



United Nations

ICCD/COP(13)/CST/6/Add.1



**Convention to Combat
Desertification**

Distr.: General
31 August 2017

English only

**Conference of the Parties
Committee on Science and Technology**

Thirteenth session

Ordos, China, 6–9 September 2017

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda

Interfacing science and policy, and sharing knowledge

Review of the Science-Policy Interface and its achievements

Review of the Science-Policy Interface and its achievements

Note by the secretariat

Addendum

Information on expenditure

Summary

Document ICCD/COP(13)/CST/6 provides evidence-based information on the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) during the biennium 2016–2017 and its overall achievements, as well as related conclusions and recommendations. This document complements that information by providing an overview of expenditure relating to the work of the SPI.

GE.17-15202(E)



* 1 7 1 5 2 0 2 *

Please recycle 



Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction.....	1–4	3
II. Science-Policy Interface: 2016–2017 expenditure.....	5–10	4

I Introduction

1. By its decision 23/COP.11, the Conference of the Parties (COP) established a Science-Policy Interface (SPI) composed of 20 members and three observers. The objectives of the SPI are 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) to all interested parties.

2. For 2016–2017, the SPI work programme has three objectives: (i) addressing the operationalization of the voluntary land degradation neutrality (LDN) target; (ii) highlighting the science-based synergistic potential of sustainable land management practices to address DLDD, climate change mitigation and adaptation; and (iii) encouraging the development and implementation of specific rehabilitation, restoration and reclamation measures and practices in degraded lands. The work programme also contains four coordination activities involving: (i) the Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment conducted by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); (ii) contributions to the development of the Global Land Outlook (GLO); (iii) the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS); and (iv) the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

3. Building on the reports submitted by the SPI to the Committee on Science and Technology at its thirteenth session (CST 13¹) and an external assessment of the SPI² that was commissioned between January and May 2017 by the secretariat of the UNCCD and overseen by the Bureau of the CST, the main deliverables and action taken concerning the objectives and coordination activities of the SPI in its 2016–2017 work programme are summarized as follows:

Table 1
Progress on the Science-Policy Interface work programme objectives

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Product</i>
1: Provide scientific guidance to the operationalization of the voluntary land degradation neutrality target	Document: <i>Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality</i> , consisting of a 98-page document and a short science-policy brief summarizing the key content. A synthesis report is contained in document ICCD/COP(13)/CST/2.
2: Highlight the science-based synergistic potential of sustainable land management practices to address desertification/land degradation and drought, and climate change mitigation and adaptation	Document: <i>Contribution of sustainable land management to successful land-based climate change adaptation and mitigation</i> , consisting of a report and a short science-policy brief summarizing the key content. A synthesis report is contained in document ICCD/COP(13)/CST/3. This work is expected to contribute to the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on climate change and land.
3: Encourage the development and implementation of specific rehabilitation, restoration and reclamation measures and practices in degraded lands	Cooperation initiated with the International Resource Panel of the United Nations Environment Programme for the preparation of a report on land restoration. A synthesis report of the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface on this topic is contained in document ICCD/COP(13)/CST/4.

¹ Documents ICCD/COP(13)/CST/2, ICCD/COP(13)/CST/3, ICCD/COP(13)/CST/4, ICCD/COP(13)/CST/5 and ICCD/COP(13)/CST/INF.1.

² Final report of the Science-Policy Interface assessment. Available online: <www2.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2017-05/FinalReportof%20the_SPI_Assessment.pdf>.

