



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



The International Treaty
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Item 21 of the Provisional Agenda

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Kigali, Rwanda, 30 October – 3 November 2017

Communication Strategy of the International Treaty

Executive Summary

At its second meeting in March 2017, the Bureau of the Seventh Session of the Governing Body requested the Secretariat to develop a Communication Strategy for the International Treaty, to be presented to the Governing Body at this Session.

The purpose of this Communication Strategy is to provide a strategic tool to guide the International Treaty in developing more regular communication with its stakeholders. It is expected to provide a more coherent and cohesive framework for the development of communication products and services.

Guidance Sought

The Governing Body is invited to consider the information provided in this document and endorse the Communication Strategy for the International Treaty, and provide any further guidance it considers appropriate for the effective implementation of the Communication Strategy for the International Treaty.

*This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page;
an FAO initiative to minimize its environmental impact and promote greener communications.
Other documents can be consulted at [http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-
detail/en/c/888771/](http://www.fao.org/plant-treaty/meetings/meetings-detail/en/c/888771/)*



mu706

Table of Contents

	Paragraphs
I. Introduction.....	1 – 2
II. Scope and Purpose.....	3 – 5
III. Objectives.....	6 – 9
IV. Target Audience.....	10 – 11
V. Roles and Responsibilities.....	12
VI. Branding and Key Messages.....	13 – 17
VII. Methods and Tools	18 – 30
VIII. Partnerships and Collaborations	31 – 33
IX. Communication Plan.....	34 – 35
X. Resources.....	36 – 40
XI. Periodic Review	41 – 44
Appendix: List of Acronyms	

I. Introduction

1. The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (International Treaty or ITPGRFA) was adopted in 2001 to enable nations around the world to conserve crop biodiversity and sustainably utilize germplasm in a fair and equitable manner. The International Treaty has grown significantly since its inception to include 144 Contracting Parties. To date, it has facilitated the transfer of more than 4 000 000 accessions of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) through its Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (MLS), and supported farmers and plant breeders in the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA through 61 projects implemented in 55 developing countries worldwide.

The International Treaty is now in a transformative phase and a Communication Strategy is needed to ensure that stakeholders are regularly apprised of latest developments, achievements and future programmes.

2. In recent years, the importance of a Communication Strategy and its dedicated implementation has been widely acknowledged by international organizations, including the International Treaty's parent organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). These now have dedicated communication teams to implement organizational communication policies and plans. To date, the International Treaty has not had a cohesive Communication Strategy, nor has it allocated dedicated resources to deliver ongoing communication products and activities within the framework of a strategic plan. The need for a Communication Strategy for the International Treaty and its implementation was most recently acknowledged and discussed by the Bureau of the Seventh Session of the Governing Body, as well as by the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy (ACFS).¹ At its second meeting, the Bureau invited the Secretariat to develop a Communication Strategy for consideration by the Seventh Governing Body Session in October 2017. It is in the context of this request that this Communication Strategy has been developed.

II. Scope and Purpose

The primary purpose of the Communication Strategy is to provide a strategic tool to guide the International Treaty in developing regular, clear and ongoing communication with its stakeholders.

3. The key to effective communication is reaching the right audience with the right tools at the right time. Clear and effective communication is crucial, regardless of whether institutions are trying to relay a message to a large group, or to an individual. Without it, even the most brilliant programmes and achievements may remain underutilized, or even invisible. To build and maintain support, the Governing Body and the Secretariat of the International Treaty must continue to engage effectively with stakeholders, increasing awareness of the International Treaty, communicating achievements, sharing knowledge and garnering support for future activities. This can be most effectively achieved through a Communication Strategy that will act as a guide for the development of future communication activities and material.

