



**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
EAST AFRICAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION (EASTECO)**

PRESS RELEASE

Regional Stakeholder Workshop on EAC Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Policy

24TH September 2018, Kenya School of Monetary Studies, Nairobi, Kenya

“Unlocking East Africa’s Development Potential through Science, Technology and Innovation”

The East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO) is a semi-autonomous institution of the East African Community (EAC) that was established by the fifth Extra-Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State on 18th June 2007, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Treaty on the Establishment of the EAC to promote cooperation in the development of science and technology. *EASTECO’s overall objective is to promote and coordinate the development, management and application of science and technology to support regional integration and socioeconomic development.*

The EAC Partner States have explicitly recognised the importance of Science Technology and Innovation (STI) for socio-economic development in the relevant provisions of Treaty establishing the Community. Science, technology and innovation is important for the enhancement of the socio-economic status of individuals and communities and is key to the establishment of the competitiveness of regional economies. It will be altogether impossible, to create wealth and improve the living standards of the people of this region without developing and applying science and technology and strengthening systems to harness innovation at the national level.

However, the implementation of national STI policies is at varying stages in the EAC Partner States. In some of the EAC partner states, the national STI policies are under a review process. Some of the key challenges hampering the development and implementation of effective STI policies in EAC Partner States are inadequate funds for the implementation of national STI policies, lack of up-to-date, reliable data and indicators on the current status of S&T, lack of indicators and support mechanisms for innovation. The National Institutions have focused on training, education, research and development of national STI policies, with less focus on innovation in the national STI policies. This has resulted in weak and non-direct linkages for science, technology and innovation to support societal needs and sustained economic growth.

The general objective of the regional STI policy is to create an enabling environment for increased investment in Science, Technology and Innovation in order to support sustainable regional development and socio-economic transformation. The Regional STI Policy will avail opportunities for coordination between national and regional level developments which will serve to avoid unexpected risks caused by uncoordinated activities and harness available synergies. The policy with implementation plan will allow and facilitate the various stakeholders in the region to work towards a common goal albeit within the context of their particular countries.

The purpose of the meeting is to review and validate the draft policy for the East African Regional science, technology and innovation for sustainable regional development and socio-economic transformation.

The regional STI Policy which aims at fostering cooperation and promoting the development, transfer, adoption, adaption and mastery of science, technology and innovation in the East African Community for sustainable regional development and socio-economic transformation.

The expected outputs of the regional stakeholder meeting draft EAC Policy on Science, Technology and Innovation validated and enriched with lessons and experience from STI Stakeholders, Partner States and partners; and effective support mechanisms identified and validated to enhance regional and national innovation systems for a sustained conducive environment in fostering S&T-led innovations;

The workshop will gather about 65 stakeholders' representative from EAC Partner States including National Commission/Council for Science and Technology; Ministries responsible for Science, Technology and Innovation; National Departments responsible for Intellectual Property in EAC Partner States; Universities/Academia; National Research Institutions; Private Business and Civil Society sector and Development Partners (UNESCO, IDRC and UNECA).

The EAC IP Policy development process has been participatory and included national level consultations in all EAC Partner States.

After this consultative process the reviewed draft Regional Policies will be submitted to the EASTECO Governing Board for adoption before consideration and approval by the EAC Council of Ministers.

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