Connect: Mainstreaming biodiversity into the heart of government decision-making

Communication Strategy: Global

Contents

1. Introduction

The Connect project 2016-2020 will help governments to achieve their sustainable development objectives by bringing biodiversity and ecosystem services to the heart of government decision-making using actionable environmental information. Connect focuses on in depth development of proofs of concept with Ghana, Uganda and Mozambique to:

1. Clearly understand the in-country demands for, and the barriers to using, biodiversity information within government decision-making including clarifying the format, timing and packaging required
2. Mobilise and repackage existing biodiversity data and information from a range of national and international sources to meet a number of the above demands; and
3. Strengthen the connection between government decision makers and biodiversity and ecosystem services data providers in order to sustainably provide policy-relevant, spatially explicit information to meet ongoing national needs

This Global Communication Strategy covers internal and external communications from the global perspective. Each national project team will produce a complementary National Communication and Engagement Plan/Strategy, found in Annex 1.

2. Aims of the Global Communication Strategy

This document seeks to:
- Support each partner to achieve the project's overall objectives
- Be a platform for project partners to collaborate on agreed communications objectives
- Assist internal communication among project partners,
  Identify the most appropriate ways to promote the dissemination of the project outputs externally to, regional, national and global initiatives
- Enable effective communication with the key stakeholders of the connect project

Clear and effective communication at the national level is critically important to the success of the project. The National Communication and Engagement Plans/Strategies (Annex 1) have a related, but distinct aim of demonstrating how the national project teams intend to facilitate communication between stakeholders to achieve the project objectives. This includes discussing how the national stakeholders are engaged by the project, how the project is communicated to those stakeholders and by what methods.

3. Communication objectives

The aims of the Global Communication Strategy will be realised through the following objectives:

- To raise awareness of the Connect project as measured through level of message uptake in target countries, use of data/knowledge products and increasing website traffic by target audiences throughout project duration
- To generate case studies and positive feedback from users

4. Audience

The table below describes how the project team intends to communicate with the various audience groups of the project, including: what will be communicated; how it will be communicated; and when it will be communicated.

Audience	Organisations	What will be communicated?	How will it be communicated?	When will it be communicated?
Implementing and Executing Partners	United Nations Environment and UN Environment-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)	Project progress and reporting	Standard reporting templates	Regular reporting intervals
Work package lead organisations	National Biosafety Authority (NBA), Ghana Ministry of Land, Environment and Rural Development (MITADER), Mozambique National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Uganda Secretariat to the Convention on Biological Diversity (sCBD) International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	• Project progress and reporting from contracting partners to UNEP-WCMC • Lesson sharing and networking between countries and partners • Support and guidance on upcoming activities to national partners	• Regular project teleconference calls • Face-to-face meetings prior to national workshops • Annual All-hands meetings • Project reports • Email communication	• Email/Skype support on an 'as and when' basis as required • Monthly teleconference calls • Regular national workshops • Annual All-hands meetings
Other project partners	Prospex Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON) BirdLife International Joint Research Council (JRC)	• Project progress and reporting from contracting partners to UNEP-WCMC • Lesson sharing and networking between countries and partners • Opportunities for further collaboration between project partners and UNEP-WCMC	• Project update emails • Annual All-hands meetings • Website updates	• Informal email/face-to-face communication as required • Bi-monthly project update emails • Annual All-hands meetings

Audience	Organisations	What will be communicated?	How will it be communicated?	When will it be communicated?
	South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI; South Africa)			
Global organisations and initiatives	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Biodiversity Indicator Partnership (BIP) members	• Project progress and reporting from contracting partners to UNEP-WCMC • Lesson sharing and networking between project partners, UNEP-WCMC and others • Opportunities for further collaboration between project partners, UNEP-WCMC and others	• Website updates • Dissemination at regional and international meetings (e.g. side events etc.) • Mailing lists such as biodiversity-l	• Monthly website updates • 1-2 regional and/or international meetings per year as required (e.g. CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)/CBD Conference of the Parties (COP))
Regional organisations and initiatives	Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Conservation Alliance South African Development Community (SADC) East African Community (EAC) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) African Union Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)	• Lesson sharing and networking across region between project partners, UNEP-WCMC and others • Opportunities for further collaboration between project partners, UNEP-WCMC and others in the region	• Website updates • Dissemination at regional and international meetings (e.g. side events etc.)	• Monthly website updates by WCMC • 1-2 regional and/or international meetings per year as required (e.g. CBD SBSTTA/COP)

Audience	Organisations	What will be communicated?	How will it be communicated?	When will it be communicated?
	Organisation of American States (OAS) Caribbean Community (CARICOM)			
National project organisations and initiatives	National government bodies/departments (e.g. Ministry of Environment, Forestry Commission, National Development Planning Commission, Agriculture, National Statistics Offices) Private companies (including private sector organizations and associations) Academic/research institutes Non-governmental Organisations Civil Society Organisations Women's Groups and Organisations	• Raise awareness of decision makers across sectors of the potential use of biodiversity data in decision making • Opportunities for further collaboration between project partners, UNEP-WCMC and others in each country	• Stakeholder workshops/events • National government websites • Face-to-face networking in country • Flyers and brochures	• According to the schedule set in National Action Plans
Relevant National focal points and government offices for countries outside of the Connect project	National Focal Points for the biodiversity conventions (e.g. CBD Focal Point) National Statistics Offices	• Raise awareness of decision makers across sectors of the potential use of biodiversity data in decision making • Opportunities for further collaboration between project partners, UNEP-WCMC and others in countries outside of the project	• Website updates • Dissemination at regional and international meetings (e.g. side events etc.)	• Website updates on a monthly bases • 1-2 regional and/or international meetings per year as required (e.g. CBD SBSTTA/COP)
Other national organisations	National Geomatics Centre (China)	• Lesson sharing and networking across regions • Opportunities for further collaboration between project	• Website updates • Dissemination at regional and international	• Bi-annual ITAUG meetings (remote and face-to-face) • Website updates on a monthly bases

