



Event: *7th Meeting of the Science-Policy Interface of the UNCCD*

Date: *15 –16 February 2018*

Thursday, 15 February: 9:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:00

Friday, 16 February: 9:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:00

Venue: *UN Campus (Langer Eugen)*

Meeting Room: LEU 2705

Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1, 53113 Bonn, Germany

Draft Report of the 7th Meeting of the Science-Policy Interface of the UNCCD

I. Welcome address and adoption of the agenda

1. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Chief of the Science, Technology and Implementation Unit, Mr. Johns Muleso Kharika and the Lead Scientist of the UNCCD, Mr. Barron Joseph Orr welcomed all participants to the 7th Meeting of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) of the UNCCD at the UN Campus in Bonn. The welcome address by the secretariat emphasized the importance of the SPI to the UNCCD.

2. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Mariam Akhtar-Schuster – co-Chair of the SPI. Omer Muhammad Raja, SPI co-Chair and Chair of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), participated in the meeting through video conferencing. Out of the 41 participants, 24 were members and observers of the SPI¹ (for the list of participants – see Annex 2).

3. The agenda (see Annex 1) was adopted without amendments.

II. Introduction to the SPI

4. The secretariat referred to how the SPI works,² as it translates current science into policy-relevant recommendations resulting from assessment and synthesis of current science. The mandate of the SPI is to provide the CST with thematic guidance on knowledge requirements for implementing the UNCCD.³

5. The secretariat recalled the context of the work of the SPI and presented decisions relevant to science which were taken at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13) including decisions 1/COP.13, 2/COP.13, 3/COP.13, 7/COP.13, 15/COP.13, 18/COP.13, 19/COP.13, 20/COP.13, 21/COP.13, 22/COP.13, 23/COP.13, 27/COP.13, 28/COP.13, 29/COP.13, 30/COP.13, and 31/COP.13.⁴

¹ The UNCCD Science-Policy Interface (SPI) was renewed at the UNCCD Conference of Parties (COP) 13 in September 2017, Ordos, China. The SPI is composed by 10 globally selected independent scientists, 5 regionally nominated independent scientists, 5 elected CST Bureau members (science-focused policy makers) and 5 observer organization representatives (see <<https://knowledge.unccd.int/science-policy-interface/members-and-observers-science-policy-interface>>).

² See <<https://knowledge.unccd.int/home/science-policy-interface/how-spi-works>>

³ For the exact mandate of the SPI, see decision 19/COP.11 (<https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/Decision19_COP12.pdf>) and 23/COP.12 with its corrigendum (<https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/Decision23_COP11_0.pdf> and <https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/Decision23_COP11_corr_0.pdf>)

⁴ A compilation of these decisions is available at the SPI Extranet: <https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/Decision23_COP11_0.pdf>



6. The secretariat also introduced the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the SPI⁵, Conflict of Interest Policy⁶, Code of Conduct⁷, and Communication Strategy⁸ as agreed by the CST Bureau.

III. Facilitating communication and collaboration

7. The secretariat presented ways to facilitate external and internal communication and collaboration:

- The *external communication*: included introducing the UNCCD website, the Knowledge Hub, and ideas for SPI dissemination and outreach, including approaches for social media and formal media communication.
- The *internal communication*: included introducing the SPI Extranet as a web-based platform which can be used for collaboration, including sharing publications and documents to produce joint outputs in the frame of the SPI work programme 2018-2019.

IV. Context for the SPI work programme 2018-2019

8. To provide the overall context for the SPI work programme 2018-2019, the following presentations were made by SPI members on the following SPI publications which were produced during the biennium 2016-2017:

- Sustainable Land Management Contribution to Successful Land-based Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation*,⁹ which was welcomed by the country Parties to the UNCCD in decision 18/COP.13;
- The *Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality*¹⁰ which was endorsed by the country Parties to the UNCCD in decision 18/COP.13.

9. Further, the secretariat presented some of its ongoing initiatives and the potential contribution by the SPI to these initiatives:

- The *UNCCD Gender Plan of Action* adopted by decision 30/COP.13;¹¹
- The *UNCCD Drought Initiative* and the *Drought Resilience, Adaptation and Management Policy Framework* as mandated in decision 29/COP.13;
- Background and progress on the development of *SDG indicator 15.3.1* "Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area" and its sub-indicators land cover change, land productivity and carbon stocks.

