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**DRAFT ITTO COMMUNICATION STRATEGY  
[Item 15 of the Provisional Agenda]**

# Draft ITTO Communications Strategy, 2022-2026

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## Introduction

Forests are more essential than ever to people and the planet. ITTO is a little-known juggernaut working to promote sustainable forest management in the tropics as a path for economic development and a solution to climate change challenges, biodiversity loss, massive forest fires, and future pandemics emerging from zoonotic diseases. Governments in both consumer and producer countries, NGOs, companies, communities, smallholders, and tropical forest consumers and producers need strategies and tactics for meeting demand for wood and non-wood products while protecting one of the most precious and important resources on earth.

ITTO works to improve the wealth of tropical forests. Through more than 1,200 field projects and activities around the world, they have contributed to improving sustainable forest management practices, developing viable forest-based industries, and increasing the transparency of the tropical timber trade while keeping forest environments intact.

ITTO supports its partners, donors and members—which represent more than 80% of the world's tropical forests and about 90% of the global tropical timber trade—in embracing sustainable forestry so that they can achieve environmental, economic and public health goals. ITTO analyzes and reports on the production and trade of tropical timber and other tropical forest products, with a database that comprises primary (industrial roundwood, sawnwood) and secondary products (veneer, plywood, wooden furniture, builder woodworks, mouldings, among others). This research offers the timber trade, including producers and consumers, critical market information about the sale, use and restoration of forest resources.

ITTO has been successfully conducting wide-ranging communication activities for many years, as reported to and recognized by the International Tropical Timber Council. Noting this success, the Council at its 55th session requested the Secretariat to prepare a communication strategy to further increase the impact of ITTO's work through outreach. ITTO needs a robust communications strategy to elevate its role in the forest dialogue and provide essential thought leadership on policies, practices and ideas for sustainable development through sound tropical forest management and a vibrant trade of forest goods and services. ITTO also needs to sustain itself financially and, therefore, must communicate strongly about the relevance of its work.

## Communications opportunities and challenges

The research phase of the communications strategy helped to define the following communications opportunities and challenges for ITTO.

### Opportunities

- Stakeholders interviewed during the research phase highlighted ITTO's strong expertise in the timber industry and forest management. They also

recognized the valuable role ITTO can play in the larger conversations on economic development, climate change, biodiversity, and even pandemics.

- ITTO has a wealth of technical expertise that needs to be highlighted and amplified in its wider communications. Activities that meet this opportunity include:
  - producing more success stories;
  - improving the accessibility of the Tropical Timber Market Report;
  - developing one-pagers on program areas that highlight contributions to biodiversity, livelihoods, fire management, legal access, and climate-change mitigation.
- ITTO's successes show the power of small-budget projects with high impact, which is unique to ITTO. ITTO's direct ties with projects on the ground is a key "differentiator" of ITTO.
- ITTO is poised to contribute to the 'green recovery' in the COVID-19 era.
- ITTO is well respected for its technical expertise, often advising other multilateral bodies (e.g., CBD, CITES, FAO, etc.). This should be highlighted and enhanced further.
- ITTO should make more use of the research and impacts coming out of the Fellowship Programme.
- ITTO should create additional multimedia content (e.g., photo/slide shows, podcasts) to feed into ITTO's newsletters and social media.
- Enhance cooperation with other international aid agencies that advocate for sustainable forestry in lecture delivery/educational programmes, such as the ongoing collaboration between ITTO and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for knowledge co-creation program; Yokohama Association for International Communications & Exchanges (YOKE) and the City of Yokohama Lecture Delivery Programmes to schools and participation in other relevant events in Japan.

## **Challenges**

- The tropical timber sector's reputation faces many challenges and SFM (sustainable forest management) is poorly understood in the eyes of the public, who believes that, put simply, "chopping down trees is bad." Sustainable forestry was noted as the viable middle ground between clearcutting the forest and closing down the timber industry. In the stakeholder interviews, donors noted that sustainable forestry and what it really means is missing in the public conversation, offering an opening for ITTO to weigh in. ITTO's communications will need to define the term and back up what it means with concrete examples of impact and strong messages. Continuing illegal deforestation globally reduces the ability for key stakeholders to believe sustainable forestry is possible.

- Web content in French and Spanish is not as robust as English. (But more resources would be needed to address this and other communications priorities).
- ITTO program impact can be hard to define with concrete accomplishments. The Peruvian dry forests communications project, for example, is a great success for ITTO but it did not yield an easily definable impact.
- Occasionally, conservation organizations criticize ITTO for not focusing narrowly on sustainable forestry. Many of these organizations also drive the narrative that “not touching” the resource is the only solution for deforestation, ostensibly disregarding the possibilities that sustainable forestry can produce.

## Communications Goals

Given the findings of the research phase of the communications strategy, the following are the communications goals of the ITTO communications strategy. The strategy will help the organization make a compelling case for its work and the funding that enables its activities:

Goal One: **Elevate ITTO’s thought leadership around tropical forests** particularly as they relate to urgent issues including climate change, fires, biodiversity loss, economic livelihoods in rural areas, and zoonosis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Goal Two: **Promote sustainable forest management practices that are succeeding**, particularly highlighting ITTO’s projects on the ground. ITTO is already well established as a source of tropical timber trade information and statistics. This communications strategy will expand ITTO’s communications footprint to better encompass sustainable forestry and its role in conserving forests, so that donors and policy makers—who have communicated an interest in stopping or minimizing deforestation—can better appreciate ITTO’s role in advancing sustainable forestry.

Goal Three: **Continue to serve tropical timber traders and companies** through regular offerings, such as the Tropical Timber Market Report, and other services.

The strategy that follows accomplishes these goals and is fully aligned with ITTO's objectives, as set out in the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), 2006. It also aligns with the Organization’s four pilot programmatic lines, which are:

- 1) To enhance capacity in tropical timber supply chains to meet the increasing demand for legality and/or sustainability and assurance that products are from legal sources.
- 2) To maintain and enhance the biodiversity and ecosystem services of tropical forests and forest landscapes while maintaining the sustainable production of timber and other products and services.
- 3) To scale up the area of forest landscapes restored and to increase the provision of goods and services from planted and restored forests, thereby

generating opportunities for local employment and contributing to wider development goals.

- 4) To address emerging/urgent issues and innovation focused on achieving ITTA objectives that are not covered under the other programmatic lines.

## Key audiences

Understanding ITTO's audiences—what they value and what motivates them—is a critical starting point in any communications strategy. Knowing these values will help ITTO tailor communications, not just through media outreach but also via email, one-to-one communications or even direct social media interaction. (Please note the audience analysis in the Annex.)

Respondents to the online survey indicated focal points as the key audience. Other relevant audiences were Ministries of Forests/Agriculture/Environment and Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Donors, private sector, NGOs, forest communities, academia and general public were mentioned with less frequency. There were a wide range of responses to other key audiences.

Overall, ITTO's key audiences are familiar with forests, the timber and non-timber forest products industries, and the need for economic development in the context of climate change, biodiversity and food security crises. The key audiences that the communications strategy seeks to reach are the following. All the tactics listed below will seek to reach these audiences:

- Current, occasional and prospective donors, including the governments of Japan, US, China, EU, Germany, Korea, the Netherlands, Sweden, UK, as well as Soka Gakkai.
  - Government agencies in this donor category include Ministries of Forests/Agriculture/Environment, Ministries for International Development/Development Cooperation, and Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- Media outlets covering environmental and sustainable development issues.
- ITTO consumer member countries, which include all donor countries.
- ITTO producer member countries.

Another key audience is:

- Tropical timber companies (including manufacturers, processors and traders), and the media outlets that cover this industry.

Tropical timber companies will be primarily served by the ITTO's special reports (i.e., India Timber Supply and Demand 2010–2030, Forest product conversion factors: tropical logs and sawnwood, etc.) as well as the Tropical Timber Market Report, which is published in English every two weeks delivering market trends and trade news from around the world, as well as indicative prices for over 400 tropical timber

and added-value products. For further details see [www.itto.int/market\\_information\\_service/](http://www.itto.int/market_information_service/).

