

## REPORT OF THE CST BUREAU MEETING 4 APRIL 2016 IN BONN, GERMANY

**Date:** Monday, 4 April 2016

**Venue:** UN Campus Bonn – Room 1511  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
Bonn – Germany

**Working language:** English

**Working hours:** 09:30 – 18:00

### – DRAFT REPORT –

#### I. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair of the CST opened the meeting and welcomed the participants (annex I). The agenda (annex II) was adopted with the addition that a meeting with the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Panel should take place under item V.

#### II. Brief report by the secretariat on the decisions of COP 12 concerning the CST and the way forward

The secretariat informed the CST Bureau on decisions of COP 12 which are relevant to the work of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), its Bureau and the Science-Policy Interface (SPI). In particular, the secretariat presented an updated on the work conducted in response to COP 12 decisions related to target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and plans for future scientific meetings and sessions of the CST.

##### *Target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

In decisions 2/COP.12 and 3/COP.12, the COP endorsed target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the Convention, invited Parties to “formulate [national] voluntary targets to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in accordance with their specific national circumstances and development priorities” and to integrate such targets in their National Action Programme (NAP). In this framework, the CST, its Bureau and the SPI have a role in developing guidance for

formulating national LDN targets, implementing related initiatives, and monitoring progress towards LDN. Several LDN-related activities have been launched:

a. Under objective 1 of its work programme, the SPI is developing a conceptual framework to guide implementation and monitoring of LDN national voluntary targets. This conceptual framework will directly inform the implementation of the LDN target setting programme under the Global Mechanism (GM) (see para c below). An update on progress made under objective 1 of the SPI work programme is presented in annex V of this report.

b. The UNCCD secretariat together with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and in collaboration with the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility, hosted an expert meeting in Washington DC on 25-26 February 2016. The expert meeting discussed a land degradation indicator (and associated sub-indicators) to monitor and report on progress towards SDG target 15.3, the strategic objectives of the Rio Conventions and other relevant targets and commitments.<sup>1</sup> The meeting also paved the way for initiating a collaboration with the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) secretariat to develop a possible global partnership to assist countries with monitoring and reporting on progress towards SDG target 15.3. The team leaders for the delivery of objective 1 of the SPI work programme participated in the expert meeting. The report of the meeting is available online.

c. The GM, in close collaboration with the UNCCD secretariat and through a global programme, will support interested countries in the national LDN target setting process, including the definition of national baselines, measures and targets to achieve LDN by 2030.<sup>2</sup> By March 2016, around 60 countries expressed their interest to take part in LDN-TSP and a number of regional inception workshops will be held throughout the year 2016 to initiate the LDN target setting process in interested countries. Furthermore, the GM is in the process of establishing a LDN Fund aiming at attracting blended financial assistance to support large-scale rehabilitation of degraded land, for sustainable and productive use, with long-term private sector financing.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Future scientific meetings and CST sessions*

In decision 19/COP. 12, Parties decided that future scientific meetings on desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) should be decoupled from official sessions of the CST; these scientific meetings can take the form of UNCCD-related scientific conferences, stand-alone expert meetings or expert meetings held in conjunction with existing international scientific conference.

The UNCCD secretariat informed the Bureau about the informal consultation held in the course of the 5th working session of the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) of the

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<sup>1</sup> The report of the meeting is available online at:

<http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/Rio+20/LDN%202016/DC%20expert%20meeting%20SDG%20indicator%2015.3.1%20summary.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the LDN target setting programme see: <http://www.global-mechanism.org/content/supporting-countries-set-land-degradation-neutrality-targets>

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the LDN Fund see: <http://www.global-mechanism.org/content/impact-investment-fund-land-degradation-neutrality>

Global Soil Partnership (GSP) on the opportunity to organize a joint scientific conference on Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) together with the IPCC, the FAO and the Global Soil Partnership. The CST Bureau welcomed this opportunity and requested the secretariat to further explore the possible realization of such a scientific event.

In decision 24/COP.12, the COP decided that the thirteenth session of the CST (CST 13) should focus, inter alia, on the review of the work conducted by the SPI during the biennium 2016–2017 and on its overall achievements since its establishment in order to decide on the future functioning of the SPI. The COP also decided that CST 13 should be organized in such a way as to facilitate a thematic dialogue between the Parties and the SPI regarding the policy implications of the scientific outputs, and to enable the formulation of policy-relevant recommendations.

