



Date: 24 October 2019

**CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS
TO BE AN OBSERVER TO THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE**

The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is herewith inviting international organizations and United Nations organizations to express an interest to be an observer to the Science-Policy Interface (SPI). The public call for candidature opens on **24 October 2019** and will end on **5 December 2019** at 24:00 CET. The call is open to all organizations qualified in matters relevant to the UNCCD.

To respond to this call, interested organizations who would wish to become observer to the SPI and fulfil the criteria listed below are invited to:

- Carefully read the [Terms of Reference](#) of the SPI;
- Submit a letter of intent addressing the below-listed requirements/selection criteria to: spi@unccd.int by the deadline;
- Submit the curriculum vitae (**four pages maximum, in English**) of the person who would represent the organization as an observer.

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 and observers 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 observers to 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

Organizations applying to become observers to the SPI shall:

- Be qualified in matters relevant to the UNCCD;
- Have on-going projects, programmes or initiatives related to desertification/ land degradation and drought;
- Have a research-based work programme;
- Have experience in providing advice to countries in devising policies, supporting planning and creating national strategies in support of sustainable development and achieving environmental goals;
- Have experience in communicating, promoting and incorporating science into policy development processes and in synthesizing information for non-specialists;
- Have any on-going or previous cooperation with the UNCCD;
- Have an international scope (check re-wording)
- Be willing to commit the time and effort of one staff member necessary to contribute to the work of the SPI (estimated to be between 10-20% of the representative's time)¹ with at least two meetings per year expected

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 organizations will be contacted individually. They will have to confirm their availability and interest in becoming a member of the SPI, designate a representative to the SPI and express 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. Selected organizations will have one week to communicate their answer. The final composition of the SPI will be posted on the UNCCD website.

¹ Observers to the SPI contribute to delivering the work programme mandated by the UNCCD Conference of the Parties in the same way as all other members of the SPI. For more information please see the [Terms of Reference](#)



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>