in due course, taking into account evolving requirements and the progression of the CST's preparatory work.
17. Following this discussion, the CST Chair closed the meeting.



Annex I. List of participants

CST Bureau Members

Nicholas Webb, CST Chair

Jean Didier Leho, CST Vice-Chair

Chay Asdak, CST Vice-Chair

Michelle Alvarez, CST Vice-Chair

UN Geographical Regional Groups¹

Western Europe and Others Group

Africa Group

Asia Group

GRULAC

UNCCD Secretariat

Barron Joseph Orr

Olga Andreeva

Enedi Njoroge

Science, Technology, and Innovation Unit

¹ <https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/regional-groups>



Annex II. Agenda of the meeting

Fifth Intersessional Meeting of the Bureau of the 17th session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST17)

Date: Wednesday, 18 February 2026

Time: 14:30 – 15:30 (CET)

Working language: English

Virtual platform: Zoom (via [Link](#))

-- Provisional Agenda --

- I. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
- II. Discussion and adoption of the CST17 Agenda for consideration at COP17, to be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from 17 to 21 August 2026
- III. Any other business
- IV. Next meeting



Annex III. Proposed CST 17 agenda at COP17 including the Tentative schedule of work for the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology

*See Attached