The CST 13 will be held back with COP 13, tentatively in the autumn of 2017. The CST Bureau agreed that preparations for the session and modalities for the evaluation of the overall achievement of the SPI will be discussed at the next CST Bureau meeting.

### **III. Activities of the SPI**

#### *Revision of the Terms of Reference of the SPI*

The establishment of the SPI was decided by the COP in 2013 to facilitate a two-way science-policy dialogue and ensure the delivery of policy-relevant information, knowledge and advice on DLDD. In decision 23/COP.11 the COP agreed on the mandate of the SPI and requested the Bureau of the CST to develop and adopt the terms of reference of SPI to be consistent with the mandate described in paragraph 3 of the same decision. At its twelfth session, the COP decided to extend the mandate of the SPI (decision 19/COP.12, para 2).

The Bureau of the CST reviewed the Terms of Reference of the SPI in line with the extended mandate described in para 2 of decision 19/COP.12 and adopted them. The revised Terms of Reference of the SPI is contained in annex III.

#### *Modalities for review of SPI products*

In decision 19/COP.12, the COP decided that “any scientific output prepared under the supervision of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) should undergo an international, independent review process; and that any output published under the name of the UNCCD should be reviewed by the COP Bureau prior to publication”.

The modalities for review of SPI products, as further detailed in annex IV to this report, were discussed and adopted by the CST Bureau. Subsequently, the CST Bureau forwarded them to the COP Bureau for information/endorsement.

### *Work programme 2016-2017*

At its twelfth session, the COP adopted the SPI work programme for the biennium 2016–2017 as contained in the annex to decision 21/COP.12. The work programme contains three major objectives and four coordination activities. An update on progress made was presented by the UNCCD secretariat and it is contained in annex V.

Concerning objective 2 of the SPI work programme, the CST Bureau suggested making use of the next UNFCCC COP, which will be held in November 2016 in Morocco, to discuss the preliminary outcomes under this objective, if possible.

Concerning coordination activity 1, while the procedures of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) for the review of the land degradation and restoration assessment (LDRA) only foresee the submission of individual reviews, the CST Bureau suggested to consider the possibility of coordinating the review internally among SPI members and submit a joint SPI review.

#### **IV. Knowledge management including dissemination and accessibility to best practices on SLM**

The Secretariat informed the bureau on decisions 20/COP.12 and 22/COP.12, relating to knowledge management, best practices and the roster of experts, and on progress made in their implementation.

##### *Further development of the Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal (SKBP)*

In decision 20/COP.12 Parties, inter alia, requested the secretariat to continue developing and enhancing the SKBP in cooperation with partners in order to increase relevance for the different target groups and to expand the collection of information accessible through the portal to national and subnational actors in particular. The Secretariat presented the current status of the SKBP development, the milestones from 2015/2016, and the further plans for 2016. This included the launch of the revised beta version of the platform, the preliminary outcomes of the partnership strategy, and the development of a knowledge hub for LDN.

##### *Roster of Independent Experts Nominated by Country Parties*

The Secretariat presented the work that is currently being undertaken to provide the option to present the roster of experts online, search for experts by discipline and country, and provide links to other databases of relevant experts, as appropriate. Nominations for experts by country Parties were updated in 2015, and the secretariat will provide all nominated experts with an opportunity to update the information in their profile on the SKBP.

*Cooperation between secretariat and WOCAT (the primary recommended database for Best practices on SLM)*

The Secretariat informed the Bureau of the CST of the outcomes of the last Steering Committee meeting with WOCAT and the University of Bern, regarding Best Practices on SLM, in which WOCAT indicated that Parties will be requested in April to review the final version of the revised templates, and that the new templates for submitting Best Practices will be made available to the public latest June 2016.

## **V. Other business**

A brief meeting between the CST Bureau and the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Panel took place. Information on the current and future work priorities of the CST and the CSO Panel was exchanged. Members of the CSO Panel highlighted the importance of linking scientific information and traditional approaches in efforts to DLDD and some practical experiences in this regard were shared. It was agreed that the work of the CST and SPI can benefit from including civil society perspectives and experience, particularly with regard to local and traditional knowledge. It was further agreed that the CSO observer in the SPI should serve as an entry point for including civil society considerations into the work of the SPI.