4. The purpose of this Communication Strategy is to provide a framework for enhancing the International Treaty's communication processes, products, activities and services, consistent with FAO's Corporate Communication policy and guidelines.²

¹ Report of the ninth meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Funding Strategy, available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-BS764e.pdf>

² http://www.fao.org/docrep/x1200e/x1200e02.htm#P0_0

5. This Communication Strategy provides guidance for the development and dissemination of relevant, regular and strategic communication activities and material. It also provides support for national focal points and those involved in national implementation by offering useful guidelines for their communication efforts. This will, in turn, help to ensure that the International Treaty is better understood, supported and implemented. Furthermore, implementation of this Communication Strategy will help to provide valuable inputs for the ongoing dialogue to sustain the activities of the UN Decade on Biodiversity,³ contribute to on-going activities relating to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁴ and material to support International Treaty resource mobilization efforts.⁵

III. Objectives

6. The primary objectives of this Communication Strategy are to:

Increase visibility and raise the profile of the International Treaty – by sharing information with key constituents about activities, programmes and results in a clear and timely fashion; and

Garner support for and engagement in current and future programmes of the International Treaty – by demonstrating positive impact and achievements.

7. Given current global development issues and the FAO Corporate Communication strategy, an important secondary objective is to demonstrate the clear link between the International Treaty, FAO and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

SDG 2 of ending hunger and promoting sustainable agriculture;⁶ and

SDG 15 of halting the loss of crop biodiversity.⁷

8. In addition, links can also be drawn between International Treaty activities and the following SDGs:

SDG 1 of ending poverty,⁸

SDG 5 of achieving gender equality,⁹ and

SDG 13 of taking action to combat climate change.¹⁰

9. As the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Funding Strategy highlighted, in its ninth meeting, the SDGs provide an opportunity to enhance the International Treaty's 'political profile'.¹¹ The Committee emphasized the need for the Governing Body to “further reinforce interlinkages” with the SDGs and “increase communication and awareness-raising,” in addition to exploring possible linkages with

³ The United Nations Decade on Biodiversity contributes to implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. (<https://www.cbd.int/2011-2020/>).

⁴ Particularly SDG 2 and SDG 15, but also SDG 1, SDG 5, and SDG 13.

⁵ Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Funding Strategy, June 2017: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-BS764e.pdf>

⁶ End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg2>

⁷ Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg15>

⁸ End poverty in all its forms everywhere <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg1>

⁹ Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>

¹⁰ Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg13>

¹¹ Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Funding Strategy, June 2017: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-BS764e.pdf>

development issues such as climate change, agricultural development, environment and biodiversity, public health and nutrition.¹² All of these can be considered additional secondary objectives.

IV. Target Audience

Identifying key stakeholders/ target audiences is among the first steps in designing effective communication products.

10. Before designing communication products, it is important to identify and define the key stakeholders or target audience(s). For the purposes of the International Treaty's Communication Strategy, the key audiences comprise existing and potential stakeholders:

Key audience	Description	Rationale
Contracting Parties	National & international policy-makers, national Ministers (Agriculture, Environment, Foreign Affairs), national focal points, Permanent Representatives (in Rome, in capitals and elsewhere), Delegations	These are key constituents. Important to reach these decision-makers, policy-makers and national representatives, and to support them in implementing International Treaty activities and programmes.
Non-Contracting Parties	Countries yet to join the International Treaty	Important to persuade all countries to join the International Treaty in order to achieve universality and increase the potential benefits to global plant biodiversity and future food security.
FAO and the larger United Nations family	Parent organization(s), and other UN agencies — at HQ and regional, sub-regional and local levels	Important to work in close coordination and cooperation with the relevant FAO units, and to partner with other UN agencies, particularly those involved in key activity areas.
Other international organizations	Sister organizations, such the Convention on Biological Diversity	Important to form partnerships, particularly with those involved in crop biodiversity and international development, resulting in increased visibility and understanding.
Partners	Partner organizations including CGIAR Centers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), the	These offer opportunities to multiply the reach of International Treaty communication efforts, thereby increasing visibility and understanding.

