



3rd Meeting of the Bureau of the CST 14

Date: Wednesday, 14 April 2021

Time: 14:00 – 17:00 (CET)

Working language: English

Virtual Platform: [Zoom](#)

- REPORT -

I. Opening and welcoming address

1. The Chair of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), Mr. Bongani Simon Masuku, opened the meeting. He welcomed all participants with appreciation for all the work being done by the CST team and members of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) supported by the secretariat, despite the difficult working circumstances imposed by the pandemic. The meeting was attended by all the CST Bureau members.

2. The CST Chair introduced and thanked Mr. Omer Raja who was stepping in on behalf of the Asia region following the withdrawal of Bhutan from the CST Bureau. The Chair then invited the Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, Ms. Tina Birmpili, to make a welcome remark.

3. The Deputy Executive Secretary welcomed all participants to the meeting. She expressed her gratitude for the efforts of the CST Bureau who are playing dual roles, serving both on the CST and the SPI. She emphasized the importance of their work of translating scientific results into effective policy options. Ms. Birmpili highlighted the objectives of the meeting which were to provide an update of the recent COP14 Bureau deliberations, discuss the status of the relevant work completed so far under CST, and review upcoming milestones and timelines. She underlined the importance of the CST and SPI in ensuring that policy decisions are underpinned with sound scientific foundation.

II. Adoption of the agenda

4. The provisional agenda of the meeting, as contained in annex II of this report, was considered, and adopted by the Bureau with no amendments.

III. Timelines and milestones towards CST15/COP15

5. Before the Chair made his presentation, a member of the Bureau took the floor and requested that the convening of the Bureau be made when the purpose of the meeting is clear. She also requested that since the Bureau members represent their regions, the documents be made available ahead of time so that all parties of the respective regions can be informed, and their inputs can be sought.

6. The Chair, with the support of the secretariat, provided an update on the outcomes of the COP14 Bureau meeting held on 8 April 2021. He informed that the COP Bureau agreed to reschedule the 15th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to 2022. It further entrusted



the secretariat to pursue consultations with all relevant stakeholders with the view to organize COP15 between May and October 2022 at a venue to be further confirmed. Following its consultations, the secretariat will report back to the COP Bureau of its proposal for a new date and the venue for COP15.

7. Following the update by the CST Chair, the secretariat presented to the Bureau a proposal for adjusting the timelines and milestones of the work of the SPI and the CST towards CST15/COP.15, with particular attention being given to relevant pre-documentation preparation based on decision 18, 21, and 32 /COP.14. The presentation provided an overview on (i) inter-sessional activities; (ii) SPI deliverables; (iii) CST Bureau review; and (iv) CST15/COP.15 documentation processes. The Bureau members then shared their views on the implications of the COP Bureau meeting outcomes on the SPI and its work programme and considered a rescheduling of the SPI activities.

8. Following this, the secretariat introduced for consideration of the CST Bureau, a new tentative schedule with the revised target of completing all CST and SPI work by December 2021, including all CST15 pre-documentation preparations.

9. The Bureau discussed the proposed new schedule of the internal and external reviews relevant to SPI technical reports. In response to questions by the CST Chair on how the feedback and comments will be integrated into the SPI technical reports, the secretariat clarified that while the secretariat provides logistical support, the work of incorporation of feedback and comments will be conducted entirely by the SPI working groups themselves.

10. The Bureau requested the secretariat to make some adjustments to the proposed new schedule of work of the SPI. Regarding the review of the two technical reports, it was agreed that the internal review by the entire SPI, including all CST Bureau members, should take place before draft of each technical report is sent out for external independent peer review. In this way the CST Bureau members, in the role serving on the SPI, will be able to bring in all the policy aspects relating to refining the reports during the internal review stage by all SPI members, so they will be considered in the review steps which follow.

11. The Bureau acknowledged the flexibility that needs to be given to the SPI to finalize its work and asked the secretariat to incorporate the feedback that has been provided by the CST Bureau, so that it could be confirmed by the Bureau electronically following the meeting, and then annexed to this report (Annex 1). This was to ensure that the updated time schedule and milestones presented during the meeting would be revised according to the clarifications that were shared in the meeting, thereby ensuring that the SPI and the CST Bureau are all working from the same revised milestones and timelines.