V. The extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 – Introduction and Roadmap

10. The SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 (Annex 3), which was based adopted by decision 21/COP 13, was introduced by the secretariat. The secretariat also presented an extended version¹² of the work programme which included, under each objective, some potential elements for consideration and discussion by the SPI. Finally, the secretariat presented a generic roadmap to COP 14.

VI. The extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 – From Plenary to Breakout Groups

11. Participants split into the three breakout groups to consider and refine the potential elements of the extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019. Each breakout group addressed one of the three objectives of the SPI Work Programme and began to frame an approach to producing outputs

⁵ See <https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/SPI%20Terms%20of%20Reference_110717.pdf>

⁶ See <https://unccd.sharepoint.com/sites/external/spi/SPI%20Workplans/SPI%20Conflict%20of%20Interest%20Policy_110117.pdf>

⁷ See <https://unccd.sharepoint.com/sites/external/spi/SPI%20Workplans/SPI%20Code%20of%20Conduct_110117_0.pdf>

⁸ See <https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/SPI%20Communications%20Strategy_110117_0.pdf>

⁹ See <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/documents/2017-09/UNCCD_Report_SLM_web_v2.pdf>

¹⁰ See <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/documents/2017-08/LDN_CF_report_web-english.pdf>

¹¹ See <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/documents/2018-01/GAP%20ENG%20%20low%20res_0.pdf>

¹² See <https://unccd.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/external/spi/EU000ex9iv1EhJL8qD_ENVUBWr0FR4fd4aBUtIdTW5KktQ?e=5fRkf7>



including guidelines/technical reports leading to science-policy brief(s) and scientific journal articles. In the breakout groups SPI members and observers engaged in fruitful exchanges in the frame of (a) an *internal segment*, and (b) *non-internal segment*:

- a. *Internal segment*: Strategic discussions on planned products concerning the three objectives of the SPI Work Programme.
- b. *Non-internal segment*: Constructive interaction with the secretariat, the Global Mechanism (GM) and one invited external organization on their initiatives – relevant to each of the above listed objectives. These activities included:
 - i. Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative: introduced by the GM to group members of objective 1.1;
 - ii. LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes, and the Global Soil Week: introduced by the GM and by the TMG ThinkTank for Sustainability respectively to group members of objective 1.2 as avenues for identifying leverage points towards an enabling environment in the realm of LDN transformative initiatives;
 - iii. The UNCCD Drought Initiative and national drought plans, the 3-S Initiative and planned studies to understand potential relations between drought and migration; introduced by the secretariat to group members of objective 2.

VII. The Extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 – Reporting back to Plenary

12. All that was discussed with respect to the work programme objectives in the respective breakout groups was reported back to the plenary.

VIII. Appointment of the Rapporteur

13. The SPI elected Ms. Annette Cowie as Rapporteur.

IX. SPI coordination activities

14. Ms. Mariam Akhtar-Schuster facilitated the discussion on SPI coordination activities, taking into account decisions 21/COP.13 and 22/COP.13, and more information on planned actions detailed in the SPI extended Work Programme (for the list of these activities – see Annex 1, section XIII).

X. Closing remarks

15. Mr. Johns Muleso Kharika and Mr. Barron Joseph Orr provided a summary of the meeting outcomes and way forward.

List of Annexes:

Annex 1 – Agenda of the 7th SPI Meeting

Annex 2 – List of Participants

Annex 3 – SPI Work Programme for the biennium 2018-2019



Annex 1 – Agenda of the 7th SPI Meeting

Date: 15 – 16 February 2018

Thursday, 15 February: 9:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:00

Friday, 16 February: 9:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 18:00

Venue: UN Campus (Langer Eugen)

Meeting Room: LEU 2705

Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1, 53113 Bonn, Germany

- AGENDA -

Thursday, 15 February

- I. **Welcome address** (9:00-9:20)
- II. **Introduction round of the participants** (9:20-10:20)
- III. **Adoption of the agenda and organization of work** (10:20-10:30)
- IV. **SPI group photo** (10:30-10:45 > front steps or lobby of this building)

