

DRAFT v4 - IUCN SSC Global Tree Specialist Group Communications Strategy

1. Introduction

The IUCN SSC Global Tree Specialist Group (SSG) is a global network of experts who, working in their own regions and institutions, all contribute to the conservation of globally threatened trees. We currently have more than 130 members from 42 countries, and our mission is to **conserve tree species globally, by sharing knowledge and catalyse action to halt declines, restore populations and prevent extinctions.**

The overall Communication Strategy is intended to support the Communicate component of the IUCN SSC Species Conservation Cycle *“to drive strategic and targeted communication to enhance our conservation impact.”*

This communications strategy should support the Global Tree Specialist Group mission and support our Strategy for the Quadrennium 2026-2029 including the following three targets:

- T012.** Make internal communications more effective – with annual virtual meetings, quarterly newsletters and development and implementation of a new communication strategy
- T013.** Share resources of guidelines, tools and best practise to the wider tree conservation community
- T014.** Be a leading voice for tree conservation through the publication of high impact communication pieces

This communication strategy aims to:

- Improve internal communication and grow engagement among Global Tree Specialist Group and other IUCN SSC members.
- Share knowledge, tools and best practices to support global tree conservation efforts.
- Drive conservation action for trees through impactful external communications and public outreach

2. Key messages

The communication strategy will promote the following key messages:

- Trees hold vital ecological, economic and cultural value.
- Over one-third of tree species (38%) are at risk of extinction.
- Conservation policies must be grounded in sound scientific evidence.
- Sharing the outcomes of GTSG initiatives with policymakers, NGOs, and the public can drive meaningful improvements in the status of tree species.

3. Audiences

To achieve the communication objectives of the GTSG, a range of priority audience groups will be targeted. Each audience requires tailored messaging, channels, and engagement approaches to ensure relevance and impact. The following key audiences have been identified:

- GTSG members
- IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)
- Conservation Practitioners
- Conservation Scientists (including taxonomists, ecologists and related disciplines)
- Policymakers
- Funders
- Journalists /Public

4. Channels

To effectively reach diverse audience groups, the GTSG will use a range of targeted communication channels. These include:

Internal Communication Channels (for GTSG members and IUCN SSC):

- **Email** – For essential updates and direct member communication.
- **GTSG Newsletter** – Quarterly updates highlighting GTSG activities and member contributions.
- **IUCN Engage Platform** – To foster collaboration and internal discussions across the SSC network.
- **Virtual Meetings & Webinars** – For strategic updates, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing.

External Communication Channels (for practitioners, scientists, policymakers, and the public):

- **GTSG website** – A central place for resources, publications and updates.
- **Social media** (e.g., Bluesky, LinkedIn) – To share key messages and engage broader audiences.
- **Scientific publications /reports** – To reach conservation scientists and relevant researchers.
- **Press releases and media engagement** – For announcing major initiatives, discoveries or publications to journalists and the public.
- **Workshops and conferences** – To connect with practitioners, scientists and policymakers.
- **Policy briefs/position statements** – Concise materials to influence decision-making.

5. Key Activities, Audience, Products, Channels and Contributors

T012. Make internal communications more effective – with annual virtual meetings, quarterly newsletters and development and implementation of a new communication strategy

| Key Activity | Audience | Products | Channels | GTSG Contributors |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| T012.A1 Annual Virtual meetings and quarterly newsletters with increased input from GTSG (new mechanism on GTSG website) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GTSG members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Member news/case studies for newsletter. ● Members sharing knowledge and presenting at annual virtual meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GTSG newsletter ● Virtual Meetings & Webinars | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All GTSG members encouraged to contribute to newsletter and attend meetings/webinars |
| T012.A2 Facilitate ways for GTSG members to get engaged (i.e. IUCN Engage platform training, and creating “how to” guides/resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GTSG members ● IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “How to” guides and resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IUCN Engage Platform ● Virtual Meetings & Webinars ● Website/Social media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All members can be active on the IUCN Engage platform |
| T012.A3 Communicate grant opportunities for tree conservation action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GTSG members ● Conservation Practitioners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Short text on relevant funding opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Email ● GTSG newsletter ● Engage platform | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chair can send email and include in newsletter. ● All members can post opportunities on IUCN Engage platform |

T013. Share resources of guidelines, tools and best practise to the wider tree conservation community

| Key Activity | Audience | Products | Channels | GTSG Contributors |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| T013.A1 Encourage GTSG members to contribute to case studies and best practise on the GTSG website and quarterly newsletters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GTSG members ● IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Case studies and examples of best practise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GTSG newsletter ● GTSG website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All GTSG members encouraged to contribute their expertise |
| T013.A2 Consolidate existing tree conservation resources, highlight new guidance and tools and encourage GTSG members to cross post and share (see T010.A1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conservation Practitioners ● Funders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sharing of tools/guidance/training for tree conservation ● Conservation Action Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GTSG website ● Virtual Meetings & Webinars | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All GTSG members encouraged to contribute their expertise |
| T013.A3 Highlight GTSG member publications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conservation Practitioners ● Conservation Scientists (including taxonomists, ecologists etc.) ● Journalists /Public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peer-reviewed publications on tree conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scientific publications /reports ● Press releases and media engagement ● Workshops and conferences ● Website/Social media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All GTSG members encouraged to contribute their publications to be shared |