IV. Status of the CST15/COP15 pre-documentation forecast

12. The secretariat provided a summary of the preliminary forecast of nine official documents for CST15/COP15 out of which seven are CST documents and the other two are joint documents with CRIC. The status of the relevant documents includes the following:



- a. Provisional Programme and Annotation (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/1), mandated by decision 21, COP.14, will be developed by the secretariat with focus on SPI work and enhancing dialogue between the Parties and the SPI.

13. The secretariat recalled briefly on the status of SPI work programme 2020-2021 which is relevant to four planned CST 15 documents, each of which had been comprehensively discussed during the SPI meeting on 31 March - 1 April 2021:

- b. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from evidence on the potential contribution of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management to positive transformative change, achieving LDN and addressing DLDD issues, under objective 1 of the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2020–2021. Report by the Executive Secretary (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/2)
- c. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from evidence on the approaches for the assessment and monitoring of the resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems to drought, under objective 2 of the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2020–2021. Report by the Executive Secretary (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/3)
- d. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from the cooperation with other intergovernmental scientific panels and bodies. Report by the Executive Secretary (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/4)
- e. Work programme for the Science-Policy Interface 2022-2023 (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/6). Note by the secretariat.

14. The secretariat then gave a brief status report focusing on three planned documents which contain cross-cutting issues and national reporting methodologies. These documents are not directly related to the SPI work programme 2020-2021:

- f. Interfacing science and policy: The Science-Policy Interface, the dissemination and accessibility of best practices, and the UNCCD Knowledge Hub, note by the secretariat (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/5), which is mandated by the decision 19/COP.14. The secretariat informed the CST Bureau on the achievements with regards to Knowledge Hub developments including transforming information resulting from the work of the SPI into knowledge that can be used. It was indicated that this document will provide a report on:
 - Practices and working modalities for the Science-Policy Interface in the next biennium, including the renewal of the SPI membership;
 - Dissemination of relevant knowledge through the UNCCD Knowledge Hub, including the Drought Toolbox and the SDS Toolbox;
 - Accessibility of best practices on sustainable land management (SLM) and the collaboration with WOCAT;



- Coherence and alignment between ecosystem-based adaptation, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction, nature-based solutions, and sustainable land management.

15. One of CST vice-chairs emphasized the need for coherence and alignment of the different approaches and terms used for land-based interventions among different intergovernmental processes in a way that will be easily understood and used by Parties. The Bureau acknowledged the efforts that will be done by the secretariat in trying to clarify the diverse terminology that is being used in the different processes so that synergies can be achieved.

16. The secretariat further mentioned that several operational paragraphs in decision 16, 17 and 20/COP.14 contain requests which are relevant to best practices and knowledge management, and these will also be reported in ICCD/COP (15)/CST/5. These include follow-up activities of the SPI work programme 2019-2020 for its objective 1 on Land Degradation Neutrality implementation and soil organic carbon measurement, and its objective 2 on land-drought nexus.

- g. Information on modalities for reporting on Strategic Objective (SO)1 to SO 5 of the UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/8-ICCD/CRIC (20)/9): Mandate of this document is derived from decision 11/COP.14 OP 6 “Encourages the two subsidiary bodies of the Convention to work with their Bureaux to continue the good collaboration on topics related to methodology development for the indicators” and It was noted that the same document originally planned for CRIC19 has been deferred to CRIC20, and relevant paragraphs of that draft decision will potentially be discussed in a joint contact group, e.g. land-based indicators (SO 1), the new indicator on drought (SO 3) and the biodiversity related indicator (SO 4).
- h. Case studies on Land Degradation Neutrality implementation (ICCD/COP (15) /CST/9 -ICCD/CRIC (20)/11): The secretariat reported that, because LDN implementation is relatively new, there are relatively few LDN transformative projects and programmes, and those which have been implemented are not yet mature enough for evaluation. For this reason, work towards this activity was down prioritized in April 2020 considering the ongoing pandemic. There are still insufficient mature cases of LDN TPP for implementation. Consequently, this document will be removed from the forecast list.
- i. CST15 draft decisions (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/7): As mandated by decision 32/COP.14, the secretariat has been requested to collect all draft decisions in one single document. The secretariat informed the Bureau about the tentative list and titles of forecasted draft decisions which will contain all policy recommendations for consideration by CST15. These draft decisions would be prepared based on the conclusions and recommendations included in the corresponding pre-session documents. Therefore, the policy proposals from the SPI technical reports and the



outcome of the coordination activities will first be integrated into respective official documents as policy-oriented recommendation. These will then be migrated over to the draft decision official document, as per decision 32/COP.14.