¹² Ibid.

	private sector, farmers' groups, other observers.	
Donors	Existing donors (e.g. European Union) and potential donors (e.g. countries, foundations, private sector)	Important to raise visibility and demonstrate how contributions are creating/can create positive impact. Supports funding efforts.
Research institutions	Academia and relevant research institutions	Important to raise awareness and develop potential partnerships to help raise the profile and effectiveness of programmes and activities.
Press	Various media outlets. These include general and specialized media at international and regional levels, as well as local media outlets	Increases understanding and visibility.
General Public	General audience. These include the layperson, those with and without specific technical expertise	Increases awareness and understanding of the International Treaty.

11. The International Treaty needs to reach different target audiences with tailored messages, keeping in mind overall key messaging, varying the media used to maximize effectiveness. To be effective, the form, content and means of disseminating messages may have to be adapted, depending on the audience and the occasion. This includes the local, regional, national and global context, while maintaining International Treaty visual identity and key messaging.

V. Roles and Responsibilities

Defining roles and responsibilities helps to clarify what is expected of key players and ensures their direct involvement in implementation of the Communication Strategy. It is equally important that everyone work from a common and shared understanding of the issues relevant to the International Treaty, and of how they can contribute to enhancing visibility and understanding.

12. It is envisaged that the following groups will have specific roles to play in implementing the International Treaty's Communication Strategy:

- 1) **The Governing Body** will review the Communication Strategy on a biennial basis, providing guidance and ensuring the availability of adequate resources for its implementation.
- 2) **The Secretariat** will implement the Communication Strategy by developing an annual Communication Plan. This will contain products and services to be designed and produced, based on the guidance received from the Governing Body, and the needs of Contracting Parties and key stakeholders.

- A Communication and Outreach Specialist/Officer will oversee the development and implementation of a detailed annual Communication Plan of products and activities under the guidance of the Secretary of the International Treaty, and with input from Secretariat officers.
 - Technical Officers will provide input and regular review of the annual Communication Plan, keeping in mind thematic focus and stakeholder needs.
- 3) **Partners** of the International Treaty will work with the Secretariat to share and disseminate key information and communication products and activities, and provide opportunities for participation in events and other outreach activities.¹³

VI. Branding and Key Messages

Two essential elements in establishing a unique identity:

1. Branding – consistent design elements (images, colours, fonts)
2. Key Messages – clear ‘takeaway’ messages (based on thematic areas/actions)

13. In order to establish and maintain a clear and unique presence, it is important for the International Treaty to have and use consistent ‘branding’ and distinct key messages, consistent with the FAO Corporate Communication Strategy and Guidelines. For example, in 2015, following the latest FAO communication guidelines, the logo of the International Treaty was redesigned (in colour and in black and white), and subsequently always appears in combination with the FAO logo. This has become part of the International Treaty ‘trademark.’ Effective communication requires focused, clear and consistent messages.

14. **Branding:** Branding comprises the consistent use of design elements, including logos, colours and other identifying graphic details. This helps to create a clear visual identity, or ‘trademark’. To some extent, this has already been done, particularly in terms of the International Treaty logo and colours. This can and should be further enhanced, bearing in mind FAO guidelines, by combining these with catchy one-liners, highlighting the International Treaty’s unique features and thematic focus areas. In addition, the International Treaty can seize opportunities for **co-branding for specific events**, such as regional meetings, where it is useful and advisable to combine existing branding elements with specific partners, focusing on the topic of the particular event. By doing so, the International Treaty can increase its visibility while simultaneously creating a clear association with a regional area, thematic emphasis, and valuable (existing or potential) partner(s).

15. **Key Messages:** Key messages are developed based on thematic focus areas, and, in combination with visual branding, they help to showcase the unique identity of the International Treaty. This will be largely driven by decisions made by the Governing Body on the theme and related programme of work for any given biennial. For example, the Seventh Session of the Governing Body has a thematic emphasis on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, so it is appropriate to develop some communication products that highlight the contributions of the International Treaty to the 2030 Agenda, both in terms of branding elements and message development.