## Key spokespeople and champions

The key spokespeople for ITTO will be Steven Johnson, currently ITTO Officer-in-Charge, and the Executive Director of ITTO once elected.

As a key tactic in the communications strategy, ITTO will also identify and media train people who carry out ITTO projects and fellowships in sustainable forestry from tropical forested regions to be champions of ITTO.

Key donor champions will also be identified and equipped to communicate about ITTO impact stories and key messages.

## ITTO value proposition and key messages

Messaging is crucial for persuading key audiences to support and engage with ITTO. The message platform will clearly establish the need for sustainable forestry and its products—both timber and non-timber—and the importance ITTO as sustainable forestry’s primary advocate.

The most successful message platforms follow a clear arc: problem, solution, and “ask”—the action desired by the audience. The ITTO communications strategy messages follow this outline. The “ask” will vary depending on who ITTO is reaching out to. For example, ITTO may ask a donor for funding or ask a forestry department to contribute data.

The final message platform will serve as a building block for the website, social media, talking points, fact sheets, press releases, statements, pitches, opinion pieces, press releases and other communications materials. These messages will also provide key talking points for high-level global and national spokespeople.

A new master copy of ITTO’s value proposition and key messages has been created as part of this strategy’s development and is located in the Annex.

## Collateral materials and assets

The ITTO website and social media channels are the “collateral material” for the communications strategy. They hold a trove of content, including past newsletters, reports, videos, and country-specific content.

Publications include the following:

- Tropical Timber Market Report—published twice monthly
- Tropical Forest News—published monthly

- Tropical Forest Update—published once every three months
- ITTO's Annual Report—published around August or September every year
- ITTO's biennial review—published every two years
- ITTO's Policy and Technical Series, such as "Not Only Timber", "Tropical Timber 2050" and "Guidelines for forest landscape restoration in the tropics".

Additional collateral material will be developed. This includes:

- Donor-focused content including a well-designed PPT and donor-specific fact sheets.
- Fact sheets on projects that relate to key global concerns such as climate change and biodiversity loss, fires, land tenure of Indigenous People and local communities, and fire management.

## Communications tactics

Communications tactics to accomplish the communications goals of the communications strategy will include developing accessible stories, news, facts and data that help ITTO establish clear connections between the issues surrounding the sustainable management of tropical forests with solutions to major global challenges (climate change, biodiversity loss, fires, poverty, the pandemic), in a manner that fits into key audiences' beliefs and priorities (again, please note the audience analysis in the Annex). ITTO's communications program should achieve better understanding of ITTO's values and contributions among donors when considering proposals and collaborations.

A wide variety of tactics that ITTO will deploy for the core strategies are described below. A chart to follow provides suggested timing for these tactics and whether additional resources will be required.

**Infuse communications with key messages and value proposition**—ITTO has new, powerful messages and a new value proposition that will help it achieve its communications goals. As it has with previous versions of key messages, ITTO will ensure the new messages and value proposition are carried on its website, in its email communications, media and donor communications, used in talking points and presentations and through social channels.

**Create special donor-targeted content including a PPT and fact sheets**—the ITTO communications strategy will create a beautifully designed PPT geared for the donor audience. A set of high-impact visual slides can make all the difference when it comes to speaking with key audiences—whether in one-to-one meetings with donors or for use at conferences. This PPT will showcase ITTO's values and impact illustrating the success stories noted above—almost an ITTO "TED Talk," a roughly eight-minute talk with slides. The content will also include a series of specifically targeted one-page fact sheets on ITTO geared for each donor.



**Website**—the ITTO communications strategy will make revisions to the home page of the website as well as other sections and pages. (Please see the Annex with the website audit and associated recommendations.)

**Content changes and country-specific web pages**—ITTO will make the Tropical Timber Market Report (TTMR) more accessible online, developing an HTML template that will include design upgrades and facilitate placing the content in country-specific pages, so that journalists and others can quickly learn how tropical forests and their economies are faring.

**Obtain solid metrics of past ITTO-funded projects through in-depth analysis** —A thorough analysis of past projects will produce a set of statistics that communicate more of the scope and importance of ITTO's work. These metrics will include the total number of projects, the hectares of sustainably managed forests involved, the number of forest-dependent people who benefited, and other similar quantifications of ITTO's accomplishments.

**Success stories**—ITTO project managers will assist communications staff to routinely prepare success stories (with a wordcount of 500-600) that highlight impact, including efforts to promote sustainable forestry; introduce community-based approaches; improve local livelihoods; change forest management policies (including fire suppression strategies); conduct innovative research; build professional capacity; advocate for and then track legal and sustainable supply chains. These stories can also help populate the new country-specific web pages mentioned above and be used in fact sheets, the PPT and other materials. It would be beneficial for some of these stories of impact to feature Indigenous People and local communities, as donors are increasingly interested in land tenure and Indigenous People and local community-led projects.

**Social media**—ITTO will strengthen the organization's social media presence with an enhanced, systematic approach and more general-market-oriented content. (Please see social media recommendations in the Annex.)

- **Social media advertising**—the ITTO communications strategy will use some of the new tools—podcasts and videos—as the basis for an advertising tactic that extends ITTO's brand and brings its content and advocacy to a larger audience.
- **Social media tool kit**—the ITTO communications strategy will engage partners, champions, and stakeholders to share on their social media channels ITTO's online tool kits around major releases of reports or impact stories.
- **Track email statistics**—the ITTO communications strategy will enhance tracking email statistics to better understand the consumption patterns of ITTO publications—including whether the emails with the newsletter pdfs are being opened.

**Continued participation in relevant meetings and conferences** and ensure that the meetings and conferences ITTO attends will reach ITTO's key audiences—not just donors—and that these audiences find ITTO presentations relevant. Policy, technical and communications staff will ensure ITTO continues to reach its key

audiences with the most appropriate materials to match the audience values and needs. ITTO will continue to participate in the events identified as mostly likely to reach key audiences as leaders and advocates for sustainable forestry and trade through seeking speaking roles, organizing events, or taking part in social media campaigns and discussions around important forest, climate change and biodiversity events.

**Regularly create or join opportunities to reach donors**—the ITTO communications strategy will prioritize ways to reach donors via tactics such as convening a small-group, donor dinner or one-on-one meetings over coffee/lunch/breakfast (in person or virtually) to brief donors on latest trends and progress in sustainable forest management and also speaking at relevant meetings and conferences. Personal relationships with donors will continue to be important as ITTO moves forward.

**Media relations**—the ITTO communications strategy will deploy media as a conduit for reaching its key audiences. This [Mongabay story](#) positions ITTO as supporting the protection of “wildlife, forest-dependent livelihoods, and the last remaining primary forest in the Malaysian state of Sarawak.” Further ITTO was quoted thusly: “The project objectives contribute strongly to ITTO’s mandate to promote sustainable forest management in the tropics, including through empowering and engaging with local communities.” Generating more stories like this one, that position ITTO as a lynchpin and respected source on global sustainable forest management, would be the goal of the media outreach.

**Develop a media list**—ITTO will develop a list of journalists who are most likely to cover its issues through research on journalists covering deforestation and related forestry issues. The list will include key journalists most likely to be interested in ITTO’s work (names and contact details have been supplied separately to the Secretariat).

**“Deskside” meetings with journalists**—the media outreach program will begin establishing relationships with journalists through one-on-one meetings with reporters and editors at key timber and environmental trade publications.

**Publish updated “Status of Tropical Forest Management”**—to effectively expand outreach efforts to top tier media, ITTO will also carry out one press promotion around a significant research report per year. However, in order to reach mainstream media, ITTO should generate reports and publications that discuss forests beyond the specific context of commodity markets. To garner coverage beyond market trade outlets, an updated “Status of Tropical Forest Management” report will be a key communications asset and resource on sustainable forestry.

- In 2006 and 2011, ITTO released the Status of Tropical Forest Management reports, documenting sustainable forestry and how widespread these management practices were embraced. These reports, which were publicized widely through a coordinated campaign, were newsworthy as they provided a comprehensive data set and focused on the extent to which the world’s tropical forests were being managed sustainably or were at risk of deforestation. They fed directly into the growing global concern with tropical

deforestation and positioned sustainable forestry as the solution—which is what donors have requested in the stakeholder interviews that were conducted while preparing this strategy.