17. The Bureau welcomed the presentation made by the secretariat on the documentation forecast currently being made by the secretariat for the fifteenth session of the CST Bureau.

V. Other matters and next meeting

18. The Chair opened the floor for any other matters and the following were discussed:

- a. Term of office of the SPI Members: One Vice-Chair raised the question on the postponement of COP 15 to 2022 and requested to know the implications this will have on the SPI membership and recalled that SPI members have been appointed for 2 years as well as the CST Bureau members and their mandate was designed to end in 2021 during COP15. In this regard, it was agreed that the secretariat should inform the SPI members in writing on the postponement of COP15 to 2022 and check their availability to continue serving as members until the conclusion of COP15.
- b. Timeline on reporting: One Vice-Chair raised a question on the timeline of the national reporting process if COP15 is going to be postponed to May or October 2022. The secretariat responded that by end of September 2021, the secretariat will finalize the update of the PRAIS system and will initiate the training needed by Parties to be familiar with the new system. It was also noted that the reporting process was discussed in the COP Bureau meeting and it was agreed that the secretariat will provide an information note on the reporting process for the next COP Bureau meeting. Regarding the reporting cycle, it was noted that this depends on the decision COP15 will take regarding the dates of the intersessional session of the CRIC.
- c. Next CST Bureau meeting: It was agreed that the next meeting should be held just before the compilation of the CST15 official documentation, currently envisioned for December 2021. Options for dates for convening the CST Bureau will be communicated to the members in good time.

19. The regional chair on behalf of Asia, expressed appreciation to the secretariat for their preparation of comprehensive briefing notes in a such a short time, noting that a COP Bureau meeting directly relevant to the CST Bureau meeting was taking place almost in parallel.

VI. Wrap-up and closure

20. The meeting ended with closing remarks by the Deputy Executive Secretary in which she thanked the Bureau members for their time and guidance.



21. The Deputy Executive Secretary in her closing remarks noted the guidance and requests made from the CST Bureau members. She highlighted that the secretariat will notify all Parties on the COP Bureau decision on the postponement of the COP15 and its rescheduling in 2022. She also reiterated that the revised timelines will be shared with all Bureau members for their review and approval.¹ She confirmed that the secretariat will further improve CST Bureau meeting documentation, building upon clearly defined objectives, and ensuring adequate time for the Bureau to prepare, and communicate within their respective regions. In implementing the modalities for the scientific review process of SPI technical reports, the secretariat will keep in mind two principles – the independence of science and the ownership of the review process by SPI itself. She confirmed that the secretariat will follow up on all substantive issues discussed in the meeting, noting in particular the work mandated by Parties on the different land-based intervention approaches and terminologies currently in use in the different processes.

22. After the closing remarks by the Deputy Executive Secretary, the Chair of the CST formally closed the meeting. In his closing remarks, the Chair indicated that they should not lose sight of the extended time provided by relaxing but to use it to improve the quality of the output so that at the end of the day, the COP could be served with quality work and good guidance. He also indicated that the Bureau still has a lot of work in terms of finalizing the work. He then thanked everybody for their support and formally closed the meeting.

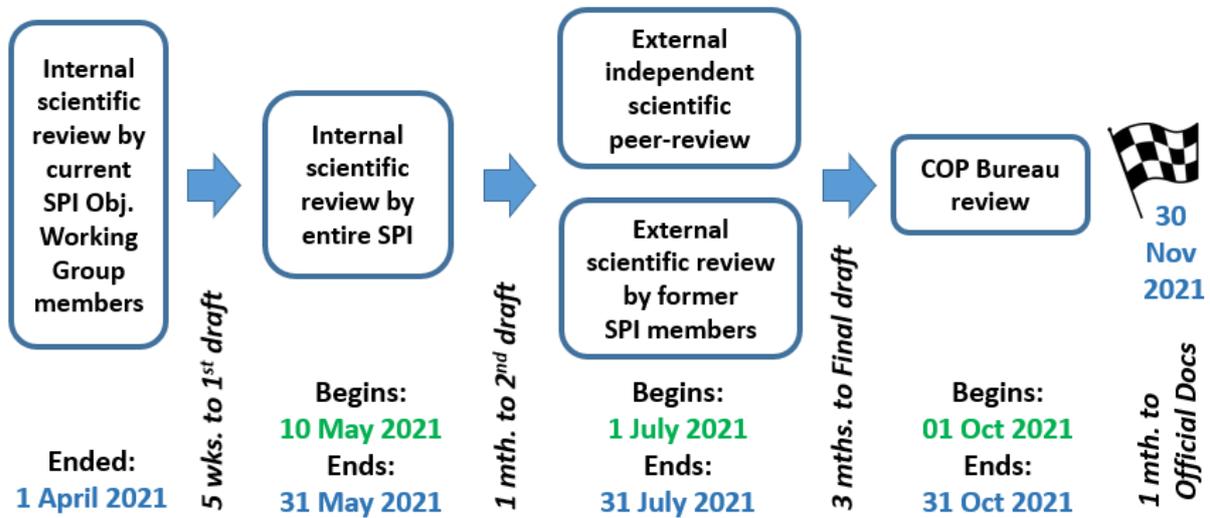
¹ NB: This has been completed, and the schedule confirmed by the CST Bureau subsequent to the meeting is included as Annex 1.