16. Key messages should be used to highlight the International Treaty’s achievements and contributions in its main thematic focus areas: the MLS, Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF) projects, Global Information System, Sustainable Use, Transfer of Technology and Farmers’ Rights. While **core messages** will remain consistent in all communication, they may need to be complemented by other strategic messaging. For example, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides the perfect environment to highlight the International Treaty’s significant contribution to achieving SDG 15

¹³ See Section VIII below on Partners and Collaborations.

through support to projects aimed at halting the loss of crop biodiversity. In addition, it is important to tailor specific key messages for specific audiences, and for specific events/activities. For example, a regional workshop on Conserving Biodiversity could provide a good opportunity to showcase how the International Treaty supports capacity development and national implementation. **Secondary messages** are often more time-bound, and should always keep in mind the overall International Treaty identify and core messages.

Examples of thematic areas for message development:

- 1) International Treaty's key role vis-à-vis the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- 2) International Treaty's role as FAO Flagship for Agricultural Biodiversity
- 3) Growth and importance of the Multilateral System
- 4) Growth and inclusiveness of the Global Information System
- 5) New vision and direction for the Funding Strategy
- 6) Impact of BSF projects on the lives of farmers in developing countries
- 7) Working in close collaboration and partnership with others in the field of Sustainable Development and Sustainable Use of PGRFA
- 8) Raising awareness of Farmers' Rights

17. Key messages can further be honed into **catchy one-liners** that appear in publications and other products, thus becoming part of the branding of the International Treaty. These are related to the thematic focus in any given biennial period, including the themes highlighted in the International Treaty's Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW). These memorable one-liners may need to be adjusted each biennium, and be supplemented with other more targeted key messages within any given biennium, depending on the thematic focus area(s), as defined by the Governing Body.

Examples of one-liners:

- 1) International Plant Treaty: Planting it Forward
- 2) International Plant Treaty: Conserving Food Crops for a Sustainable Future
- 3) International Plant Treaty: Forging Ahead Together with Breeders and Farmers
- 4) International Plant Treaty and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Planting the Seed for Future Generations
- 5) International Plant Treaty and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Planting the seeds to transform our world

VII. Methods and Tools

The overarching consideration in developing communication products and activities is ensuring that they are relevant, accessible and timely.

18. One of the most effective ways to accomplish the objectives of increasing visibility and enabling greater support for the International Treaty is by being in regular communication with key stakeholders, sharing achievements, success stories, latest developments and upcoming events. A range of methods and tools that can be used to do this.

19. A number and variety of communication products and activities have been developed by the Secretariat in the past, including brochures, press releases and publications, in addition to activities and special events, such as Ministerial Roundtables (including one at the UN General Assembly),

technical workshops, anniversary events and coordinating participation in partner events, such as International Biodiversity Day and World Food Day. The Secretariat has managed to provide a variety of communication products services. However, a coherent strategy and ongoing plan have been lacking. These are important to ensure continuity and consistency – of messaging and of the regularity of communication with stakeholders.

20. In the absence of a strategic plan, communication products have been produced in a more *ad hoc* manner, rather than in a systematic and planned fashion. For example, BSF projects have produced a great many valuable results, with strong potential as communication material, but the materials generated have been executed in a relatively isolated manner, without adequate support or a systematic plan. Furthermore, a number of communication products need updating (e.g. Media and Communication Kit for National Focal Points, BSF Projects Communication Manual, Case for Support brochure, etc.), and there is always scope to add new ones (e.g. blogs, videos, targeted material for donors, etc.).

21. Bearing in mind the need of Contracting Parties and other stakeholders, as well as FAO policy and communication requirements (e.g. requirement for professional staff to produce and disseminate a certain number of key communication products per year to contribute to building partnerships with key stakeholders and increase FAO's global visibility),¹⁴ it becomes even more important to have and follow a coherent Communication Strategy and implementation plan. This should be overseen by a dedicated Communication/Outreach Specialist within the Secretariat, who can then maintain existing communication channels and products, while developing new ones.