- In contrast, the publications released in the first half of 2021 look at forest commodities without adding data on the context of the tropical forest ecosystems. With a tighter, market-driven focus, the publications have not been newsworthy enough to attract media coverage from journalists outside the trade media. Beyond releasing the Status of Tropical Forest Management reports, future publications should also include data and insights on forests that generate commodities and show the economic development opportunities provided by tropical timber and non-timber forest products in the local or regional context.

**Statements**—to increase the media profile of both ITTO and sustainable tropical forestry, a drumbeat approach will be deployed for high-visibility moments, with statements issued at the start or end of international conferences and at other major media events involving tropical forests.

- The statements can highlight ITTO's input on relevant policies and provide relevant information on what reporters can cover. For example, if a tropical forest fire receives international coverage, a statement can discuss pertinent facts about the region—the economic data on the timber and forest products that the region produces, population data on regional forest-dependent communities, even the endangered trees that are threatened in addition to compelling quotes from ITTO spokespeople. They could lead to quotes in stories, or to interview requests.
- Opportunities for statements can include:
  - International meetings, such as the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the World Forestry Congress, the Conference of Parties for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, and the Convention on Biological Diversity;
  - The release of forest and deforestation data by U.N. Food & Agricultural Organization, INPE (Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais, the agency that tracks deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon), Global Forest Watch, and other scientific organizations;
  - Use of ITTO data and research in peer-reviewed scientific publications and high-visibility reports covering aspects of tropical forest management and issues connected with tropical forests and forest-dependent communities, including how sustainably managed forests boost wood and food production and how minimizing tropical deforestation helps prevent pandemics; and

- Moments—such as tropical forest fires and other disasters linked to illegal forestry activity, or even milestones in the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery.
- G7 communique that mentions ITTO—these may not generate media coverage in and of themselves, but they will help to communicate about ITTO's commitment to sustainable forest management.

**Site visits/feature story promotion**—Given the visual nature of tropical forests, it's worth identifying potential site visit and feature story opportunities that explore ITTO-funded projects in producer countries. Site visits present a compelling way to engage reporters; they often produce longer features that explore the issues experienced during the visit. It is worth noting that reporters often take longer to produce these stories, but the resulting stories can be much more substantive. These site visits also provide opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with reporters. Feature story pitches to journalists—suggesting stories that journalists pursue—can also be carried out. There are several ITTO projects that could be of interest for both site visits or feature pitches, including the project to save mangroves in Guatemala, conserving biodiversity in Benin's sacred forests, fire prevention and management in Peru and Indonesia.

**Op-eds**—to elevate the thought leadership of ITTO, op-eds will be produced that are authored by fellows, the Executive Director and other spokespeople, and project managers. They will incorporate key messages to discuss the importance of sustainable tropical forestry in economic development and why that matters nationally and globally—always connecting to current events like forest fires or pandemic recovery milestones. These pieces could be placed in regional or trade outlets or even in international outlets like the *Guardian*. It's important to note that these pieces will be written and placed well in advance of a key moment, or “hook,” to increase the likelihood of placement, but they also do not need to be linked to a key moment or conference. ITTO will consider encouraging fellows to develop their own voice and write op-eds on sustainable forest projects or on issues surrounding forests that they care about.

**Podcast**—Tropical Timber Market Report and Tropical Forest Update content can also feed a periodic podcast for audiences with low internet bandwidth; local radio stations in producer countries can also use this content.

**Video portfolio**—the ITTO communications strategy will continue identifying a handful of new success stories every year that can be added to ITTO's video library to popularize sustainable forestry practices and show how they can be applied in every tropical region. To help with dissemination, the videos will lead with the results—what was the social impact, what was the environmental impact.

## Preparing for Criticism

ITTO will assess the areas in which it has been criticized and could potentially be criticized in the future. Based on this analysis, the communications office will develop an internal tough question and answer document and set of key messages

that respond to criticisms so that it is better prepared in the event it will need to respond to criticism. If comments are not getting traction on social media or with important audiences through other means, ITTO will not respond but will develop a “holding statement” for each criticism to ensure it is prepared in the event it must answer journalist, donor, partner or other inquiries about the situation.

## Benchmarks and metrics for success

Every strategy needs hard data to evaluate success. Certainly, the pandemic-driven disruptions in 2020 and 2021 would mean that an evaluation will include benchmark data—for media mentions, for example—from 2019 if possible. Other benchmarks involve data that cannot be collected retroactively—for newsletter readership—but will be collected as soon as feasibly possible.

Specific benchmarks to evaluate communications success can include:

- Mentions in national, international, and trade media outlets—so far we have seen mentions in 2 trade media outlets and 13 national media outlets in 2019, 2020 and 2021—mentions include: (2019) [Traffic](#); [Agence France-Presse](#); [Le Monde](#); the [International Institute for Sustainable Development](#) [SDG Knowledge hub](#); [CIFOR Forest News](#) (2020) [IISD](#); the [International Wood Magazine & Buyers Guide](#) and (2021) [Mongabay](#); [CBD](#); [Climate Investment Funds](#); [Savoir News](#); [RTV Slovenia](#); [Landscape News](#); [Stabroek News \(twice\)](#); and [El Comercio](#) (Peru).
- Newsletter readership—including email open rates and link click-throughs;
- Engagement on social media channels:
  - Facebook—currently averaging approx. 4 posts monthly and we recommend, by 2026, to be posting approx. 3 times each week 2-3 times during special events such as the annual council session
  - Instagram—currently averaging approx. 2-5 posts monthly and we recommend, by 2026, to be posting approx. 2-3 times each week and 2-3 times each day during special events
  - LinkedIn—currently averaging approx. 5 posts monthly and we recommend, by 2026, to be posting approx. 2-3 times per week.
  - Twitter—currently posting sporadically with 2 tweets in April and none in February. We recommend, by 2026, to be posting approx. 4-5 tweets each week and 5-8 times each day during special events and relevant moments
- Production of success stories and multimedia content:
- ITTO posts approx. 8 videos on YouTube each year and we recommend maintaining that amount as a minimum.

- Increased donor interest; and
- Invitations to speak virtually or in person at conferences on forests and related issues.

## Resources

The activities in this strategy constitute an ambitious plan to improve ITTO's visibility and messaging with key audiences. Many of the activities described are new, and others represent an expansion of current communications initiatives. ITTO's existing human resources and communications staff are effective but have full workloads and thus additional resources are required to expand the unit's portfolio to match the ambitions contained in this strategy.

Other organizations that operate in the tropical forestry space—such as CIFOR and FAO—have a larger presence in no small part because they devote significant resources to marketing and communications. Additional resources to support ITTO's brand extension, increase its influence and help achieve its mission is a smart investment that should be incorporated into ITTO's fundraising portfolio with a high priority placed on it.

Additionally, ITTO communications benefit from the productivity of other programme areas—promotions that focus on substantive reports with concrete findings yield stronger results. Securing additional resources for these outputs will propel communications work.

The timeline below provides an indicative budget required to implement the strategy.

## Timeline

The following is a schedule to assist the Council to determine what the communications strategy means in concrete terms and to help the Secretariat in seeking funding for specific activities. The schedule sets out, for each communication tactic, an indicative implementation timeframe and budget. It spans the five years from 2022 to 2026. The schedule also includes existing communications activities (for some of which improvements have been suggested in this strategy).