## **VI. Next meeting**

The next meeting of the CST Bureau is scheduled to take place back to back with the next SPI meeting which is tentatively planned for autumn 2016. The members of the CST Bureau will be informed about the meeting date as early as possible to allow for early travel planning.

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### **List of Annexes:**

Annex I – List of participants

Annex II – Agenda

Annex III - Terms of Reference of the SPI including amendments of its mandate as decided in decision 19/COP.12.

Annex IV - Modalities for review of SPI products

Annex V - Update on progress made by the SPI in the delivery of its work programme 2016-2017

### Annex I - List of Participants to the CST Bureau Meeting, 4 April 2016 in Bonn, Germany

COUNTRY/ REPRESENTATIVE	REGION	CONTACT DETAILS
<b>Hamid Čustović</b> (CST Chair)	Central and Eastern Europe Group	Director Department Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science Institute of Soil Science University of Sarajevo Zmaja Od Bosne 8, 71000 Sarajevo Bosnia and Herzegovina Tel: +387 33225727/61775211 Fax: +387 667429 Email: custovic.hamid@gmail.com
<b>Foued Chehat</b> (CST-Vice Chair)	Africa Group	Directeur Général l'Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) 02 rue des frères Ouaddek, Hacène Badi El-Harrach Alger – Algérie Fax : +213 238 285 63 Email: foued.chehat@gmail.com
<b>Jean-Luc Chotte</b> (CST-Vice Chair)	Western Europe and Other Groups	Directeur de Recherches Institut de Recherche pour le Développement – IRD UMR Eco&Sols - Functional Ecology & Biogeochemistry of Soils & Agro-ecosystems Bât. 12 – 2 Place Viala 34060 Montpellier Cedex 2, France Tel : + 33 04 99612117 /+ 33 (0)4.99.61.21.01 Email : jean-luc.chotte@ird.fr
<b>Farah A. Ebraheem</b> (CST-Vice Chair)	Asia Group	Director of Coastal and Desertification Monitoring Department Head of the National Committee to Combat Desertification Kuwait Environment public Authority - KEPA P.O.Box 24395 Safat, Kuwait 13104 Tel : +965 22208322 /+965 22208305 Fax : +965 22208359 Email : farah.epa@hotmail.com; farah@epa.org.kw
<b>Ali M. Al-Dousari</b> (Accompanying CST-Vice Chair for Asia)		Research Scientist – Desert Studies Group Member of the National Committee to Combat Desertification Crisis Decision Support Program Environment & Life Science Research Center P.O. Box 24885 Safat, 13109 Kuwait Tel: +965 24989240 E-mail: adousari@kisar.edu.kw
<b>Mishari M. A.H.A. Al- kandiri</b> (Accompanying CST-Vice		Member of the National Committee to Combat Desertification Coastal and Desertification Monitoring Department

<p>Chair for Asia)</p>		<p>Kuwait Environment public Authority - KEPA P.O.Box 24395 Safat Kuwait 13104 Tel : +965 22208322 /+965 22208305 Fax : +965 22208359 Email : farah@epa.org.kw</p>
<p><b>Victor Castillo</b> (Secretary to the CST)</p> <p>Sara Minelli (STI) Jeroen van Dalen (STI) Alexander Erlewein (STI) Pedro Lara (GM)</p>	<p>UNCCD Secretariat</p>	<p>Science, Technology and Implementation Unit (STI) UNCCD Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1, 53113 Bonn, Germany Tel. +49 228 815 2834 Fax: +49 228 815 2898/99 E-mail: vcastillo@unccd.int</p>

## **Annex II – Agenda**

### **Meeting of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST)**

**Date:** Monday, 04 April 2016

**Venue:** UN Campus Bonn – Room 1511  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
Bonn – Germany

**Working language:** English

**Working hours:** Monday: 09:30 – 18:00

*- AGENDA -*

- I. Adoption of the Agenda
- II. Brief report by the secretariat on the decisions of COP.12 concerning the CST and the way forward
- III. Activities of the SPI
- IV. Knowledge management including dissemination and accessibility to best practices on SLM
- V. Other business
- VI. Next meeting

**Annex III - Terms of Reference of the SPI including amendments of its mandate as decided in decision 19/COP.12.**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
of the Science–Policy Interface**

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- 1) Background
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- 3) Scope and activities
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- 6) Role of the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
- 7) Governance

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**1) BACKGROUND**

1. In accordance with decision 23/COP.11, paragraph 1, the Conference of the Parties (COP) decided to establish a Science–Policy Interface (SPI) 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).