To develop **effective communication products**, it is important to use appropriate methods and tools to **deliver key messages to key audiences**.

The International Treaty website will continue to serve as a primary vehicle for communication in the next two biennia, supplemented by other tools and products, for example:

- Traditional media
- Social media
- Outreach activities/events
- Leveraging partnerships
- Using Goodwill Ambassadors

22. The **website** will continue to be a primary vehicle for International Treaty communication, along with email and other communication products. In 2016, the International Treaty website was migrated to form part of the larger FAO corporate website. This also entailed the transfer of International Treaty documents into the FAO document repository. While this migration marks the growth of the larger corporate identity and presence, as in the case of any new initiatives, it also brought some inevitable transition challenges. One of these was the 'loss' of some communication products, resulting in the need to recreate certain elements, such as the 'Outreach and Publications' section of the website. Hence, it is crucial that the International Treaty website continue to be honed and developed to continue to meet the communication needs of Contracting Parties and other stakeholders. For continued maintenance and development of the website, it is important to have a dedicated website Content Manager, who can keep abreast of new developments and ensure that the International Treaty website remains current.

¹⁴ FAO Senior Officers' Media Initiative (SOMI).

23. Given the range of International Treaty stakeholders/target audiences, it is recommended that a combination of ‘traditional’ and ‘new social media’ be harnessed in developing communication products. Both are valuable and serve their own purposes. All products should have a fresh and clean style, which is visually appealing and has clear easy-to-understand messages. In addition, it is advisable to have targeted outreach activities and special events, encouraging personal participation and offering immediate feedback from the target audience.

24. **Traditional communication products** include printed material (e.g. press releases, brochures, leaflets, infographics, fact sheets, newsletters, presentations and articles) and multimedia products (e.g. infographics, videos and audio products), all of which should also be made available online through the website, in addition to other web-based products (e.g. websites and blogs). A number of such products were produced in the last biennium, including more than 30 press releases.¹⁵

25. New **social media** include interactive tools (e.g. webinars and online fora) and social media platforms (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram and Facebook), all of which facilitate instant exchanges of information and views, and are particularly popular with the younger generation.

26. **Outreach activities/events** are another effective vehicle for promoting the International Treaty’s brand and achievements, and ensuring increased visibility through direct engagement with specific target audiences. These should include regularly scheduled meetings that are part of the Secretariat’s routine activities. Examples include technical meetings, standing or *ad hoc* committee meetings, specialized capacity development workshops (e.g. to support the implementation of Farmers’ Rights or to demonstrate and train users in latest developments in the Global Information System (i.e. promoting capacity development); briefings for Permanent Representatives based in Rome (e.g. in advance of Governing Body meetings and special events); and other special events (e.g. anniversary celebrations, Ministerial meetings or donor conferences).

27. While the Secretariat has organized and/or participated in a number of special events, such as International Biodiversity Day (2017), World Food Day (2016), a High-level Ministerial Roundtable during the UN General Assembly in New York (2014), the Muscat Ministerial Meeting (2013), the Bali Ministerial Meeting (2011), and a number of BSF-related events, this has been done in a more-or-less *ad hoc* manner. What is needed is a more strategic and systematic approach, with a pipeline of relevant supporting communication products for each foreseen event/outreach activity, including those relating to key activities such as BSF projects and resource mobilization efforts.

28. **Leveraging Partnerships** by sharing relevant communication material and platforms with them and their stakeholders and participating in relevant events. This is often a cost-effective way to exponentially multiply the number of people who can be reached, thereby rapidly increasing the visibility of the International Treaty.¹⁶

29. **Goodwill Ambassadors** offer an interesting avenue to explore. Although this approach is not currently widely used within FAO, engaging high-profile Goodwill Ambassadors can help to increase visibility and support. This group could include recognized leaders in the field of agriculture, but also famous personalities and entrepreneurs with public credibility, who are known to be vocal proponents of environmental and human development causes, such as climate change and the conservation of the earth’s food basket (crop biodiversity).