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Year(s) implemented</b>	<b>Existing?</b>	<b>Additional resources required?</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Infuse comms with new key messages	2022–26	Yes (with older messages)	Yes Staff time	N/A

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Year(s) implemented</b>	<b>Existing?</b>	<b>Additional resources required?</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Donor-targeted PPT	2022	No	Yes	USD 8,000
Donor-target fact sheets	2022–23	No	Yes	USD 12,000 (considering 4 fact sheets)
Revision and new developments to the website	2023–24	Yes	Yes	USD 40,000
Obtain solid metrics of past ITTO-funded projects through in-depth analysis	2022–23	No	Yes	USD 40,000
Success stories	2022–26	Yes	Yes	USD 20,000
Strengthen ITTO social media presence—advertising strategy, social media tool kit, track email statistics	2022–26	No	Yes	USD 48,000
Continue participation in relevant meetings and conferences	2022–26	Yes, and enhance by using new materials—such as fact sheets	Yes Staff time	To be determined
Create and join opportunities to reach donors	2022–25	Yes, but improve	No Staff time	USD 10,000/annually

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Year(s) implemented</b>	<b>Existing?</b>	<b>Additional resources required?</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Develop media list*	2022 with annual updates afterwards	No	Yes Staff time or outside agency	USD 5,000
Publish and promote updated “Status of Tropical Forest Management”	2023	Yes	Yes Costs of report and costs to carry out media promotion	USD 50,000 for media promotion (doesn’t include production of the report)
Arrange “deskside” meetings*	2023–26	No	Yes	USD 5,000/annually
Issue statements	2022–26	No (not ones geared for media)	Yes	USD 15,000 for 3 statements per year
Carry out site visit with journalists or promote feature stories	2023, 2025	No	Yes	USD 15,000/site visit. Estimate for designing and promoting the visit. Doesn’t include travelling costs
Write and place op-eds	2022–26	No	Yes	USD 5,000 per op-ed
Launch a tropical timber report podcast	2023–26	No	Yes Staff time, equipment and consultancy	USD 25,000/annually



<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Year(s) implemented</b>	<b>Existing?</b>	<b>Additional resources required?</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Continue video production	2022–26	Yes	Yes Staff time and cost associated with video recording and production	USD 10,000/video
Preparing for criticism	2022–26	No	Yes Staff time	N/A

Notes: Light red = tactic being carried out by the Secretariat (it may require enhancing/modification). Light green = new tactic to be implemented. \* = It is recommended that ITTO hire a media specialist in a consultancy.

## Editorial calendar

ITTO communications will develop an editorial calendar that includes the development of its ongoing periodicals, as well as new materials, such as case studies, dissemination channels and opportunities, and key external events for the year—hosted on a google document so it can be continuously updated. This calendar will inform the timing of earned media and social media outreach as well as direct outreach. The following is a sample calendar for 2021.

### ITTO Meetings

#### External Meetings

- UNFCCC CoP
- World Forestry Congress
- CBD CoP
- CITES CoP

#### Key Sample Dates (from 2021)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name of day</b>
<b>2 Feb</b>	World Wetlands Day
<b>3 March</b>	World Wildlife Day
<b>8 March</b>	International Women's Day
<b>15 March</b>	World Consumer Rights Day
<b>21 March</b>	International Day of Forests
<b>31 March (tent)</b>	Launch of Global Forest Watch Deforestation Data
<b>22 April</b>	International Mother Earth Day
<b>26-30 April (tent)</b>	UN Forum on Forests
<b>15 May</b>	International Day of Families
<b>21 May</b>	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

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<b>22 May</b>	International Day of Biological Diversity
<b>25 May</b>	Africa Day
<b>June-September</b>	Tropical Forest Fires Season in the Amazon
<b>5 June</b>	World Environment Day
<b>17 June</b>	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
<b>21-24 June (tent)</b>	World Conference on Ecological Restoration
<b>22 June</b>	World Rainforest Day
<b>4 July</b>	International Day of Cooperatives
<b>11 July</b>	World Population Day
<b>28 July</b>	World Nature Conservation Day
<b>August</b>	Peak Tropical Forest Fires Season in Brazil
<b>August-October</b>	Tropical Forest Fires Season in Indonesia
<b>9 August</b>	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
<b>3-11 September (tent)</b>	IUCN World Conservation Congress
<b>5 September</b>	Amazon Day
<b>21 September</b>	Zero Emission Day
<b>26 September</b>	World Environmental Health Day
<b>27 September</b>	World Tourism Day
<b>3 October</b>	World Habitat Day
<b>11-24 October</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>13 October</b>	International Day for Disaster Reduction
<b>15 October</b>	International Day of Rural Women
<b>16 October</b>	World Food Day
<b>17 October</b>	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
<b>24 October</b>	International Day of Climate Action
<b>28 October</b>	Sustainability Day (the fourth Wed. Of October each year)
<b>30-31 October (tent)</b>	G20 Leaders Summit
<b>November (tent)</b>	INPE Deforestation Data Release (date TBD)
<b>6-7 November</b>	Global Conference on Health and Climate Change
<b>4 December</b>	Wildlife Conservation Day
<b>5 December</b>	World Soil Day

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## **Annexes**

In preparation of this strategy, Burness has prepared additional material that can help ITTO communications further enhance its profile. These include:

1. Methodology
2. Audience Values and Questions
3. Summary of online survey responses
4. ITTO value proposition and key messages
5. Website audit
6. Digital audit and influencers list
7. Research interview notes
8. Research review of documents

## Annex 1: Methodology

In preparation for the ITTO communications strategy, Burness staff reviewed ITTO's written materials, both in print and online, and studied your website and social media accounts to gain an understanding of ITTO and your work, as well as to assess your current communications and your communications needs. We also drew from our knowledge of working in the global forestry space to put your operations in context.

We focused our review on issues of Tropical Forest Update and the Tropical Timber Market Report and considered how these publications were housed on the ITTO website. Other documents that we assessed included:

- 2016 ITTO Communications Strategy Draft
- 2018 Communications Strategy—Outreach Agenda 10c (presented at the 54th Council)
- Materials discussing the recent Dry Forest Conservation Project in Peru [PD 741/14 Rev.3 (F)]
- 2019 Annual Report
- Decision 4(LVI): Implementing ITTO New Financing Architecture—Phase II

After this review, Burness staff prepared two audit memos: one regarding ITTO's social media and one regarding your website, both with observations and recommendations for improvements.

We then conducted eight interviews with experts from producer and consumer countries; donors; outside stakeholders within the UN and on location in tropically forested countries.

Agencies and organizations whose staff participated in these conversations include:

- US Government, US Department of State and US Forest Service
- International Cocoa Organization (ICCO)
- EU's Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade Independent Market Monitor (FLEGT IMM)
- UN Food and Agricultural Organization
- Government of Switzerland State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
- Congo Basin Forest Partnership
- European Commission, Directorate-General for International Cooperation
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

All the people we spoke with were honest and open about ITTO and its work. They also invested in ITTO's success and want you to be an important player in the global dialogues concerning tropical forests in the years ahead.

The takeaways from the interviews which are the basis of the communications strategy are:

- ITTO has a wealth of technical expertise that needs to be amplified (i.e., producing more success stories; improving the accessibility of the Tropical Timber Market Report; and developing one-pagers on programme lines that highlight contributions to biodiversity, livelihoods, legal access, climate-change mitigation).
- ITTO's successes show the power of small-budget projects with high impact, which is unique to ITTO and provide direct ties with projects on the ground.
- ITTO is poised to contribute to the 'green recovery' in the COVID-19 era.
- ITTO is well respected for their technical expertise, often advising other multilateral bodies (e.g., CITES). This should be highlight and enhanced further.
- ITTO should make more use of the research and impact coming out of the Fellowship programme.
- ITTO should create multimedia content (e.g., photo/slide shows, podcasts) to feed into ITTO's newsletters and social media.
- The sectors' reputation is at stake and SFM is poorly understood in the eyes of the public: "chopping down trees is bad." Messaging should help illustrate SFM's true meaning and it should be prominent.
- Web content in French and Spanish is not as strong as English (But more resources would be needed to address this).

Finally, ITTO partners, stakeholders, and funders participated in an online survey to collect their feedback. Much of what they shared echoed the findings in the interviews and other research conducted for this effort.

Respondents to the online survey indicated focal points as the key audience. Other relevant audiences were Ministries of Forests/Agriculture/Environment and Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Donors, private sector, NGOs, forest communities, academia and general public were mentioned with less frequency. There were a wide range of responses to other key audiences.

## Annex 2: Audience Values and Questions

### Audience values

A summary of the audience analysis that ITTO carried out is below, followed by the audience analysis which it conducted.