**2) MANDATE**

2. In accordance with decision 23/COP.11, paragraph 3, the mandate of the SPI is to:
- i. Establish the approach to deliver each task assigned to it by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST);
  - ii. Analyse, synthesize and translate relevant scientific findings and recommendations from DLDD-related scientific conferences, including upcoming UNCCD scientific conferences, the roster of independent experts, as well as from relevant stakeholders and networks into proposals to be considered by the CST for the consideration of the COP;
  - iii. Interact with existing multiple scientific mechanisms, in particular the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils and other new and existing scientific networks and platforms; and
  - iv. Assist the Bureau of the CST in organizing the UNCCD scientific conferences and assessing their results.

3. In decision 19/COP.12, the COP decided that the SPI mandate, as contained in decision 23/COP.11, paragraph 3, should be extended to enable the SPI, under the leadership of the Bureau of the CST, to:

- v. Provide the CST with clear and well-defined thematic guidance on scientific knowledge requirements (e.g. thematic assessments, scientific studies and/or user guides) for implementing the UNCCD;
- vi. Identify the most optimal way forward (e.g. commissioning an individual or group of experts, organizing expert meetings, encouraging the organization of regional meetings by regional scientific institutions or networks) to address these knowledge requirements;
- vii. Draft terms of reference for the scientific work to be commissioned to external experts or institutes and ensure the quality of content according to the contract administered by the secretariat; and
- viii. Select experts, including from scientific societies, science and knowledge organizations, and CSOs, and networks known for their expertise in DLDD.

4. The SPI will operate up to the end of the thirteenth session of the COP, at which time it will be reviewed.

### 3) SCOPE AND ACTIVITIES

5. The SPI shall:

- a. Identify needs for the scientific and/or technological knowledge requirements for implementing the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and/or making it a global authority on science and technology relating to DLDD issues;
- b. Explore and select mechanisms to address the prioritized identified needs and/or needs brought to the attention of the SPI by the CST, such as existing and/or new assessment processes, research activities and other mechanisms operated by relevant existing and/or new institutions, organizations and other relevant entities at either global, regional or national level (such as an independent consortium of scientist networks and regional science and technology platforms, among other things);
- c. Initiate, support and follow up on the implementation of the selected mechanisms for knowledge acquisition;
- d. Analyse, synthesize and translate the results obtained (see paragraph 5.c.) into a language that is comprehensible to policymakers and decision-makers, thus enabling, promoting and facilitating the use of the scientific and technological findings for DLDD-relevant policy-/decision making; and
- e. Provide requested support to the Bureau of the CST.

### 4) COMPOSITION

6. The SPI is composed of 20 members and 3 observers. Taking into account paragraph 3 above, the duration of membership to the SPI will end at the end of the thirteenth session of the COP.

7. In accordance with decision 23/COP.11, paragraph 4, and its Corrigendum, as contained in document ICCD/COP(11)/23/Add.1/Corr.1, the membership of the SPI shall comprise: (1) members of

the Bureau of the CST; (2) five scientists, one nominated by each region; (3) ten scientists selected by the Bureau of the CST through an open call taking into account regional and disciplinary balance; and (4) three observers: one from a civil society organization, one from an international organization and one from a relevant United Nations organization.

8. The SPI shall be co-chaired by the Chair of the Bureau of the CST and a scientist elected by all the members of the SPI from among the 15 scientists mentioned in paragraph 6.

9. In the case the scientist who is co-chairing the SPI resigns or is unable to perform or complete her/his assigned tasks and functions, the members of the SPI shall chose another member to replace her/him. Until a new chair is elected, the other Co-Chair serves as the only acting Chair.

10. If a scientist of the SPI resigns, s/he will be replaced by an alternate using the same procedure of appointment.

11. The Rapporteur of the SPI will be appointed at its first meeting.

## 5) MODALITIES OF WORK

12. The official working language of the SPI is English only.

13. The mode (i.e. physical meeting or teleconference), dates and duration of the SPI meetings are defined by the Co-Chairs of the SPI in consultation with the UNCCD secretariat in line with the available budgetary resources. However, no more than two physical meetings should be held per year and shall take place in Bonn unless a Party/institution makes an offer to host the meeting and bear the associated costs. Physical meetings of the SPI shall also take advantage of the meetings of the Bureau of the CST or any other suitable occasion linked to the schedule of other UNCCD meetings or conferences.