Coffee break (10:45 – 11:15 > next to room 2705)

- V. **Introduction to the SPI** (11:15-12:15)
- VI. **Facilitating communication and collaboration** (12:00-13:00)
 - a. *12:00-12:20 - External communication.* The secretariat (Wagaki Wischnewski and Jeroen Van Dalen), will introduce the UNCCD website, the UNCCD Knowledge Hub, and share ideas for SPI dissemination and outreach.
 - b. *12:20-13:00 - Internal communication and collaboration.* The secretariat (Jeroen Van Dalen) will introduce the SPI Extranet.

Lunch break (13:00 – 14:00 > We recommend the canteen on the 29th floor)

- VII. **Context for the SPI work programme 2018-2019** (14:00-16:45)
 - a. *14:00-14:40* - The secretariat (Barron Orr) will summarize those policy decisions relevant to science which were taken at the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13) (September 2017, Ordos, China).
 - b. *14:40-15:00* - Extended SPI member Jean Luc Chotte will present the [Sustainable Land Management Contribution to Successful Land-based Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation](#) which was produced during the last biennium and was welcomed by the country Parties to the UNCCD in decision 18/COP.13 (p. 62).



- c. 15:00-15:25 - Extended SPI member Annette Cowie will present the [Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality](#) which was produced during the last biennium and was endorsed by the country Parties to the UNCCD in decision 18/COP.13 (p. 62).
- d. 15:25-15:40 - The secretariat (Corinna Voigt) will introduce the UNCCD Gender Plan of Action (decision 30/COP.13, pp. 3-9) relative to the future work of the SPI.
- e. 15:40-16:00 - The secretariat (Daniel Tsegai) will introduce the UNCCD drought initiative and associated policy advocacy as mandated in decision 29/COP.13 (pp. 84-86).

Coffee break (16:00 – 16:30 > next to room 2705)

- f. 16:30-16:45 - The secretariat (Sara Minelli) will introduce background and progress on the UNCCD development of SDG indicator 15.3.1.

VIII. Introduction to the Extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 (16:45-17:45)

- a. 16:45-17:30 - The secretariat (Barron Orr) will introduce the SPI Extended Work Programme (Annex 7, which is based on decision 21/COP 13 (pp. 69-79)
- b. 17:30-17:45 - Subsequently, the co-Chair will open the floor for questions or clarifications on the context for the SPI work programme 2018-2019.

IX. Logistics for Day 2 (17:45-18:00)

- DAY 2 -

Friday, 16 February

X. The Extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 – Plenary (9:00-9:45)

- a. 9:00-9:15 - The co-Chairs will introduce a preliminary allocation of responsibilities among the three overarching SPI work programme objectives which was developed based on the bios of all SPI members and observers.
- b. 9:15-9:30 - The secretariat (Sara Minelli) will present the generic roadmap to COP 14 (September or October 2019). The work of the SPI will need to fit into this roadmap (milestones and deadlines).
- c. 9:30-9:40 - The co-Chairs will explain, with support of the secretariat, the logistics behind breakout sessions dedicated to discussing each of the three objectives framed by the SPI Extended Work Programme.



d. 9:40-9:45 - SPI members and observers will move to breakout rooms:

- **Objective 1.1** - Scientifically sound **LDN** initiatives which deliver **multiple benefits** (including SOC>SLM>LDN) – **Room 1511** (facilitated by **Annette Cowie** and **Sara Minelli**)
- **Objective 1.2** - How **LDN** can be **transformative** in enhancing the well-being and livelihoods of people and the state of the environment – **Room 2705** (facilitated by **Mariam Akhtar-Schuster** and **Marcelo Inacio da Cunha**)
- **Objective 2** - Land-based interventions to mitigate the effects of **drought** and confer resilience – Room 1330 (facilitated by Barron Orr and Xiaoxia Jia)