To reach **current donors** who value organizations that are recognized, accountable, transparent, and that also provide value for donor investments and the ability to engaged multilaterally with producers; and **donors** who value organizations that are robust, accountable, transparent, and aligned with their objectives and priorities, ITTO must communicate its value and transparency along with its objectives and priorities.

**Both sets of donors, in addition to ITTO consumer members and media outlets, can see that tropical forests are being lost**, and they fault poor management. Tropical forests are thought to need conservation—and in many cases by ‘not-touching’ the resource. Deforestation rates are higher in the tropics, and the management of natural resources in the tropics is associated with corruption, informality, and poor capacity. Forest fires linked to deforestation have become a permanent threat. ITTO must show a third way forward, sustainable forestry, that reveals the forest as a **truly renewable resource**.

**ITTO producer members can see that sustainable forestry is the best way** to ensure the conservation of tropical forests and to provide decent livelihoods for the people who live in and/or depend on tropical forests. **Tropical timber traders and companies are working in a market that is being scrutinized like no other**. Proof of legality, increasingly required by international markets, remains challenging. However, verification of sustainable forestry practices and proof of legality can be an added expense that producer members want to share with consumer members. ITTO must demonstrate the value of **sustainable forestry as a marketing tool that serves both environmental and economic needs**.

With these audience viewpoints in mind, ITTO will communicate **accessible success stories, forest and market news, along with facts and data** to help ITTO’s **existing, past and donors establish clear connections** between the issues surrounding the sustainable management of tropical forests with ITTO-driven solutions to major global challenges (climate change, biodiversity loss, poverty), in a manner that fits into their beliefs and priorities—which may differ depending on the donor.

ITTO will also serve tropical timber traders and companies through the **Tropical Timber Market Report**, which is published in English every two weeks and delivers market trends and trade news from around the world, as well as indicative prices for over 400 tropical timber and added-value products.

The ITTO communications program will allow **donors** to be seen by their own key audiences as fair, magnanimous and proactive in taking action to overcome global challenges.

Donor countries will **feel a sense of accomplishment** by assuring that they are partnering with an organization that is working for a better planet and a brighter future; they will **feel pride in the impacts of the work that they financed**; and they will **feel hope in seeing tangible improvements in forest management and forest-based economies as well as on the quality of life of forest-dependent people**.

Producer countries will **appreciate how the legality of their forest products are communicated, and feel supported in economic development efforts** as well as **respected for embracing both the need for sustainability and the need for generating secure and stable livelihoods**.

Out of this analysis, the following were action steps. Please note the first suggested action step is communications-related and has been included in the communications strategy above. The rest of the suggested actions steps fall on the program side of ITTO.

- Achieve better understanding of **ITTO's values and contributions among donors when considering proposals and collaborations**.
- **Amplify the critically important perspectives of producer governments** when global policies are developed that impact tropical forests.
- Ensure **ITTO consumer members appreciate their obligations** under the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) and increase their trust in ITTO.
- Help **ITTO producer members overcome bureaucracy and meet their obligations** under the ITTA (e.g. payment of their assessed contributions).
- Help both **consumer and producer members** by encouraging timber markets to trade legal timber and helping to communicate the legality of products produced through sustainable forestry.

## Annex 3: Summary of online survey responses

### 1.- Briefly describe your history with ITTO

Summary of responses	Repetitions
Focal point and benefited from projects	IIII
Through ITTO funded projects	III
Focal point	III III
At some point we used ITTO's statistics database for an antidumping measure (which was very successful). Through financing training activities for timber companies.	I
Participated in ITTO deliberations since its establishment and being a major donor	II
ITTO has been our technical and financing partner since 1990	I

### 2.- How do you rate or value the work of ITTO and its overall mission? How have you and your colleagues benefited from your country's/organization's membership of ITTO?

Summary of responses	Repetitions*
Very good: The country has benefited from projects and participation in relevant meetings, fellowships and publications	III II
Good: Disregard the financial issues. The country has benefitted from projects with positive impact in the country's membership to the Organization	II
Highly appreciate ITTO's overall mission and find the Market Information Service (MIS) very useful. ITTO's mission and its achievements are not well recognized in the international community, especially in consuming countries	I
ITTO's work has supported in-country public policy for SFM. Many professionals have benefited from ITTO fellowships and projects have benefited forest communities	I
ITTO is the only entity that provide data and funds projects around legal tropical timber. My country has not been very skillful in taking	I



full advantage of ITTO's work. There's a need for better channels of communication.	
<p>Deficient: In the last years ITTO has paid more attention to administrative processes that to fulfill its mission.</p> <p>Since the financial impairment credibility with donors decreased with its corresponding decline in financing for projects and activities, creating discomfort among beneficiary countries.</p> <p>Even with clarity of objectives, ITTO's operational activities are deployed in a political and diplomatic context, hindering consensus, decision-making and ultimately creating lost opportunities for the achievement of its objectives.</p> <p>In the last few years, my country has not received support to build capacity on trade of legal and sustainable timber</p>	I
ITTO has greatly contributed to having a different perspective of SFM and to learn about what other regions are doing. "ITTO is the best platform to harmonize the needs". Information from newsletters, publications, project funding and conferences has greatly contributed to further understand my current task	I
ITTO is a valuable platform for multilateral dialogue between producer and consumer countries on ways to expand international collaboration to promote SFM on tropical forests, promote green supply chains for timber products, tackle illegal logging, etc., and how tropical forest can contribute to addressing the major challenges we are facing and to the achievement of the SGDs	I
ITTO mission is not yet fulfilled as there are many projects pending financing	I
ITTO is consistent with our boarder SFM objectives. ITTO enhances our impact beyond individual efforts. Interested in market information to pursue bilateral forestry discussions with other members	I
ITTO's work is very technical and well-organized	I
We value a membership organization that is solely focused on tropical timber and tropical forests that are essential for the ecosystem services, biodiversity and many goods they provide to local people and economies. By convening both producer and consumer countries, ITTO greatly enhances cooperation and incentives to ensure their sustainable management and	I

<p>conservation for future generations. Tropical forest management and related industry and trade are also highly specialized subsectors with unique challenges, which other multilateral organizations do not fully cover. We value ITTO's work on markets, the work of the committees, policy and technical guidelines, fellowships, and ability to co-finance and execute projects and work programme activities focused on tropical forests—quickly converting and testing new policy approaches to practice through pilot field projects.</p>	
<p>We value ITTO's mandate and role in promoting sustainable forest management and legal and sustainable trade of timber and timber products, and as such, have funded numerous projects worldwide to promote the objectives of the ITTA over the past few decades. We appreciate ITTO's role as a focal agency of international timber trade and legal and sustainable supply chains of forest products in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). In our view, this role is taking on greater importance and prominence in the world stage, as problems of illegal logging and deforestation have accelerated sharply, particularly in tropical forests, due to the economic downturn induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Deforestation (mostly spurred by illegal timber trade/agriculture) is now seen as key driver of the world's most pressing environmental problems (i.e. climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, food security loss, natural disasters, etc.) as well as leading to skyrocketing/volatile prices for wooden material, and we reckon that ITTO can serve an important role in resolving these issues, through its unique structure of consumer- and producer states of timber commodities. Through hosting this organization, we hope to have projected in the world stage the importance the country places on resolving these issues, as a responsible major consumer nation of commodities and commodity products.</p> <p>However, in our view, ITTO's visibility could be enhanced significantly further on the world stage. We increasingly observe a countless number of UN resolutions, G7/G20 communique and other documents of international organizations making reference to the importance of this issue through high-level political statements, especially as the COVID-19 outbreak has exacerbated this problem. However, what is lacking at the moment is the technical guidance and voice of expertise to actually enable this on the ground. ITTO is uniquely positioned to fill this hole under its official mandate unlike any of the other international organizations (that are currently trying to do so), and we think that it is timely to step in to do so. We appreciate the current management's focus on tackling this issue</p>	<p>I</p>

<p>finally, since Council mandated this task almost 4 years ago. Building global brand equity should help spur the implementation of the ITTA worldwide, including the resources required to do so.</p> <p>In our view, ITTO has unrivaled technical expertise and data to measure impact and enable the political ambition related to combatting illegal logging/trade. However, the under-appreciation/under-promotion of this expertise and effort and the relatively muted core policy dialogues (mandated under the ITTA) over the last 4 years has led to muted acknowledgement. These points need fixing immediately, in our view.</p>	
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*\*There are 19 responses in total. However, one response covered two items, one already expressed plus additional information.*

### 3.- How does ITTO communicate with you and your colleagues (e-mails, circulars, meetings/webinars, social media, media, email marketing, etc.)?