14. Members of the SPI shall attend each meeting physically or electronically. If, due to circumstances beyond their control, a member is unable to attend a meeting fully or partially, s/he shall, through the secretariat, immediately inform the Co-Chairs of this fact. Input from the absent members shall be provided via electronic means.

15. Should any member fail to fulfill her/his assignments and/or to attend three consecutive meetings of the SPI, s/he will be replaced by an alternate.

16. Travel costs and the daily subsistence allowances (DSAs) will be covered for all members in accordance with United Nations rules and regulations.

17. Institutional partners or individual experts might be invited to participate in the meetings/discussions of the SPI on an ad hoc basis and based on a proposal from the Co-Chairs.

18. The Co-Chairs are responsible for coordinating the work of the group during and between meetings and for facilitating a free exchange of views and information among members and between the secretariat and members.

19. Only the Co-Chairs of the SPI are permitted to sign and send letters and other official communications from the SPI to other entities.

20. The SPI will be responsible for developing the work programme for its first biennium of operation (2014–2015). For the biennium 2016–2017, the SPI will present its draft work programme to the CST for submission to the COP for its approval/endorsement.

21. The SPI will report to the COP at each session on progress made and the status of implementation of its tasks and obligations, including precise and workable recommendations, with a view to seeking guidance for its next steps and activities.
22. The SPI will communicate updates to the process through UNCCD mechanisms.
23. The UNCCD secretariat will be the sole owner and possess all rights, titles and interest in all proprietary intellectual property, including copyrights for methodologies and products developed and delivered by the SPI and its members. The secretariat will duly acknowledge and/or share, as appropriate, any copyright with SPI members that have contributed to a particular output. No special permission from the copyright holder is required for the reproduction, distribution and/or co-sharing of the said methodologies and products, provided that the source is acknowledged and that no alterations are made to the original work. Once the secretariat authorizes the reproduction, distribution and/or co-sharing of the methodologies and products, they will be in the public domain subject to proper acknowledgement of the source and any limitation stipulated by the secretariat as appropriate.

## **6) ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION**

24. The UNCCD secretariat will provide administrative and secretariat support to the work of the SPI, including to its meetings as needed. Tasks include:
  - Inviting the members and observers to the meetings of the SPI pursuant to the date and venue of a meeting of the SPI, arranging the travel arrangements of the members and funded invitees and providing a daily subsistence allowance as required;
  - Preparing the provisional agenda in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the SPI and handling the related substantive documentation prepared by the SPI;
  - Assisting the Rapporteur in the preparation of the reports (including the list of participants) of each meeting;
  - Maintaining, reviewing and continuously updating the SPI website/webpage;
  - Making arrangements for meetings of the SPI;
  - Providing legal support as required; and
  - Communicating with other entities through official channels as required.

## **7) GOVERNANCE**

25. The SPI will operate in accordance with COP decisions pertaining to its activities.
26. Decisions of the SPI shall be made by consensus. The Co-Chairs will moderate discussions among the SPI members and help them achieve consensus. If no consensus is reached, decisions on procedural matters shall be taken by a simple majority of the members present and voting. Decisions on matters of substance shall be decided by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. If the question arises as to whether a matter is one of a procedural or substantive nature, the decision shall be taken by a simple majority of the members present and voting. Any other matter not foreseen in this paragraph will be decided in accordance with the standard practice of the United Nations.

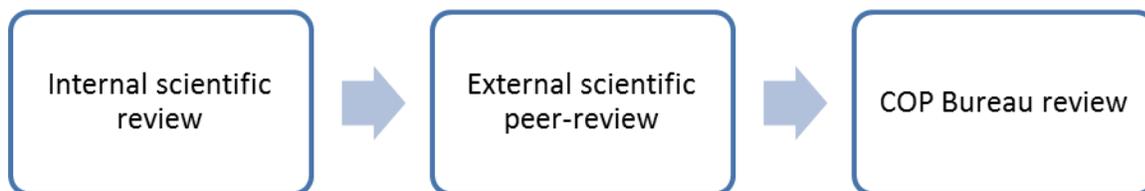
27. The two Co-Chairs of the SPI have the same power and will jointly ensure the compliance of all SPI members with the terms of reference. The two Co-Chairs remain, through the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, under the authority of the COP.
28. All disputes arising out of or in connection with the work of SPI members will be settled in line with the code of conduct and the conflict of interest policy of the SPI. Compliance with the code of conduct and the conflict of interest policy and its implementation procedures is mandatory. An individual is not allowed participate in the work of the SPI if s/he has not complied with the policy and procedures.
29. The Bureau of the CST will review the terms of reference of the SPI as needed.