Table 2
Progress on the Science-Policy Interface coordination activities

<i>Coordination activity</i>	<i>Progress</i>
1: Follow up and contribute to the Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment (LDRA) conducted by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services	The Science-Policy Interface (SPI) is contributing to various draft versions of the LDRA. Information on the contribution by the SPI is contained in document ICCD/COP(13)/CST/5.
2: Contribute to the development of the Global Land Outlook (GLO)	The SPI has been involved in the Steering Committee of the GLO. Its contributions to the GLO include outputs prepared as part of the SPI work programme, to be incorporated into the structure of the GLO as potential working papers, and SPI members as reviewers of working papers and draft chapters by the GLO.
3: Follow up on the current collaboration and explore further means of collaboration with the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS)	<p>Joint activities focus on: (a) soil organic carbon, including the preparation by the ITPS of a chapter of the GLO on soils; (b) collaboration within the framework of indicator 15.3.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals and the endorsed metrics for assessing land degradation neutrality; and (c) a joint global assessment of soil erosion.</p> <p>A global symposium on soil organic carbon was jointly organised in Rome in March 2017 by the SPI, the ITPS and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), among others. A report on cooperation between the SPI and the ITPS is contained in document ICCD/COP(13)/CST/5.</p>
4: Initiate and coordinate interactions between the UNCCD and the IPCC	Coordination and collaboration in the preparation of a special report by the IPCC on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems. A report on the cooperation between the SPI and the IPCC is contained in document ICCD/COP(13)/CST/5.

4. The external assessment of the SPI summarizes the achievements of the SPI as follows:

“The SPI has made good progress in implementing its 2016–2017 work programme. It is working on all objectives and coordination activities that were assigned to it and many planned outputs have already been delivered. The SPI has effectively organized its work by allocating tasks among members, and the secretariat has provided the necessary services for its functioning.

From the stakeholder feedback it is clear that the SPI produces useful knowledge with a solid scientific basis. It is also succeeding in influencing other scientific processes and better involving the scientific community in the UNCCD work, although there is yet plenty to be done in these areas.”³

II. Science-Policy Interface: 2016–2017 expenditure

5. The SPI has arranged its work on the three objectives by self-organizing SPI members into teams, usually with a designated leader. For SPI work programme objective 1, the report was prepared by a team of two lead authors and 11 contributing authors. Related

³ Final report of the SPI assessment. Available online: <www2.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2017-05/FinalReportof%20the_SPI_Assessment.pdf>.

expenses included an honorarium to the lead authors, the organization of an author meeting, consultancy to assist in the preparation of the report, and the publication of the report and the associated science-policy brief in three languages.

6. Under objective 2, following a public tender and competitive selection, the Basque Centre for Climate Change was commissioned to prepare a report in association with the Mediterranean Center for Environmental Studies, under the supervision of the SPI. In addition to the fees of the aforementioned organizations, the expenses included the organization of an author meeting, consultancy to assist in the preparation of the report and the joint organization of a global symposium on soil organic carbon with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, ITPS, IPCC and the World Meteorological Organization. By the end of 2017, further funding will be spent on the publication and translation of the report.

7. With regard to objective 3, the work is being carried out in partnership and no expenditure has been incurred thus far.

8. The four coordination activities were led by self-organized SPI teams in close collaboration with the secretariat of the UNCCD. Coordination activity expenditure has included the cost of travel and participation in various workshops and meetings.

9. While the SPI did much of its work remotely through email and teleconferences, the two meetings that took place during the biennium were major opportunities to organize the implementation of the work programme and discuss related activities. These meetings were organized back-to-back with the meetings of the Bureau of the CST, which resulted in participation cost savings. One more meeting of the SPI will be held this year, back-to-back with the COP in September.

10. Income for the activities of the SPI has included funding from the Core Budget of the UNCCD and from COP-approved appropriation from reserves, as well as voluntary contributions. A breakdown of the expenditure of the SPI is presented below.

Table 3
Expenditure of the Science-Policy Interface by activity as at 31 August 2017 for the biennium 2016–2017 (euros)

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Expenditure forecast Sept–Dec 2017</i>	<i>Total expenditure</i>
Objective 1	73 961	0	73 961
Objective 2	84 232	30 000	114 232
Coordination activities	17 679	5 000	22 679
Meetings of the Science-Policy Interface	25 787	22 487	48 274
Total	201 659	57 487	259 146