Summary of responses	Repetitions
E-mails, circulars, online meetings and publications	I
E-mails, circulars, meetings, webinars	I
E-mails, circulars and meetings	III
E-mails	III
E-mails, ITTO's website	I
All of the above (e-mails, circulars, meetings/webinars, social media, media, email marketing)	II
Through the ITTO website or referred by others	I
ITTO communicates via conventional ways (e-mail, ITTC meetings, website updates). Look forward more interactive and trendy communication such as YouTube, TV show, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok and Google adds.	I
In various ways: e-mail, ITTC sessions, Market Information Service and Tropical Forest Update, various social media, meetings and webinars organized together with other international organizations.	I
Currently, the most frequent communications we receive are emails and circulars from the Secretariat, followed by ITTO's website, social media, meetings and newsletters.	I

Website, Tropical Forest Update, Market Reports, direct emails through designated focal points. However, for those that do not visit the website regularly, more announcements and alerts of upcoming webinars and workshops, new videos and multimedia productions, especially with the CPF would be appreciated.	I
<p>Most of the communication from the Secretariat is through letters/ e-mails, which are helpful, keeping the Secretariat in front of member states.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some updates on the Secretariat's ongoing tasks are delivered through the IAG or Advisory Board meetings, but these should be posted on the website on a more timely basis, in line with best practices to induce engagement.</li> <li>• Some information (such as important strategic news, etc.) has not been sent by e-mail, and only placed on the ITTO website. We think important information should be shared to member countries directly via email as much as possible (newsletter links should be disseminated also via emails).</li> </ul> <p>We think that there have been substantial improvements in the ITTO website over the last few years, and it is now easier to find important material by topic.</p>	I

**4.- Who are ITTO's most important audiences for communication (in order of priority, if possible)?**

Summary of responses	Repetitions
ITTO focal points, beneficiaries of ITTO projects/activities and aid agencies	I
ITTO focal points, researchers, forest-related businesses	II
People and businesses in consumer countries	I
Member countries	III
Governments, forest entities, forest communities, forest companies and forest professionals	II
Forest communities, academia, stakeholders in the forest supply chain	I

Focal points, donor community and beneficiaries of ITTO projects/activities	I
Public, NGOs and industry players	I
Members of ITTO; multilateral organizations that can provide funding; the wider UN system; ITTO observer countries and organizations; the wider public	I
Ministries of economy in consuming countries	I
Government (particularly member countries), Researchers and NGOs, general public	I
Government regulatory entities, NGOs, general public	I
It depends on the content, which should be matched to the audience. While the State of the Tropical Forests and forest industry would be for a general audience, other materials need to be targeted. For example, guidelines and technical information can be aimed toward forest sector practitioners and Ministries. For the private sector market reports, industry, and research is valuable. Community groups and civil society may be interested in livelihoods and trainings, while academia should be alerted to the fellowship programme and research.	I
Governments, NGOs and forest communities	I
All member states (including potential signatories); TAG/CSAG; other stakeholders (trade associations etc.)/international organization partners; potential donors (including ODA providers, private sector, philanthropic multilateral funds/development banks); private sector (from both consumer and producer countries) and general public.	I

**5.- Please be as specific as possible when describing who ITTO should be trying to reach through communications. For example, the producer country/consumer country government, and in particular the Ministry of XXX or Ministers XXX” or any other suggestion?**

Summary of responses	Repetitions
Audience 1: National forest authorities  Audience 2: Academia	I

Audience 3: Aid agencies	
Audience 1: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Audience 2: Ministry of Trade Audience 3: No response	I
Audience 1: People in consumer countries Audience 2: Business enterprises in consumer countries Audience 3: Related international fora	I
Audience 1: Ministry of environment Audience 2: Ministry of agriculture Audience 3: Private sector, NGOs and academia	III
Audience 1: Forest enterprises, especially forest community enterprises Audience 2: Ministries of agriculture and environment Audience 3: Academia	I
Audience 1: Focal points Audience 2: Donor community Audience 3: Beneficiaries of ITTO projects/activities, education and research institutions, forest producers	I
Audience 1: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Audience 2: Ministry of Forestry Audience 3: Producer countries	I
Audience 1: The forest authority Audience 2: Producer countries/exporters and NGOs Audience 3: Consumer countries/importers and consumers	I
Audience 1: Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC) Audience 2: Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB)	I

Audience 3: Malaysian Timber Council (MTC)	
Audience 1: The country's governments Audience 2: Heads of international organizations Audience 3: Directors of relevant bodies	I
Audience 1: Ministry of Economy and Finance	I
Audience 1: Government officials including, forest and environment ministers, state ministers, environment/industry, non-member countries Audience 2: Universities, consultants, data analysts, think tanks Audience 3: School students, consumers of tropical timber products, media	I
Audience 1: Ministry of Agriculture Audience 2: Government regulatory entities Audience 3: General public (including NGOs and private sector)	I
Audience 1: Producer Country Ministerial Staff/practitioners and leaders Audience 2: Consumer country buyers and markets Audience 3: The CPF/donors- CIFOR, CGIAR, IUCN, IUFRO Audience 4: (not necessarily least important) The general public-academia, civil society, community groups, enterprises)	I
Audience 1: Ministry of Forestry Audience 2: NGOs Audience 3: Forest communities	I
Audience 1: Focal points, CSAG/TAG and partners Audience 2: Potential donors Audience 3: General public	I
Audience 1: Focal points Audience 2: Producer countries	I

Audience 3: Ministries of forestry, environment and agriculture	
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**6.- What does each of these audiences care about? For example, in your opinion, what motivates them, what are their work priorities, how does ITTO fit into/fare within their priorities and aspirations?**

Summary of responses	Repetitions
<p>Audience 1 (National forest authorities): Public policies and national programmes.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Academia): Research and knowledge.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Aid agencies): Accountability and transparency.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs): Monitoring, evaluation and considerations for international cooperation.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Ministry of Trade): Monitoring, evaluation and considerations for international cooperation.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (People in consumer countries): Consideration to economic, social, and environmental sustainability as well as sustainable use of natural resources.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Business enterprises in consumer countries): Factors affecting their business activities, including regulation of governments and expectation from their clients.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Related international fora): Contribution to the achievement of global goals, such as SDGs, climate change mitigation, conservation of biodiversity, prevention of land degradation and deforestation.</p>	I
<p>Audience (Ministry of environment): Financing for projects or other form of international cooperation. Information on progress towards SFM with concrete examples, like community forestry.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Ministry of agriculture): General information produced by ITTO. Examples of what ITTO has done in other countries.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Private sector, NGOs and academia): Exchange of experiences; research on forests and forest products/services.</p>	III
<p>Audience 1 (Forest enterprises, especially forest community enterprises): Information for decision-making.</p>	I



<p>Audience 2 (Ministries of agriculture and environment): Policies for sustainable development.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Academia): Knowledge for national development.</p>	
<p>Audience 1 (Focal points): The most relevant stakeholder, as it is in-charge of promoting the development of the forestry sector. It is also the interlocutor that disseminates information on ITTO's work, achievements and financing opportunities within the country.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Donor community): The donor community is the engine of the Organization, as they provide resources to finance projects, activities, collaborative opportunities, etc. Donors also benefit from supporting and demonstrating the environmental and social sustainability of their tropical timber businesses.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Beneficiaries of ITTO projects/activities, education and research institutions, forest producers): Through them the impact and benefits of ITTO projects are measured. They are also responsible for managing sustainable timber trade.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs): International trade and relations.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Ministry of Forestry): Sustainable forest management.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Producer countries): Ability to trade equitably their tropical timber.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (The forest authority): Trade statistics for decision-making; emerging issues affecting markets; incentives.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Producer countries/exporters and NGOs): Trade statistics and market trends. For NGOs governance and accountability.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Consumer countries/importers and consumers): Product preference, pricing and market accessibility.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (MPIC): Focal point.</p> <p>Audience 2 (MTIB): Timber trade regulatory body for Peninsular Malaysia and responsible for coordinate the overall development of the timber industry.</p> <p>Audience 3 (MTC): Timber promotional council.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (The country's governments): Since they are members of the Organization, they should share and promote the objectives of</p>	