30. Such Goodwill Ambassadors could attend and address special events, provide testimonials and show their support for the work and/or projects of the International Treaty. To a limited extent, this concept was explored through the International Treaty’s High-level Task Force on Resource

¹⁵ At least 38 press releases were published between 2015 and mid-July 2017.

¹⁶ Please also refer to Section VIII below on Partnerships and Collaborations.

Mobilization, which was initiated but not fully developed or fully utilized.¹⁷ The Governing Body of the International Treaty could consider whether it would be worthwhile to explore this option further.

VIII. Partnerships and Collaborations

Partnerships and collaborations offer an important tool for increasing the visibility of International Treaty messages, and delivery platforms for communication products.

31. Partnerships and collaborations with other institutions (internally within the FAO and external to FAO) can help to increase awareness of the International Treaty's overall vision and mission. Collaborating with partner organizations and other FAO departments, and leveraging their own events and communication efforts, offers a relatively low-cost, high-efficiency tool for multiplying the reach of communication efforts. By sharing International Treaty messages and communication products with their own stakeholders, partners can help to increase the dissemination of information, resulting in increased awareness. All stakeholders and target audiences can also be seen as 'partners'.¹⁸ At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that partner organizations/departments are also a target audience, who need to be cultivated and maintained.

32. The opportunities to collaborate with International Treaty partner organizations, particularly those in the field of biodiversity, are many, and should be more fully exploited. At the very least, it would be worthwhile to compile and review a full list of existing and potential partners who might be able to help spread the word and increase awareness of the International Treaty. The following list is just a sample of partnerships that could be cultivated and leveraged to increase International Treaty communication efforts:

- 1) CGIAR¹⁹
- 2) Convention on Biological Diversity²⁰
- 3) Bioversity International²¹
- 4) European Environment Agency²²
- 5) Global Crop Diversity Trust²³
- 6) Global Environment Facility²⁴
- 7) International Food Policy Research Institute²⁵
- 8) International Institute of Sustainable Development²⁶
- 9) International Seed Federation²⁷
- 10) Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions²⁸
- 11) National Ministries (Environment, Agriculture, Climate Change)
- 12) United Nations Environment Programme²⁹
- 13) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change³⁰

¹⁷ *Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Benefit-sharing Fund of the Funding Strategy*: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-br578e.pdf>

¹⁸ *Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy*: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-BS764e.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://www.cgiar.org/>

²⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/>

²¹ <https://www.bioversityinternational.org/>

²² <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/biodiversity>

²³ <https://www.croptrust.org/>

²⁴ <https://www.thegef.org/>

²⁵ <http://www.ifpri.org/>

²⁶ <http://www.iisd.org/>

²⁷ <http://www.worldseed.org/>

²⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/blg/>

²⁹ <http://www.unep.org/>

³⁰ <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/>

14) UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre³¹

15) United National Information Platform on Multilateral Environmental Agreements³²

33. Similarly, enhanced collaboration with other FAO units, including the Climate, Biodiversity, Water and Land Department under which the International Treaty now falls, can also benefit the International Treaty by facilitating the exchange of information and using existing in-house expertise and communication channels. This is particularly true for the Office of Corporate Communication (OCC), which is the central point for FAO communication, particularly social media channels, notably YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. Collaborating with OCC immediately increases the reach of International Treaty messages, while strengthening internal collaboration and partnerships. Similarly, strengthening collaboration with the FAO Division for Partnerships and South-South Cooperation in, the development of communication products could be beneficial for the International Treaty's resource mobilization efforts.

IX. Communication Plan

Developing a comprehensive Communication Plan of products and services, based on needs and objectives, will help to streamline the development of appropriate communication material. This will provide an annual 'Work Plan' for communication materials and outreach events.

