

Communication Strategies The 9 Step Plan



1. Objectives

- Overall programme or corporate objectives
 - What does the programme, project or IUCN want to achieve?
 - Changing behaviour, policy, practice, laws, perceptions
- Communication objectives
 - Raise awareness of issues, solutions, best practices
 - Disseminate knowledge
- Be as specific and measurable as possible
- Be realistic

2. Target Audiences

- Who needs to change their behaviour or attitudes?
 - Who is making the decisions?
 - Who is influencing the decision-makers?
- Be as specific as possible
 - Define target audiences
- Get to know them
 - Research target audiences: talk to them, surveys, focus groups, free research
- Where are they?
 - Geographic locations, priorities

3. Messages

- What is the current attitude of your target audiences?
 - How do they see the issue?
 - Put yourself in their shoes
 - Do they already know IUCN?
- What would motivate them to change?
 - What drives them?
- Tailor messages
 - For individual audiences, consider a matrix
 - Keep them simple: relevant to each audience
- Make sure the messages fit into the box

4. Channels

- What's the best way to reach your target audiences?
 - Where do they get information and knowledge from?
 - How receptive are they?
 - How accessible are they?

- Consider member organizations, Commissions, networks, partners
- Contact information
 - Do you have the right lists and databases?
- Revisit communication objectives

5. Products

- What products work best for the audiences and channels?
 - How do they see the issue?
 - Put yourself in their shoes
- What are the interesting stories?
- How can different products and channels support each other?
 - Multiplier effect (eg media exposure for a publication launch or event)
 - Limit content generation if possible
- Be realistic
 - Time, money and people

- Publications
- Press releases
- Brochures
- Articles and op eds
- Web content
- Media information
- Speeches
- Videos
- Events
- Newsletters
- Personal meetings
- Proposals
- Training courses
- etc

6. Budget

- How much money do you need?
 - But how much do you have?
 - Can you get money from other sources?
- Be conservative
 - Hope for the best, prepare for the worst
- Be as specific as possible

7. People

- Who is going to do the work?
 - Who is responsible, who is supporting?
 - Is everyone clear on objectives and tasks?
 - Breakdown as much as possible: research, writing, design, selling, production, distribution etc
- Do you need additional help?
 - Can you use volunteers, consultants, members?
- Does your management buy-in to the plan?
 - Maybe involve staff from other departments or programmes for political reasons

8. Time

- What are the key milestones?
 - Start at the end and work backwards
 - Include all key deliverables
- What is the frequency of products?
- Be realistic
 - Be aware of sign-off procedures, holidays etc

9. Measure success

- How will you know when objectives are met?
- How can you monitor results?
- Indicators, measurement methods, frequency
- How will you report success?

You can measure your success through:

- Web stats
- Media coverage monitoring
- Surveys
- Personal meetings
- Publications sales
- Call them