Audience	Organisations	What will be communicated?	How will it be communicated?	When will it be communicated?
and initiatives	National Commission of Biodiversity Use and Knowledge (CONABIO; Mexico) National Institute of Biodiversity (INBio; Costa Rica) Instituto Humboldt (Colombia)	partners, UNEP-WCMC and others across the globe	meetings (e.g. side events etc.) • International Technical Advisory and Upscaling Group (ITAUG) meetings	• 1-2 regional and/or international meetings per year as required (e.g. CBD SBSTTA/COP)

5. Strategy

- Develop and use the Connect Project website (www.connectbiodiversity.com) as a dynamic tool for communication between and among project partners, and for wider dissemination of project outputs and outcomes.
- Use meetings, workshops, and project milestones to disseminate project outputs, outcomes and other relevant news.
- Share communication channels and establish media connections with project partners.
- Work with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UN Environment communications offices to maximize media liaison opportunities.

6. Key messages

Within this project there will be both over-arching and regionally optimised key messages, which will be modulated region by region, for different regional audiences. Over-arching key messages will be reinforced through all communications channels.

Key messages will be created at each project milestone, depending on project outputs. As an interim, some key messages include:

- The Connect project aims to help government's achieve their sustainable development objectives by bringing biodiversity information to the heart of government decision-making
- The project will improve understanding among the international biodiversity community of the types, format, packaging and delivery of biodiversity data and information that is required for decision-making at the national level.
- An outcome of the project will be decision-appropriate biodiversity and ecosystem services data and information products that feed specific government decision-making processes.
- A theory of change will be developed for biodiversity mainstreaming and tested through the pilot countries of Uganda, Mozambique and Ghana

7. Activities

Website
The Connect project website is a key communication tool for the project. A highly informative and dynamic website will provide an essential link between the project partners and the wider community. The project website will describe the Connect project, provide up-to-date information about the project's progress and act as a repository for the technical products that are produced by the project. Communication from the partners will be fed into the news on the website. The website address is www.connectbiodiversity.com

Reports and publications
Meeting and workshop reports and other project publications will be made available via the project website to inform both internal project stakeholders and external audiences.

Regional and International meetings and conferences

The Connect project will be promoted through presentations, posters and/or side events at selected meetings and conferences within the African region and beyond as deemed appropriate.

Social media

A brief summary of the news contributed by the partners to the Connect project website will be posted on the UNEP-WCMC Twitter account @unepwcmc under the hashtag #connectbiodiversity Where appropriate, tweets will also hashtag relevant topics e.g. #mainstreaming, #SDGs, #biodiversity. When relevant conferences/events are taking place which have their own #, relevant content will be shared with this #. Partners, funders and stakeholders should also be mentioned where appropriate to increase reach of the tweets (e.g. @TheGEF)

Internal project communication

- An Annual All-Hands meeting will be held to inform all partners of project progress, and discuss implementation plans for the year ahead.
- The Project Steering Committee (PSC) will meet face to face once per year, preferably directly following the All-Hands meeting. The PSC will meet remotely at 6 monthly intervals between each face to face meeting. UNEP-WCMC will also provide updates to the PSC regarding project progress at regular intervals.
- The International Technical Advisory and Up-Scaling Group will meet remotely at regular intervals, coordinated by UNEP-WCMC.
- Work Package lead organisations will hold monthly update calls with UNEP-WCMC via telephone, Skype or similar. In addition all Work Package leads will be invited to attend a coordination call every three months.
- UNEP-WCMC will provide project updates to all partners via email every 6-8 weeks and will be available to discuss individual issues with project partners as necessary.

8. Branding

- Logos of the funder (GEF), Implementing Agency (UN Environment) and Executing Agency (UNEP-WCMC) and the relevant Government Ministry from each project country should feature on all products. Other project partner logos will be added as required. All products should be submitted to UNEP-WCMC at the draft stage to ensure that the appropriate publication guidelines of GEF and/or UN Environment are adhered to.
- Reports, publications and presentations will be produced in the same style and format for consistency in the look of all products using UNEP-WCMC style guidelines.
- Where possible, images should be used to help visualise the links between biodiversity information and decision making, and an optimistic and positive outlook will be sought.

9. Monitoring

UNEP-WCMC will monitor both the internal and external flow of communication; the former, to ensure that partners are well informed, engaged and able to perform the communication

activities as agreed; the latter, to ensure that the information is well received by external stakeholders, such as policy makers.

UNEP-WCMC will develop monitoring tools (such as online surveys) in collaboration with partners in order to facilitate the gathering of standardized information from partners. The monitoring strategy will consist of the following:

- The monitoring tool for internal communications will allow the assessment of partners' levels of information about progress in the project, levels of participation in the implementation of project communication activities, and perception of benefits derived from the project.
- For external communications, the monitoring tool will help to assess progress towards achieving goals and communication outputs. Some examples of indicators that could be considered include the number of documents downloaded from the project website, and number of citations in publications and reports etc. Once the final project website is created, these statistics will be compiled every six months.

Annex 1
National Communication and Engagement Plans/Strategies