HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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# Mobilizing and sharing science, technology and innovation for an SDG driven recovery

***Tuesday, 5 July 2022, 4:30 to 5:30 PM***

## Secretariat Background Note

### Executive summary

One of the key functions entrusted to the high-level political forum on sustainable development by Rio+20 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to strengthen the science-policy interface, including through the Global Sustainable Development Report and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

Progress in science, technology, and innovation (STI) promises to help realize the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). STI's potential to promote education, health, food security, decent jobs, renewable energy, and other areas of development is immense. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated their impact in a range of areas. Governments are investing in the innovative use of new technologies to make public services more accessible, accountable, and efficient. Digital innovation and advances in mobile technologies are opening new avenues for financial inclusion through mobile banking.

Yet, challenges also abound. Alignment between STI and SDGs remains weak. STI may lead to adverse economic and social consequences. Issues of STI design and access may create winners and losers, accentuate existing inequalities, raise new ethical and moral dilemmas, and amplify systemic bias and discrimination.






Governments and the international community have a central role to play in helping to direct innovation activities to ensure that STI is driven by considerations of inclusiveness and sustainability. The Science, Technology and Innovation for SDGs Roadmaps provide strategic tools for ensuring policy coherence, linking public and private actions, and optimizing investments. Promising avenues to strengthen the alignment between STI and SDGs include state-funded programmes, initiatives led by philanthropic organizations, programmes funded by State investment banks that create demand for new technologies, and public-private partnerships. At the policy level, governments may consider further strengthening capacity in strategic planning, and investing in technological foresight, establishing ethical frameworks, and bringing more technological expertise into government. There is an urgent need to discuss potential support to strengthen international partnerships on STI capacity-building for SDGs achievement in the context of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and preparations for the SDG Summit 2023.

The purpose of the session is to build on the outcome of the 7th Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology, and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (5-6 May 2022) and consider the recommendations contained in the co-chairs' Summary of the Forum. It will also further advance progress on the implementation of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other related UN processes. It will

The session will discuss the main challenges and opportunities for mobilizing and sharing science, technology and innovation for an SDG driven recovery. Specific attention will be given to exploring proactive STI policy measures that are needed to stimulate research efforts, focus investments, and inspire coordination. The session will explore






lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic for a better science-policy-society interface, a resilient, sustainable and inclusive recovery, and rapid solutions for global challenges. It will consider how science can prepare for a future with pandemics, extreme weather, and other risks and build toward long-term resilience. Views, suggestions, and current achievements are expected to be shared by practitioners, policymakers, and experts based on their most recent experiences and research.

## Proposed guiding questions

- What are examples/good practices of use of technologies and innovations during the COVID-19 crisis to tackle inequalities affecting vulnerable groups, including by ensuring equal access to quality healthcare, education, and finance? How can these be shared and scaled up?

- Proactive STI policy measures are needed to stimulate research efforts, focus investments, and inspire coordination. How can your countries' science, technology and innovation (STI) roadmaps or action plans contribute to a more cost-effective SDGs-focused STI development?

- From an STI perspective what are some of the key lessons learned on what worked and what did not work to meet the targets related to SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 14 on life below water, and SDG 15 on life on land? Taking into consideration the strategies that did not work to meet the SDG targets, how could these barriers be overcome in the near future?

- How can we further strengthen international cooperation on science, technology, and innovation for an SDG driven recovery, building on the 2030 Agenda?