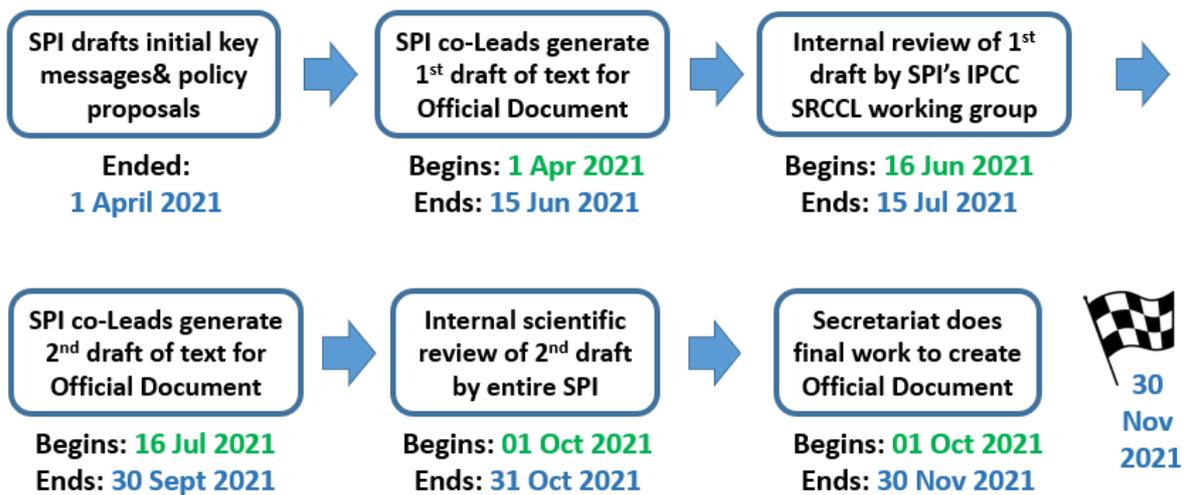
Annex I– Revised Timelines and Milestones towards CST15/COP15 for the COP taking Place in 2022

It was agreed by the CST Bureau on the revised timelines and milestones relevant to SPI work and CST documentation as follows:

1. New Schedule for SPI Objective working groups work

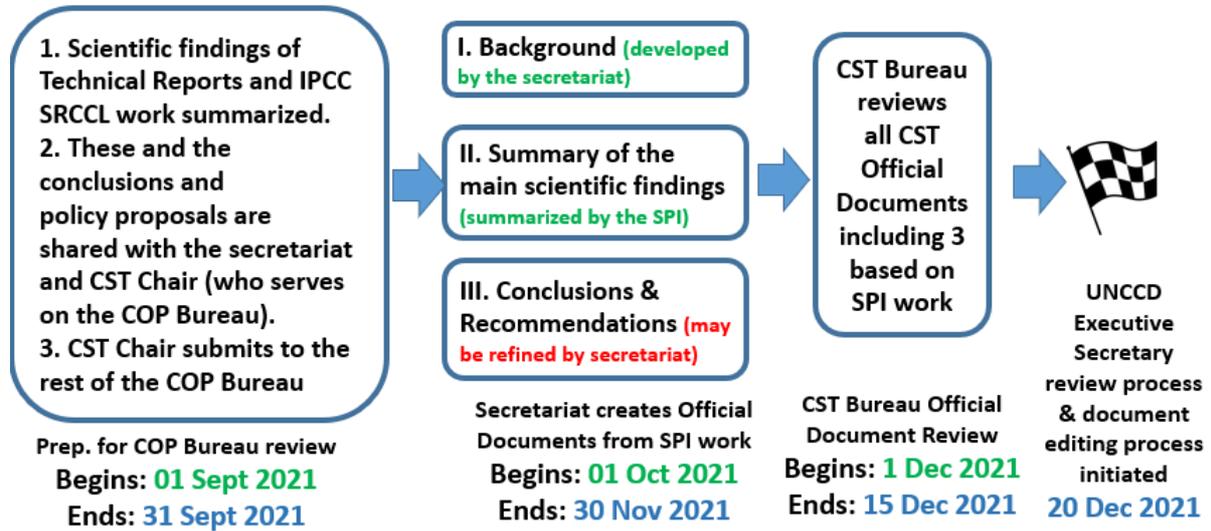


2. New Schedule for SPI’s IPCC SRCLL Coordination Work





3. New schedule for preparation of the CST15 documentation





Annex II – Agenda

3rd Meeting of the Bureau of the CST 14

Date: Wednesday, 14 April 2021

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- Agenda-

I. Opening and welcoming address

II. Adoption of the agenda

III Timelines and milestones towards CST15/COP15.

IV. Status of the CST15/COP15 pre-documentation forecast

- a. Provisional Programme and Annotation ICCD/COP (15)/CST/1
- b. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from evidence on the potential contribution of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management to positive transformative change, achieving LDN and addressing DLDD issues, under objective 1 of the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2020–2021. Report by the Executive Secretary (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/2)
- c. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from evidence on the approaches for the assessment and monitoring of the resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems to drought, under objective 2 of the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2020–2021. Report by the Executive Secretary (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/3)
- d. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from the cooperation with other intergovernmental scientific panels and bodies. Report by the Executive Secretary (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/4)
- e. Work programme for the Science-Policy Interface 2022-2023 (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/6)
- f. Interfacing science and policy: The Science-Policy Interface, the dissemination and accessibility of best practices, and the UNCCD Knowledge Hub (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/5)
- g. Information on modalities for reporting on SO 1 to SO 5 (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/8-ICCD/CRIC (20)/9)
- h. Case studies on land degradation neutrality implementation (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/9-ICCD/CRIC (20)/11)
- i. CST15 draft decisions (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/7)

V. Other matters and the next meeting

VI. Wrap-up and closure



Annex III – Schedule of work

Wednesday, 14 April 2021	
13:50-13:59	<i>Connection check</i>
14:00- 14:10	I. Opening and Welcome address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening of the meeting by the CST Chair • Welcome address by the Deputy Executive Secretary
14:10-14:15	II. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the agenda by the CST Chair • Adoption of the agenda <i>Group Photo</i>
14:20-14:50	III. Timelines and milestones towards CST15/COP15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair of the CST provides an update on the 8 April 2021 COP Bureau Meeting. • The Secretariat introduces updated timelines and milestones. <i>Interventions</i>
14:50-15:15	IV. Status of the CST15/COP15 pre-documentation forecast <p>The secretariat provides a brief summary of the preliminary forecast of the documents for CST15/COP15 and followed by interventions from the Bureau members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provisional Programme and Annotation (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/1) b. and c. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from Obj, Obj2 of the SPI work programme for the biennium 2020–2021 (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/2 & ICCD/COP (15)/CST/3) d. Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from the cooperation with other intergovernmental scientific panels and bodies (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/4) e. Work programme for the SPI 2022-2023 (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/6) <i>Interventions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Interfacing science and policy (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/5)
15:15-15:25	10 Minutes Break
15:25-16:20	IV. Status of the CST15/COP15 pre-documentation forecast (continue) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Information on modalities for reporting on SO 1 to SO 5 (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/8-ICCD/CRIC (20)/9) h. Case studies on LDN implementation (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/9-ICCD/CRIC (20)/11) i. CST15 draft decisions (ICCD/COP (15)/CST/7) <i>Interventions</i>
16:20-16:40	V. Other matters and the next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CST Chair opens the floor for Bureau members if any other matters need to be discussed. • The secretariat proposes date of the next meeting for consideration. <i>Interventions</i>
16:40-17:00	VI. Wrap-up and Closure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from the secretariat by the Deputy Executive Secretary • Wrap up and closing by the Chair of CST



Annex IV – List of participants

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