XI. The Extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 – Breakout Groups (9:45-13:00)

Objective 1.1 (room 1511) (facilitated by Annette & Sara)	Objective 1.2 (room 2705) (facilitated by Mariam & Marcelo)	Objective 2 (room 1330) (facilitated by Barron & Jia)
9:45-10:45 Discussion on proposed elements <i>NB: Closed segment (SPI/STI)</i>	9:45-10:45 Discussion on proposed elements <i>NB: Closed segment (SPI/STI)</i>	9:45-10:45 Discussion on proposed elements <i>NB: Closed segment (SPI/STI)</i>

Coffee break (10:45 – 11:15 > next to room 2705)

Breakout groups continue

Objective 1.1 (room 1511)	Objective 1.2 (room 2705)	Objective 2 (room 1330)
11:15-11:45 Interaction with related activities Alexander Asen, Global Mechanism	11:15-11:45 Interaction with related activities Sandrine Jauffret, Global Mechanism Jes Weigelt, (TMG) ThinkTank for Sustainability and the Global Soil Week (by invitation)	11:15-11:45 Interaction with related activities Satu Ravola, Daniel Tsegai, Barbara Bendandi, UNCCD secretariat Team of migration experts exploring migration-DLDD links

Objective 1.1 (room 1511)	Objective 1.2 (room 2705)	Objective 2 (room 1330)
11:45-13:00 Planning action on the objective <i>NB: Closed segment (SPI/STI)</i>	11:45-13:00 Planning action on the objective <i>NB: Closed segment (SPI/STI)</i>	11:45-13:00 Planning action on the objective <i>NB: Closed segment (SPI/STI)</i>

Lunch break (13:00 – 14:00) > We recommend the canteen on the 29th floor)

XII. Appointment of the Rapporteur (14:00-14:15) (all in room 2705)



XIII. SPI coordination activities (14:15-16:00)

- *14:15-14:40* - 1.a. Intergovernmental Science–Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES) [Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment \(LDRA\)](#). Discussion leads: Annette Cowie, Mariam Akhtar-Schuster and Maria Angélica Fernandez Garcia.
- *14:40-14:50* - 1.b. [IPBES Global Assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services](#). Discussion leads: Mariam Akhtar-Schuster and Jonathan Davies
- *14:50-15:05* - 2. [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) Special Report on Climate Change and Land](#). Discussion leads: Mariam Akhtar-Schuster, Omer Raja and Annette Cowie
- *15:05-15:20* - 3. [Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils \(ITPS\)](#). Discussion leads: Jean-Luc Chotte, Eduardo Mansur and Ahmet Şenyaz
- *15:20-15:30* - 4. [International Resources Panel \(IRP\)](#). Discussion leads: Mariam Akhtar-Schuster and Carl Fiati
- *15:30-15:45* - 5. [Global Land Outlook \(GLO 2\)](#). Discussion leads: Barron Orr, UNCCD secretariat and German Kust
- *15:45-16:00* - 6. [The Global Land Indicators Initiative \(GLII\)](#). Discussion lead: German Kust

Coffee break (16:00 – 16:30 > next to room 2705)

XIV. The Extended SPI Work Programme 2018-2019 – Plenary (16:30-17:30)

XV. Other matters (17:15-17:45)

XVI. Closing remarks (17:45-18:00)



Annex 2 – List of Participants of the 7th SPI Meeting

Participants of the 7th Meeting of the Science-Policy Interface of the UNCCD

I. SPI members and observers

Mariam Akhtar-Schuster, SPI Co-Chair
Nichole Barger
Ermias Betemariam
Jean-Luc Chotte
Annette Cowie
Jonathan Davies (IUCN)
Maria Angélica Fernandez Garcia
Carl Kojo Fiati
Marijana Kapovic Solomun
Zahurul Karim
German Kust
Rattan Lal
Armando López Santos
Eduardo Mansur (FAO)
Graciela Metternicht*
André Francisco Pilon
Omer Muhammad Raja, SPI Co-Chair*
Ahmet Senyaz
Robert Stefanski (WMO)
Mark Svoboda
Peter Verburg
Graham Paul von Maltitz
Ana Vukovic