34. To effectively implement the Communication Strategy, the Secretariat will develop a Communication Plan, taking into account the thematic emphasis of each biennium, the needs of key stakeholders and the resources available. This plan should be developed on an annual basis and serve as a 'work plan' to operationalize the Communication Strategy. It will be regularly reviewed by the Secretariat, so that it can be adjusted according to needs and requirements as the year progresses.

35. Developing a Communication Plan will provide a detailed overview of planned communication products and activities over a 12-month period. It will offer details about each product's/activity's target audience, key message(s)/thematic emphasis, timelines, and key responsibilities. It is important that this plan is consistently dynamic, through continual updating, to ensure that it remains current and relevant. In order to do this, and to keep the pipeline products and services going, it is equally essential to have a dedicated Communication and Outreach Specialist/Officer. This person will develop the annual Communication Plan, and then implement and monitor it, including overseeing the development of relevant communication materials.

X. Resources

In order to effectively implement a Communication Strategy, it is essential to have adequate human and financial resources.

36. For the effective implementation of the Communication Strategy, it is necessary to provide adequate resources. In recent years, Contracting Parties have noted the need for more communication, but the resources available for this have remained limited.

37. By current global practices and standards, it is highly unusual for an international entity such as the International Treaty not to have dedicated communication professionals on staff with a budget allocated specifically to the development of communication material. The International Treaty is

³¹ <https://www.unep-wcmc.org/>

³² <https://www.informea.org/en>

currently the only biodiversity-related Convention without at least one dedicated Communication professional on staff.

38. There is clear evidence that whenever resources have been allocated for communication, the International Treaty has developed useful products, as mentioned in Section VI (Methods and Tools) above. What is needed is a sustained commitment to enhance International Treaty communication.

39. At its second meeting, the Bureau of the Seventh Session invited the Secretariat to present a Communication Strategy for the International Treaty, including provision for hiring a new officer in the draft Budget, for consideration by the Governing Body.³³ The Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on the Funding Strategy also noted the need to improve communication and visibility of funding tools in support of International Treaty implementation during the biennium.³⁴

40. In order to accomplish these objectives, it is necessary to have a dedicated Communication and Outreach Officer or Specialist, supported by a fulltime Website Content Manager, in addition to other *ad hoc* communication experts, as needed (e.g. graphic designers, videographers, video editors, audio specialists, professional photographers, etc.). Currently, there is no designated fulltime Communication and Outreach Officer/Specialist, nor a budgeted Web Content Manager. Without sufficient financial and human resources, International Treaty communication activities and products will continue in an *ad hoc* manner.

XI. Periodic Review

A regular review of the Communication Strategy will help to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.
--

41. The Communication Strategy should be regularly reviewed to help ensure that it remains relevant and effective.

42. The Secretariat should implement the Communication Strategy through the development of annual Communication Plans, taking into account the needs of Contracting Parties, feedback received from key stakeholders, emerging global priorities and available resources. The annual Communication Plans should be adjusted within any given year in response to stakeholder needs and available resources.

43. The Governing Body should review the Communication Strategy biennially and ensure the allocation of adequate resources for its implementation.

44. These review mechanisms will help to ensure that the Communication Strategy and its Communication Plans remain current, relevant and effective.

³³ IT/GB7/Bureau-2/17/Report.

³⁴ IT/ACFS-9-17/Report.

Appendix: List of Acronyms

ACFS	<i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee on the Funding Strategy (of the International Treaty)
AGP	Plant Production and Protection Division of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department
BSF	Benefit-sharing Fund of the International Treaty
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CSO	Civil society organization
CGIAR	formerly Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CGRFA	FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GB	Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation
GIAHS	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
MLS	Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing of the International Treaty
MYPOW	Multi-Year Programme of Work
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCC	FAO Office of Corporate Communication
OPC	FAO Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development
PGRFA	Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOMI	Senior Officers' Media Initiative
UN	United Nations