



Scientific & Technical Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference of the STC are based on the paragraphs 42-47 of the Declaration of Intent in support of the International “4 per 1000” Initiative, hereafter referred to as *the Initiative*.

1. Mission of the STC

Noting paragraph 42 of the Declaration of Intent in Support of the international Initiative the STC shall provide scientific and technical support to the Consortium of the Initiative and act as ambassadors of the Initiative.

2. Roles and activities of the STC

Based on paragraph 43 of the Declaration of Intent, the roles of the STC are to:

- *propose to the Consortium and update, a set of reference criteria for the evaluation of projects and actions founded on the principles and goals of the Initiative as defined in the Paris Declaration, as well as on the Sustainable Development Goals;*
- *formulate opinions and advice on projects, actions and programs at the request of the Consortium or the Secretariat;*
- *formulate and update priorities in support of international scientific research and cooperation programs*
- *make contributions to the resource center in conjunction with the Secretariat and, when asked to do so by the Secretariat, validate the posting of documents online.*

Additionally, the STC may support other scientific and technical tasks such as but not limited to:

- providing advice and input for the scientific and technical aspects of the Initiative, including:
 - proposed actions;
 - implementation of the strategic plan;
 - documents produced and published;
- supporting the dissemination of knowledge related to Soil Health and other aspects addressed by the Initiative, through, e.g., policy briefs, scientific papers, webinars or conferences;
- assessing projects in the framework of the calls organized by the Executive Secretary;
- communicating with the College of Research and Educational Bodies of the Forum of the Initiative on training, capacity building, technology transfer, data management, and research activities;
- consulting when deemed necessary any external expert it considers relevant to its activities.

3. Membership in the STC

The STC shall be composed of fourteen (14) scientists or practitioners, all recognised for their scientific or technical skills on topics relevant to the Initiative.

STC members shall notably be experts in relevant disciplines, such as: soil sciences, the carbon cycle, agronomics, land tenures, farming, forestry, environmental sciences, GIS or remote sensing, data sciences, economics, political sciences and sociology, with the following areas of application: food and

nutrition security, adaptation or mitigation to climate change, and development.

The composition of the STC reflects the importance of on-the-ground experience and engagement.

It takes into account the world's various regions and shall promote a gender balance.

STC members act in an individual capacity, independent of national or institutional affiliation.

The STC members are endorsed by the Consortium from a list of candidates proposed by the Bureau based on the analysis of the applications by the Executive Secretariat and after consultation of the college of research and educational bodies. Candidates recommended by the STC are also considered.

The Executive Secretariat is responsible for compiling the list of candidates, and preparing and leading the nomination procedure. The diversity of disciplines covered in the scope of the "4 per 1000" Initiative as well as gender balance are important factors to be considered in the nominations.

Criteria for selection are:

1. Outstanding academic record, international visibility, and reputation in the scope of the topics addressed by the Initiative.
2. Broad vision of the challenges related to agriculture/forestry, food security and climate change.
3. Expertise on the ground will be considered as a complementary positive point.

STC members are appointed for a term of 2 years as standard.

If a member of the STC should leave before completion of their term, the Executive Secretariat shall set up a new nomination.

4. Membership renewal

One third of the STC members shall be replaced every two years, so that a complete exchange of STC members is reached within a period of 6 years.

Members can be re-appointed a two year mandate with a maximum of 3 mandates by decision of the members of the Consortium. This rule will be implemented in a flexible manner in order to avoid discontinuity in the functioning of the STC.

5. Chair and Vice-Chairs of the STC

The STC shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chairs (with a maximum of 3) from its members.

With the assistance of the Executive Secretariat, the Chair shall propose an agenda for the STC work program, facilitate and moderate the meetings of the STC, with a Vice-Chair assuming this responsibility in the event of the Chair being unable to attend.

The STC shall report directly to the Consortium through the Chair (or a Vice-Chair) on due time.

The Chair and Vice-Chairs are elected for a 2-year term. The Chair and Vice-Chairs can be confirmed for a second 2-year mandate by the STC members.

In addition to the replacement of the Chair in case of their inability to attend, each Vice-Chair has specific roles to play for the functioning of the STC. These are to be defined by the STC during the meeting in which the Chair is elected, or during the following meeting, if the Chair is elected by electronic consultation.

The Chair and Vice Chair(s) are members of the Bureau and responsible to keep the STC informed of important Bureau discussions and vice versa.

6. Meetings of the Scientific and Technical Committee

6.1. Meeting frequency and attendance

The STC carries out its assigned tasks by means of physical and virtual meetings with support from the Executive Secretariat.

The STC shall meet at least twice a year at the invitation of the Executive Secretariat. Additionally, the STC may be convened by the Chair and/or the Consortium if special circumstances necessitate such a meeting.

Regular attendance at meetings and active participation in and between the meetings as well as in implementing the work program of the STC is expected and is a consideration in the renewal process.

The STC will consider to end the mandate of any STC member who fails to attend more than two STC meetings in a row, be it virtually or in person, while also being inactive between the meetings.

Meetings of the STC are organized and attended by the Executive Secretariat and, if appropriate, by a maximum of 2 representatives of the Bureau or the Consortium.

The STC, through the STC Chair and Executive Secretariat, may invite experts, including former STC members, on a permanent or temporary basis to attend STC meetings where their attendance would facilitate discussion.

Chair and Vice-chairs are required to attend Consortium and Forum meetings, other STC members and former STC members are invited to attend.

6.2. Decision process

Quorum

The STC has a quorum of two-thirds, i.e. 9 members, either in person or by video/telephone conference.

Voting

The STC takes decisions by consensus.

7. Conflict of Interest

STC members may provide advice for the development of activities and public policies only if they have demonstrated the absence of any conflict of interest.

Statements of interest shall be produced by each STC member and updated every year.

STC members shall not participate in any decisions or any evaluation where a situation or circumstance of personal or professional nature has the potential to compromise their ability to make decisions in the interest of best performing their role in the STC.

In case of a potential conflict of interest, such STC member shall raise the issue with the Chair. Consequently, the STC shall decide, as a panel, on whether or not the STC member can participate in the discussion. The STC shall make this decision outlining the situation(s) considered as conflict of interest.

8. Expenditure, Travelling Expenses

STC members work in an honorary capacity and are not employed by the Initiative to fulfill this role. Members and invited experts are reimbursed for their travel expenses related to "4 per 1000" Initiative meetings.