

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

*Ministerial Roundtable on  
"the role of science, technology, and innovation in Transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions for the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals for a sustainable future for all: Contribution of the Commission to the 2026 theme of the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development and the implementation of its 2026 Ministerial Declaration"*

Monday, 20 April 2026, 11:00-13:00 (Geneva time)

### Concept Note

#### 1. Background

The theme for the 2026 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) to be held from 6 to 15 July 2026 will be convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July 2026, with the theme "*Transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals for a sustainable future for all.*" The HLPF will conduct in-depth reviews of **SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).**

Science, technology and innovation (STI) play a central role in enabling the transformations required to achieve the 2030 Agenda. STI underpins productivity growth, industrial development, infrastructure resilience, sustainable urbanization, clean and renewable energy transitions, efficient and effective water management, and the strengthening of partnerships and means of implementation. At the same time, uneven STI capacities and persistent digital divides among countries, and insufficient coordination of national innovation systems continue to constrain progress in achieving the goals to be reviewed this year, particularly in developing countries.

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development, as the United Nations' system-wide platform for discussing STI for development, has a unique mandate to contribute to the HLPF by providing policy-oriented guidance on how STI can support transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated action to implement the SDGs. Building on the outcomes of the 28th session of the CSTD and its contribution to HLPF 2025, the Ministerial Roundtable at the 29th session aims to articulate concrete STI-related policy messages to inform the 2026 HLPF.

#### 2. Objectives

The Ministerial Roundtable aims to:

- Highlight the **role of science, technology and innovation** in advancing transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda;
- Examine how STI can accelerate progress in the **SDGs to be reviewed at HLPF 2026**, with particular attention to SDGs 9 and 17;
- Provide a **high-level platform for ministers and senior policymakers** to share experiences including challenges and best practices in leveraging STI for implementing SDGs 9 and 17;

- Identify **key policy recommendations and priority actions** for consideration by Member States.

### 3. Guiding Questions

The Ministerial Roundtable will be guided by the following questions:

- How can STI support transformative and equitable pathways towards the SDGs to be reviewed at HLPF 2026, particularly SDG 9 and 17?
- What policies and institutions are needed to harness technology and innovation for industrial development, a target under SDGs 9?
- What forms of international cooperation and partnerships are most effective in closing STI gaps, particularly in developing countries and least developed countries?

### 4. Expected Outcomes

The Ministerial Roundtable is expected to result in:

- **Key STI-focused policy messages** contributing to the deliberations at the 2026 HLPF;
- **Concrete recommendations** for leveraging STI more effectively to achieve the SDGs;
- Enhanced **partnerships** among member States and stakeholders to strengthen STI for sustainable development.

### 5. Format of the roundtable

The Moderator will invite the high-level speakers to share their insights and recommendations (maximum 7 minutes each). The Co-Chairs of the 2026 STI Forum have been invited to speak at the roundtable to maintain synergies between the CSTD and STI Forum.

### 5. Supporting documents

- [Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment of the 2025 session of the Economic and Social Council and the 2025 high-level political forum on sustainable development \(E/HLS/2025/1\)](#)
- Outcome document of the [10th Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, 7-8 May 2025, E/HLPF/2025/6](#).
- Information on the 2026 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development under the auspices of ECOSOC can be found [here](#).
- Information on the 11th Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum 2026) can be found [here](#).
- Further documents are available on the website of the twenty-ninth session of the CSTD can be accessed [here](#).