T014. Be a leading voice for tree conservation through the publication of high impact communication pieces

| Key Activity | Audience | Products | Channels | GTSG Contributors |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| T014.A1 Publish and publicise 'Act now' species priority list | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conservation Practitioners ● Conservation Scientists (including taxonomists, ecologists etc.) ● Funders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report/publication to focus on 'Act now' global priority list for trees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scientific publications /reports ● Press releases and media engagement ● Policy briefs/position statements ● Website/Social media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working group |
| T014.A2 A success story/conservation action tracker update when we hit a pivotal number | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policymakers ● Journalists /Public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report/publication highlighting use of conservation action tracker for global tree conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scientific publications /reports ● Press releases and media engagement ● Website/Social media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working group |
| T014.A3 Advocating for tree conservation in scientific events, presentations, publications (to improve tree diversity and conservation knowledge) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conservation Scientists (including taxonomists, ecologists etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scientific publications on tree conservation ● Presentations at conferences/workshops on tree conservation ● Teaching? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scientific publications /reports ● Policy briefs/position statements ● Workshops and conferences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All GTSG members encouraged to share their expertise |
| T014.A4 Position statements of the GTSG on relevant issues (reforestation, tree planting, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policymakers ● Journalists /Public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Position statement (as required) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scientific publications /reports ● Press releases and media engagement ● Policy briefs/position statements ● Workshops and conferences ● Website/Social media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chair ● Advisory Committee ● Policy working group |

6. Use of the Global Tree Specialist Group Logo and Affiliation

The Global Tree Specialist Group (GTSG) affiliation and logo identify work of the Global Tree Specialist Group and help maintain credibility, consistency and alignment with GTSG mission and wider SSC.

Individuals may reference their **affiliation with GTSG** (without using the logo) in CVs, biographies, academic papers and presentations. The recommended wording is “[Member], IUCN/SSC Global Tree Specialist Group”. Affiliation does not imply endorsement of personal views or independent work.

The **GTSG logo** may be used by all GTSG members, when work is relating directly to GTSG targets and activities. Where appropriate, include clarifying text (e.g. “An activity of the IUCN/SSC Global Tree Specialist Group”). The logo can be used on:

- Official GTSG publications, reports and online content
- Presentations, posters and events that are GTSG-led or GTSG-endorsed
- Funding proposals where GTSG has agreed to participate

Use of the logo for new outputs, partnerships or high-profile external communications should be approved in advance by the GTSG Chair (with support of the GTSG Advisory Committee). If a use could be interpreted as official GTSG endorsement, approval is required.

The logo **must not** be used for commercial, fundraising, political or advocacy purposes or to imply endorsement of organisations, products or positions without prior approval by the GTSG Chair (with support of the GTSG Advisory Committee).

The logo and powerpoint templates can be downloaded here:

<https://portals.iucn.org/union/node/33322>



7. Communication Partners

The GTSG works closely with several IUCN SSC programs and groups to highlight and share success stories regarding tree conservation (T014.A2), advocate for tree conservation (T014.A3), and disseminate policy documents such as position statements on relevant issues (T014.A4). Relevant communication plans, updates, and outputs should be shared with one or more of these partners:

- Center for Species Survival for Trees hosted at The Morton Arboretum: Centers for Species Survival (CSS) are partnerships between the SSC Chair's Office and leading species conservation organisations. They empower dedicated staff to work closely with relevant SSC Groups in catalysing priority efforts for assess-plan-act projects across a variety of geographic, taxonomic or thematic areas/scales.
 - Contact person: CSS: Trees Manager, Amy Byrne, abyrne@mortonarb.org
- Reverse the Red: a global, diverse coalition committed to using a science-based approach to assess, plan, and act for species conservation. Reverse the Red provides the tools and expertise to empower governments, partners, and local communities to set and reach their biodiversity conservation targets and celebrates and promotes conservation success stories.
 - Contact person: Megan Joyce, megan.joyce@reversethered.org
- Red List Unit: The IUCN Red List is managed by the Red List Unit (RLU), which is part of the IUCN Secretariat. The RLU review all Red List submissions for appropriate use of criteria, adequacy of supporting information, and overall consistency prior to publication. A press release is prepared for each IUCN Red List update, often with different foci. But there is often call for case studies and species to be highlighted that are included in the update.
 - Contact: redlist@iucn.org