## Annex IV

### Modalities for review of SPI products

In decision 19/COP.12, the COP decided that *any scientific output prepared under the supervision of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) should undergo an international, independent review process; and that any output published under the name of the UNCCD should be reviewed by the COP Bureau prior to publication.*

The SPI work programme 2016-2017, which was adopted by decision 21/COP.12, includes three main objectives and associated reports as deliverables. It is proposed that these reports undergo a three-step review process as detailed below. It is also proposed that associated products, such as science-policy briefs or manuscripts submitted to scientific journals, do not undergo the same review process since they would be based on already reviewed SPI reports. In the case of manuscripts submitted to scientific journals, they would undergo a formal peer-review process as is mandatory prior to publication.



The review process of SPI reports will consist of three steps. After each step, the authors of the reports will address and incorporate the reviewers' comments. It is recommended that each step of the review process be concluded within two weeks to speed the publication of the reports.

**Step 1 - Internal Scientific Review:** The first review will be conducted within the SPI, including both SPI members and observers.

**Step 2 - External Scientific Peer-review:** Following common practice in the academic sector, and for the sake of transparency, the reports will go through an open, external review process, where the identities of authors and reviewers are mutually disclosed and the reviews themselves are passed in full to the authors. A minimum of 2 peer reviewers (up to 5) will be appointed by the UNCCD secretariat based on their scientific expertise on the subject matter of the report and independence. The SPI and authors of the report will suggest names of potential external reviewers. Out of the pool of suggested experts, the SPI will identify the required number of reviewers and propose these experts to the UNCCD secretariat for further consideration. The reviewers will be acknowledged in the report, unless they indicate that they would prefer not to have their name listed as one of the reviewers. Based on the scope of a report, and existing or emerging circumstances, the SPI can propose changes to the external scientific peer-review process to ensure credibility of and timeliness in the delivery from the assigned task.

**Step 3 - COP Bureau Review:** The final review is conducted by the members of the COP Bureau who will receive the draft report via email through the UNCCD secretariat for their review within a suggested timeline to ensure timeliness and preparedness of the UNCCD in matters related to science.

## Annex V

### Update on progress made by the SPI in the delivery of its work programme 2016-2017

Objectives of the SPI work programme 2016–2017 <sup>4</sup>	
Objectives	Status
<p><b>1: Provide scientific guidance to the operationalization of the voluntary land degradation neutrality (LDN) target</b></p>	<p>A workshop on the development of a scientific conceptual framework for Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) was held from 22-23 February 2016 in Washington D.C.</p> <p>Three SPI members, six external experts, and secretariat and GM staff members participated in the workshop.</p> <p>Objectives of the workshop, which will ultimately lead to a 30-page report on a scientific conceptual framework for LDN, were to: agree on all essential components of the conceptual framework; revise accordingly the outline of the 30-page report prepared prior to the workshop; develop content for the report itself (if time allowed).</p> <p>The 30-Page report is currently under revision by the SPI.</p> <p>The 30-page report will be accompanied by an SPI Science-Policy Brief. Both documents will be delivered in the first half of 2016.</p>
<p><b>2: Highlight the science-based synergistic potential of sustainable land management (SLM) practices to address DLDD, climate change mitigation and adaptation</b></p> <p><b>2a:</b> Foster and facilitate the adoption of SLM practices which address DLDD while mitigating climate change</p> <p><b>2b:</b> Foster and facilitate the adoption of SLM practices which address DLDD while enhancing climate change adaptation</p> <p><b>2c:</b> Critically evaluate the conclusions of 2a and 2b to ensure the clear understanding of synergies and trade-offs between climate change mitigation and adaptation, and SLM practices which</p>	<p>In line with decision 19 /COP.12, the elaboration of this report will be commissioned to a qualified institution or a consortium while the SPI will act as supervising and reviewing body.</p> <p>Draft Terms of Reference for the preparation of the report are currently under revision and are planned to be published in April/May 2016.</p> <p>The exact timeline for the delivery of the outputs is still under discussion. It is proposed to develop first material for UNFCCC COP.22, which is scheduled for 7-18 November 2016.</p>

