



Date: 24 October 2019

## CALL FOR INDEPENDENT SCIENTISTS TO JOIN THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE (SPI)

The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is herewith inviting experts to apply to become members of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI). The public call for candidature opens on **24 October 2019** and will end on **10 November 2019** at 24:00 CET. The call is open to scientists from all regions and organizations and all relevant disciplines and thematic areas, with the priority given to the thematic areas of work identified in the SPI Work Programme 2020-2021.

To respond to this call:

- Carefully read the [Terms of Reference](#) of the SPI;
- Complete and submit the SPI Online Application Form by clicking on the link below: <https://www.surveymonkey.de/r/SPI-Call>
- You will be prompted to upload your CV (**maximum of four pages, English only**) and a short Bio-sketch (**maximum words: 250, English only**)
- Only candidates who submit their complete application by the deadline will be considered.

### A. Mandate and purpose of the SPI

The mandate of the SPI is to facilitate a two-way science-policy dialogue and ensure the delivery of policy-relevant information, knowledge and advice on desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD). The SPI pursues this through work programmes agreed by the UNCCD Conference of the Parties (COP). It is collaborative by design and thus cooperates with other intergovernmental panels and bodies and seeks synergies among the global environmental conventions. The SPI ultimately transforms scientific advice into a policy-relevant format for consideration in the decision-making process of the UNCCD COP every [two years](#).

### B. Responsibilities

Members of the SPI have the responsibility to:

1. Uphold and implement the principles and procedures of the SPI as described in the attached SPI Terms of Reference;
2. Contribute directly to delivering the work programme of the SPI as agreed by the UNCCD COP for each biennium through the provision of timely, clear and well-defined thematic guidance developed from:
  - a. scientific assessment (e.g., systematic review, analysis, synthesis and communication of vital scientific knowledge and evidence);
  - b. translation of science into accessible knowledge and policy-relevant recommendations;
  - c. production of technical reports, and deriving from those, science-policy briefs as well as manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed literature;
  - d. contribution to and cooperation with other international scientific panels and bodies dealing with DLDD issues in order to develop synergies and avoid duplication of efforts;
  - e. peer-review of scientific and technical results produced by other international scientific panels and bodies as well as UNCCD science-based communications (in adherence to the procedures developed by those bodies);
3. Communicate in a clear and balanced way about what the SPI produces, including uncertainties, without compromising accuracy;



4. Communicate how the SPI works, in a credible, transparent, balanced and authoritative manner;
5. Maintain the highest standards of scientific and technical excellence, professionalism and collegiality; and
6. Ensure scientific exchange with scientists from their regions and/or domains on SPI activities.

### **C. Term of appointment**

The term of appointment of independent scientist members of the SPI is four years (two UNCCD biennia). Thus, the term of appointment of those selected to serve in response to this call is from early 2020 up to the end of the sixteenth session of the COP, which is envisioned to take place in autumn 2023.

### **D. Requirements / Criteria for selection**

Scientists applying to become members of the SPI shall:

- Have an advanced degree and widely recognized academic knowledge in discipline(s) relevant to the UNCCD process;
- Have at least five years applied and acknowledged interdisciplinary scientific work experience and/or interdisciplinary practical/project experience in thematic areas relevant to the SPI Work Programme 2020-2021, including but not limited to: integrated land use planning/ spatial planning/territorial planning; Integrated landscape management; Drought vulnerability assessment; Land governance; Evaluation of ecosystem services/Natural capital accounting/Environmental economics; Biodiversity (including soil biodiversity); Sustainable consumption and production; Gender and environment/sustainable development;
- Have substantive evidence of significant, peer-reviewed publications in international journals in the last ten years;
- Have experience working with intergovernmental/international/interorganizational scientific panels and bodies;
- Have experience in providing scientific advice to natural resource management and/or agriculture policy makers and practitioners at global, regional, national and/or sub-national level national in thematic areas relevant to the UNCCD;
- Have experience in communicating, promoting and incorporating science into policy development processes and in synthesizing information for non-specialists;
- Be willing to work in a multicultural and multidisciplinary team and be accepting of other views and comments from different perspectives in order to reach consensus;
- Be fluent in English (the working language of the SPI is English only);
- Be willing to commit the time and effort necessary to contribute to the work of the SPI (estimated to be between 10-20% of the member's time); and
- Have full access to email and web-based information and communication systems in order to ensure participation in SPI activities conducted electronically.

### **E. Selection process**

The selection process, using the above requirements as criteria, will be conducted by the Bureau of the UNCCD Committee on Science and Technology (CST) with the support of the UNCCD secretariat based on applications submitted in response to this public call before the deadline.

Selected scientists will be contacted individually. They will have to confirm their availability and interest in becoming a member of the SPI as well as their agreement with the Terms of Reference of the SPI, the SPI Communications Strategy, the SPI Code of Conduct, and the SPI Conflict of Interest Policy. Scientists will have one week to communicate their answer. The final composition of the SPI will be posted on the UNCCD website. Female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.



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**F. More information**

*Historical information on the SPI:*

<http://knowledge.unccd.int/home/science-policy-interface>

*The SPI produces several peer-reviewed technical reports and science-policy briefs each biennium.*

*For examples please visit:*

<https://knowledge.unccd.int/science-policy-interface/spi-publications>

*Work Programme:*

[SPI Work Programme 2020-2021](#)

*To get a sense of past and current SPI members please visit:*

<https://knowledge.unccd.int/science-policy-interface/members-and-observers-science-policy-interface>