

United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)
Twenty-eighth annual session

Agenda item 4:
Report on technical cooperation activities in science, technology and innovation

Tuesday, 8 April 2025, 15:00–18:00 (Geneva time)
Room XIX, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

Concept note

Background

Science, technology and innovation (STI) are essential drivers of economic transformation, competitiveness and sustainable development. Technical cooperation on STI strengthens STI policy capacity and policy frameworks in developing countries. It supports countries' efforts to build technological capabilities, strengthen national systems of innovation, and develop policy frameworks that promote inclusive and sustainable growth and development.

This session will highlight recent STI-related technical cooperation initiatives supported by UNCTAD-CSTD, focusing on:

- **Technology assessment** as a tool for anticipatory technology governance and evidence-based policymaking, outlining the lessons learned from the UNCTAD pilot project in Seychelles, South Africa and Zambia;
- **Application of space technologies and earth observation systems in sustainable urban development**, based on achievements from the joint UNCTAD–Atlantic International Research Centre (AIR Centre) project; and
- The **policy dimensions and practices concerning the development of STI parks**, featuring experiences from Ghana, Mozambique, Mongolia and Uzbekistan, and possibly from other countries.

Objective

Through knowledge-sharing and experience exchange, the session will identify key policy considerations and best practices in leveraging STI cooperation for sustainable development.

Guiding questions for discussion

- What lessons have been learned from recent UNCTAD-led STI cooperation projects, and how can they inform future initiatives?
- What are the challenges of applying space technologies to sustainable urban development? What measures can be taken to overcome them?
- What are the key success factors and challenges in developing, managing and sustaining STI parks?

- How can international partnerships strengthen STI policy capacity-building efforts in developing countries?
- What support can the CSTD and CSTD members offer with respect to international capacity-building efforts on STI policy?

Format of the session

The session will begin with presentations on

- Lessons learned from the UNCTAD pilot project (Seychelles, South Africa and Zambia); and
- Achievements from the joint UNCTAD–AIR Centre project on space technologies for sustainable urban development (Brazil and South Africa)

It will be followed by interactive discussion, in which participants are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and share relevant experiences (see the guiding questions above).

Afterwards, there will be presentations on national STI park strategies and implementation thereof, as well as capacity building under the UNCTAD STI Park project, from Ghana, Mozambique, Mongolia and Uzbekistan. Two discussants are also expected to share their respective countries' experiences.

An interactive discussion will follow, allowing participants to contribute their perspectives and share relevant experiences (see the guiding questions above).

Supporting documents

- Technology assessment in developing countries: An updated proposed methodology: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsdtlinf2024d6_en.pdf
- UNCTAD reports on technology assessment in Seychelles, South Africa and Zambia:
 - Seychelles: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsdtlinf2024d5_en.pdf
 - South Africa: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsdtlinf2024d8_en.pdf
 - Zambia: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsdtlinf2024d2_en.pdf
- Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review of Seychelles: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/dtltikd2024d1_en.pdf
- Country reports on STI parks in Ghana, Mozambique, Mongolia and Uzbekistan:
 - Ghana: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsdtlinf2024d4_en.pdf
 - Mongolia: forthcoming

- Mozambique: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsdtlinf2024d3_en.pdf
- Uzbekistan: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tcsdtlinf2024d7_en.pdf
- Other relevant documents are available on the website of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD): <https://unctad.org/meeting/commission-science-and-technology-development-twenty-eighth-session>