<sup>4</sup> For associated deliverables, see Annex I of decision 21/COP.12, available at: <http://www.unccd.int/Lists/OfficialDocuments/cop12/20add1eng.pdf>

<p>reduce land degradation.</p>	
<p><b>3: Encourage the development and implementation of specific rehabilitation, restoration and reclamation measures and practices in degraded lands</b></p>	<p>A potential collaboration with the UNEP’s International Resource Panel (IRP) recently emerged as promising and cost-effective opportunity for the delivery of objective 3 of the SPI Work Programme.</p> <p>The IRP is currently considering the possibility to prepare a report on land restoration. Discussions on collaboration are being explored and are generally welcome by the IRP.</p> <p>Developing collaboration pathways with the IRP will be given priority whilst operationalizing objective 3. However, as it can currently not be foreseen how this collaboration will evolve, and as other relevant aspects may emerge, alternative options may also be explored.</p>

<p><b>Coordination activities of the Science-Policy Interface work programme 2016–2017</b></p>		
<p><b>Coordination area</b></p>	<p><b>Activity</b></p>	<p><b>Status</b></p>
<p><b>1: Follow up and contribute to the land degradation and restoration assessment (LDRA) conducted by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)</b></p>	<p>The Science-Policy Interface (SPI) will contribute to the LDRA in accordance with the procedure established by the IPBES.</p>	<p>The online review of the IPBES thematic assessment on “Land degradation and restoration” is scheduled to start in the first half of 2016.</p> <p>The SPI will review this thematic assessment in view of its contribution to the implementation of UNCCD’s objectives to attaining land degradation neutrality (LDN).</p> <p>The Chair of the CST Bureau has observer status in the meetings of the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and thus can proactively interact with the IPBES if requested.</p>
<p><b>2: Contribute to the development of the Global Land Outlook (GLO)</b></p>	<p>SPI members should participate in the steering committee and the review process of the GLO.</p>	<p>The SPI will have a permanent seat in the GLO Steering Committee.</p> <p>The next GLO Steering Committee will take place on 30 June and 1 July 2016 in Bonn. One of the co-leaders of this coordination activity is expected to participate.</p> <p>Technical documents prepared as result of the activities of the SPI 2016-17 work programme may be considered for publication under the GLO. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the SPI in consultation with the secretariat.</p>

		SPI members may function as reviewers for GLO documents.
<b>3: Follow up on current collaboration with and explore further means of collaboration with the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS)</b>	<p>Collaboration will be based on the topics jointly agreed by the SPI and the ITPS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Development Goal related to the objective of the Convention (SDG target 15.3)</li> <li>• Indicators serving the 3 Rio conventions</li> <li>• Soil organic carbon</li> </ul>	<p>The CST chair and SPI co-chair, Dr.Custovic, and a representative of the UNCCD secretariat participated in the 5th working session of the ITPS held in Rome from 14-18 March 2016. A presentation was delivered informing about the SPI composition, mandate and its work programme for the biennium, in particular the coordination activities with the ITPS.</p> <p>It was agreed that the ITPS will invite the SPI to collaborate in a global assessment of soil erosion to be undertaken under the leadership of ITPS working group 1 on “Sustainable Soil Management”.</p> <p>It was also agreed that the UNCCD and the ITPS will jointly further work on methodologies and data accessibility on soil organic carbon, as sub-indicator for tracking progress toward SDG target 15.3.</p>
<b>4: Initiate and coordinate interactions between the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)</b>	<p>With the support of the secretariat, the SPI will explore the possibility for the IPCC to address the link between climate change and land degradation in its future work.</p>	<p>Following a call by the IPCC on thematic proposals for Special Reports in 2015, the UNCCD secretariat submitted a proposal for an IPCC Special Report on climate change and land degradation.</p> <p>The proposal was grouped together with similar proposals from Algeria and Saudi Arabia in a cluster on land use, land degradation and agriculture.</p> <p>The IPCC is going to consider the received proposals at its 43rd session from 11 to 13 April 2016. The decision of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the IPCC will be decisive for the work procedure of this coordination activity of the SPI.</p>