<p>the ITTA, 2006. ITTO promotes the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests and the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests. Furthermore, as members they have certain obligations that they need to fulfil (i.e. to pay on time the assessed contributions and any arrears).</p> <p>Audience 2 (Heads of international organizations): The role of forests in addressing major challenges of our times, such as climate change and loss of biodiversity has been recognized by many financial institutions/donors, which dedicate funding for the protection and sustainable management of forests. As ITTO's membership represents about 80% of the world tropical forests and over 90% of the trade in tropical timber, the Organization can fit in their priorities and aspirations by offering an expertise and experience of over 30 years over a big range of projects concerning tropical forests.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Directors of relevant bodies): As ITTO's membership represents about 80% of the world tropical forests and over 90% of the trade in tropical timber, the Organization can fit in their priorities and aspirations by offering an expertise and experience of over 30 years on discussing and developing policies on the sustainable management of tropical forests and effectively translating these policies into action through projects on the ground.</p>	
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Economy and Finance): No response.</p>	<p>I</p>
<p>Audience 1 (Government officials including, forest and environment ministers, state ministers, environment/industry, non-member countries): International trade, sustainable forestry management, law enforcement.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Universities, consultants, data analysts, think tanks): SFM, data trends, wood sampling, tracing.</p> <p>Audience 3 (School students, consumers of tropical timber products, media): Environment, forestry industry (impacts to jobs, economy and GDP).</p>	<p>I</p>
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Agriculture): Tendencies on forest management.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Government regulatory entities): Exchange of experiences in common topics.</p>	<p>I</p>

Audience 3 (General public, including NGOs and private sector): Guide the work they develop for the well-being of the communities to which they are accountable.	
<p>Audience 1 (Commercial sector): Cares about markets, standards, state of production, prices, trade flows, industrial improvement.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Donors, Consumers, Civil Society): SFM</p> <p>Audience 3 (Research organizations): Scientific and technical findings or ways to contribute or apply for fellowships.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Forestry): Funding for implementing SFM strategies, including certification.</p> <p>Audience 2 (NGOs): NGOs are whistleblowers. They need to be on the ground to spot bad performers on both the admin side and the dealership side. They are looking for the financial means to equip themselves.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Forest communities): The local communities work with the concessionaires daily. Their point of view in sustainable management is essential. They need to be trained and informed about the actions that the concessionaires and the governments are putting in place for local development.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Focal points, CSAG/TAG and partners): The Agreement, rules, regulations and procedures, organization/membership information, ITTO meetings/events, relevant news, projects, database (market and project-related).</p> <p>Audience 2 (Potential donors): Information on Secretariat/organization, governance matters, project-related information, market database, specific case studies/examples/measurements/evidence of impact (monitoring, evaluation and reporting of projects): i.e., ITTO's capacity, experience and knowledge, which helps contribute to tackling global issues such as climate change, biodiversity conservation and sustainable commodity supply chains, comprehensive information about technologies, system and law enforcement which contribute to halting illegal deforestation, roster of current project proposals that are available for funding, with specific resources/capacities required.</p> <p>Audience 3 (General public): Easy-to-understand guide about the Agreement and the organization; promotional video/webinars, etc.</p>	I
Audience 1 (Focal points): Management and protection of forests.	I

<p>Audience 2 (Producer countries): Use legal sources of timber for export.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Ministries of forestry, environment and agriculture): Share lessons learned/experiences and close involvement with ITTO.</p>	
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**7.- What would you recommend as the best way to communicate with these audiences (e.g. meetings/webinars, social media, media, email marketing, individual direct mailing)?**

Summary of responses	Repetitions
<p>Audience 1 (National forest authorities): N/A</p> <p>Audience 2 (Academia): Social media and mailing campaigns</p> <p>Audience 3 (Aid agencies): Direct mailing</p>	I
<p>Audiences 1 and 2 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Trade): Meetings, webinars and direct mailing</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (People in consumer countries): Participatory approach would be effective. Dissemination of ITTO's achievements through media would be insufficient. ITTO might ask for some help for the sustainable use of tropical forests, through their direct involvement such as donation, purchase of some goods, or participation of on-the-ground activities.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Business enterprises in consumer countries): Provision of useful information for their business activities would be effective. Information such as an evaluation of producing countries from the perspective of sustainability might be useful. ITTO might take advantage of their expertise in market data analysis for the use of business entities.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Related international fora): ITTO should present their achievements in a timely and impressive manner in the wide range of international fora.</p>	I
<p>Audience (Ministry of environment): Direct contact, online meetings.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Ministry of agriculture): Direct e-mail.</p>	III

Audience 3 (Private sector, NGOs and academia): Webinars, online meetings, social media.	
<p>Audience 1 (Forest enterprises, especially forest community enterprises): Social media.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Ministries of agriculture and environment): Meetings, campaigns and project financing.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Academia): Campaigns on project financing and social media.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Focal points): Meetings (physical or virtual), e-mail, publications and website.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Donor community): N/A</p> <p>Audience 3 (Beneficiaries of ITTO projects/activities, education and research institutions, forest producers): N/A</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs): Direct mailing.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Ministry of Forestry): Direct mailing.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Producer countries): Direct mailing.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (The forest authority): Direct mailing, meetings, seminars, social media.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Producer countries/exporters and NGOs): Direct mailing, meetings, seminars, social media.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Consumer countries/importers and consumers): Direct mailing, meetings, seminars, social media.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (MPIC): E-mail, meetings, social media.</p> <p>Audience 2 (MTIB): E-mail, meetings, social media.</p> <p>Audience 3 (MTC): E-mail, meetings, social media.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (The country's governments): Individual direct contact by the Executive director, by emailing and calls.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Heads of international organizations): Individual direct contact by the Executive Director, both by e-mailing and in person meetings/calls.</p>	I

Audience 3 (Directors of relevant bodies): Individual direct contact by the Executive director, by emailing and calls, meetings/webinars.	
Audience 1 (Ministry of Economy and Finance): No response.	I
<p>Audience 1 (Government officials including, forest and environment ministers, state ministers, environment/industry, non-member countries): Direct emailing to relevant individuals, as well as newsletters. Avoiding the current reliance on attachments in emails as they obscure the key contents.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Universities, consultants, data analysts, think tanks): Collaborative meetings, webinar and workshops, website communications.</p> <p>Audience 3 (School students, consumers of tropical timber products, media): Visual communications through social media and merchandise. Suggest a more simplified website for general consumption.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Agriculture): Direct mailing.</p> <p>Audience 2 (Government regulatory entities): Announcements on ITTO website.</p> <p>Audience 3 (General public, including NGOs and private sector): Social media.</p>	I
It depends on the content, which should be matched to the audience, however a mix of communications strategies for each group would be optimal.	I
<p>Audience 1 (Ministry of Forestry): Meetings, workshops, circulars.</p> <p>Audience 2 (NGOs): Workshops and webinars.</p> <p>Audience 3 (Forest communities): Webinars, information notes.</p>	I
<p>Audience 1 (Focal points, CSAG/TAG and partners): (ITTO website as a base for all categories. In addition to the website, the following can be cited per audience category:) e-mail-attached diplomatic notices/letters, closed membership-based portal, video conferences, meetings, webinars</p> <p>Audience 2 (Potential donors): e-mail-attached diplomatic notices/letters, closed membership-based portal, video conferences, meetings, webinars</p>	I

Audience 3 (General public): all forms of media outlets, especially websites/webinars, social media, relevant publications (disproportionate attention should be placed on digital formats).	
Audience 1 (Focal points): Meetings, webinars, email, social media.  Audience 2 (Producer countries): Individual direct emailing, email marketing.  Audience 3 (Ministries of forestry, environment and agriculture): Meetings, webinars, email, social media.	I