* *participated through video conferencing*

II. TMG ThinkTank for Sustainability

Jes Weigelt

III. UNCCD

Alexander Asen (UNCCD, GM)
Barbara Bendandi (UNCCD, ERPA)
Mattia Cerutti (UNCCD, GM)
Marcelo I. da Cunha (UNCCD, STI)
Jeroen van Dalen (UNCCD, STI)
Sandrine Jauffret (UNCCD, GM)
Xiaoxia Jia (UNCCD, STI)
Johns M. Kharika (UNCCD, STI)
Sara Minelli (UNCCD, STI)
Munazza Naqvi (UNCCD, GM)
Christiana Oragbade (UNCCD, STI)
Barron J. Orr (UNCCD, STI)
Satu Ravola (UNCCD, EDM)
Andjela Ristic (UNCCD, GM)
Daniel Tsegai (UNCCD, ERPA)
Corinna Voigt (UNCCD, ERPA)
Wagaki Wischnewski (UNCCD, ERPA)



Annex 3 – Science-Policy Interface Work Programme (2018–2019)

Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2018–2019

Objectives and deliverables

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Deliverable</i>
1. Provide refined guidance for implementation of land degradation neutrality. (LDN)	
1.1 Provide advice on the design and implementation of LDN-related policies and initiatives that bring about multiple environmental and development benefits and synergies with other Rio conventions, in particular for climate change adaptation and mitigation actions.	Guidelines on how to identify and design scientifically sound and practical LDN-related policies and initiatives. Provision of scientific assistance to the Global Mechanism in supporting LDN-related policies and initiatives.
1.2 Provide science-based evidence on the potential contribution of LDN to enhancing the well-being and livelihoods as well as the environmental conditions of people affected by desertification/land degradation and drought.	Report providing science-based evidence of how land-based interventions can improve the well-being and livelihoods of people while simultaneously enhancing the state of the environment.
2. Based on a review of existing synthesis reports and, if necessary, referring to primary literature, provide guidance to support the adoption and implementation of land-based interventions for drought management and mitigation.	Science-policy brief and, if necessary, a report highlighting the potential of appropriate land-based interventions to mitigate the effects of drought by increasing the resilience of ecosystems and the socio-economic well-being of populations.

Coordination activities

<i>Main Activity</i>	<i>Sub-activities</i>
1. Follow up on the land degradation and restoration assessment (LDRA) conducted by the Intergovernmental Science–Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES), and review the IPBES Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and its associated summary for policymakers if this report is available in time for the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) to complete the review.	The SPI will review the LDRA and analyse its key messages relevant for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) for presentation at the fourteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST 14). The SPI will also review the key messages of the IPBES Global Assessment relevant for the UNCCD regarding options to protect and use biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as the benefits they provide for people, for presentation at the CST 14.
2. Strengthen cooperation with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) within the framework of its agenda, particularly regarding its special report on climate change and land (SRCL) and its Sixth Assessment Report (AR6).	In accordance with the procedures established by the IPCC, the SPI will contribute to the SRCL and the AR6.
3. Follow up on current cooperation and explore future means and topics for cooperation with the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS).	The SPI will cooperate with the ITPS on topics to be jointly agreed by the SPI and the ITPS, bearing in mind the importance of soil organic carbon to land degradation neutrality (LDN). The SPI should be involved in any follow-up activities emerging from the conclusions of the Global Symposium on Soil Organic Carbon, including the organization of a possible second meeting in cooperation with IPCC and other organizations.



Main Activity

Sub-activities

4. Cooperate with the International Resources Panel of the United Nations Environment Programme on preparing a report on land restoration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SPI will contribute to the preparation and review of the report.

Based on this report, the SPI will outline policy-oriented options on how land restoration contributes to LDN in the context of DLDD and the SDGs.

5. Contribute to the possible development of a second edition of the Global Land Outlook (GLO 2) and other UNCCD science-based communications, as appropriate.

The SPI will participate in the steering committee, development and review process for a possible GLO 2 and will be invited to contribute to the review and, as appropriate, to the development of other UNCCD science-based communications.

6. Cooperate with the Global Land Indicators Initiative (GLII) of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to ensure the harmonization of land indicators developed by the GLII to measure tenure security, with land indicators used for measuring progress towards LDN.

The SPI may provide input to the GLII to ensure the harmonization of land indicators developed by the GLII with land indicators used by the UNCCD on the basis of existing data sources and standards that are globally collectible and comparable.