**8.- What do you think is/are ITTO's greatest accomplishment(s) to date? Do you feel these are well known among the important audiences? How have they been communicated?**

Summary of responses	Repetitions*
SFM tropics and the Market Information Service (MIS)	I
Project funding: (funding that can be accessed by several stakeholders through the Focal Point; projects' results are not known or shared widely among the ITTO members, leading to other members requesting for similar projects)	III
On-the-ground long-running experiences of SFM in tropical countries and accumulated data and knowledge on tropical timber markets	IIII
There's a need to strengthen communication with Focal Points on ITTO's achievements. Many times, we learn about them from other sources	I
Guidelines, technical documents, fellowships	I
It has created awareness on the need for SFM, it has promoted research and development through projects with results well-disseminated	I
Reorient SFM with a gender perspective and with contributions to sustainable development and disseminate it to other productive sectors	I
One of the Organization's greatest achievements is information on global tropical timber markets. However, it has not reached the majority of stakeholders responsible for the promotion, production,	I

processing, regulation and trade of tropical timber. The information is disseminated through the Forest Update newsletter and the MIS on the website. The perception is that outreach requires greater efforts to reach stakeholders.	
ITTO pioneered the development of criteria and indicators (C&I) for the sustainable management of natural tropical forest in the 1990's and has continue its leadership on this field. ITTO accomplishments are well communicated among tropical countries.	I
<p>In general, ITTO is a policy forum where challenges and opportunities regarding tropical forests are brought up and discussed. Furthermore, policies are discussed and developed regarding the sustainable management of tropical forests and these policies are effectively translated into action through projects on the ground. ITTO also provided C&amp;I for SFM very early, has been developing Guidelines in various fields and provides trade information regarding tropical timber. However, these are not always well known in the important audiences.</p> <p>ITTO has not communicated efficiently its accomplishments and potential to the important audiences.</p>	I
The harmonization of international reporting and accessibility to forestry data. These are communicated well to audience 1 (government officials) and 2 (Universities, consultants, data analysts). However, they are targeted towards the professional audience and in turn, are not as valuable to the broader public, including non-member governments.	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market reports, market days at Council</li> <li>• State of the Worlds Tropical Forests</li> <li>• Fellowships</li> <li>• SFM and other policy and technical guidelines and Objectives</li> <li>• Projects and related evaluations, which build capacity in-country: We see great opportunities for story telling based on past success stories. We suggest showcasing past ITTO projects, which led to significantly larger at-scale projects from large donors, such as GEF and the World Bank. These "small" ITTO projects are meaningful for the participating communities and effective due to the ITTO Secretariat's technical expertise and involvement. Drawing a direct line from ITTO's initial involvement in a specific area, community, and/or project to the subsequent larger funding and project output would be compelling. A key advantage of ITTO is</li> </ul>	I



their ability to relatively quickly translate new policy approaches into practice through their “smaller” field projects/pilots – helping to more quickly demonstrate value/vet approaches – something that sets them apart from larger, more deliberative organizations programming funding in this space.	
The completion of the national inventory carried out in 1997 remains the most important achievement of ITTO in Gabon. There have been other relevant projects such as support to the National School of Water and Forests or on Community Forests.	I
ITTO’s major achievements comprise of accelerating the sustainable forest management and sustainable supply chains of tropical timber via its council sessions, policy discussions (including at other international forums, particularly through the CPF), projects and activities, which help to increase certified forest area and number of CoC certifications across various regions. As ITTO’s achievements have not been fully publicized, we think there is much room for ITTO to improve its visibility on its activities and achievements over the past 30 years.	I

**9.- What do you see as ITTO’s key communication moments this year? (for example launching a new report, or regular market information)**

Summary of responses	Repetitions
The MIS	### I
Dissemination of the new “ITTO Guideline for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics” at UNFCCC COP26, CBD COP15 (2022), or WFC (2022) would be timely and impressive	I
Advice on deforestation-free supply chains would be welcome by the international community	I
The Council	III
ITTO reports should be available in all three official languages (there are many documents, reports and courses valuable to forest communities which are only available in English, which reduces its accessibility)	I
The release of new publications	II
Communications seem to be appropriate and timely done	I

Webinars in times of pandemic	I
In this time of crisis for the Organization, information on the work of the Organization should be continuously disseminated and expanded to current and potential partner countries. In many cases, the role of ITTO is not clear	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the work of ITTO contributes to addressing the global challenges</li> <li>• Providing information on the new ED (when he/she will be elected)</li> <li>• Communicating the extension of ITTA 2006 (when this will be decided at ITTC57)</li> </ul>	I
Most notable communications relate to international regulatory development. ITTO is considered an appropriate medium for breaking news	I
Over the last 12 months, the launch of the ITTO Guidelines for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Tropics and its Project Brief were key communications moments after multiple years of preparation. The Monthly market information is highly valued by readers, especially during the disruptions in the global supply chain due to COVID-19	I
Council session (especially the market/trade-related discussions, which should be expanded this year to cover market developments from pandemic impact/success stories in greater depth), regular market information and annual reports (including the current timber market situation affected by COVID-19 and future outlook), any planned side events at major international events (e.g. IUCN World Congress?)	I

*\*There are 19 responses in total. However, one response may include more than one key communication moment.*

**10.- Do you or your colleagues have articles or moments that you feel ITTO has used or could use in its communications? If so, please describe briefly, including how ITTO can contribute or did contribute to these successes.**

Summary of responses	Repetitions*
Central American countries with pine-oak ecosystems suffered natural degradation of their forests as a result of aggressive epidemic episodes during 2014-2018 by bark beetles and pine borers, which degraded around 512,000 hectares of natural pine forests (in Honduras alone), with impacts on community organizations that live from the extraction of resins and wood	I

ITTO might fully utilize their existing advisory boards, such as the Trade Advisory Group (TAG) and the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG), for better communication	I
ITTO could disclose in its communications which countries have applied its guidelines to formulate guides, for example on SFM, in the formulation of its forest regulations, or training for micro-enterprises	I
ITTO has co-financed the publication of a book on protected areas and national parks that is used as a guide text in forestry education	I
Experiences in the sustainable management of natural forest	I
ITTO should review its communication strategy and put emphasis in disseminating results/products of funded projects and activities. The Organization's website must be easy to navigate, contain the most relevant information and be visibly attractive	I
Cannot recall	III
ITTO should consider promoting tropical timber initiatives in platforms such as Al Jazeera, Bloogmerg or Netflix documentary	I
Communications on illegal logging regulatory developments, including legislative reviews. ITTO can contribute by reporting to the international community and potential impacts	I
ITTO could assist with donor communications and coordination, as well as sharing tropical forest news and results. ITTO's market information during the pandemic is an example of timely communications during a difficult year	I
We have received several reminders about our country's debt to the organization. Such communications allow us to remind our Ministry of Finance to do everything to pay off. It is important to make these reminders periodically to states that are no longer paying their dues. The organization lives from these contributions	I
PowerPoint presentations used at various events (e.g. UN High Level Political Forum)  Strategic Action Plan  Landscape Restoration Guidelines	I

Recent Report on the Pilot Case Study on the New Financial Architecture	
Forest incentive assessment	I

*\*Many respondents skipped this question.*

#### 11.- What else is important in your mind that we haven't covered?

Summary of responses	Repetitions*
Issues related to native communities and climate-change adaptation	I
ITTO should put emphasis on people in consumer countries, since they are the ultimate funding contributors	I
There's room for business entities to participate in ITTO's activities	I
It's important to know how the communication strategy will be implemented to reach forest communities, civil society in coordination with member countries (focal points) to ensure it is widely known	I
Most government officials do not know about ITTO and the opportunities it offers. Universities must disseminate to their students about ITTO	I
I believe that ITTO covers well the issues that are of concern and interest to its member countries	I
Regionalize project financing to achieve greater financing	I
<p>ITTO must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on achieving greater effectiveness in their actions through a business environment, less diplomacy, politics and bureaucracy, in addition to an urgent reduction of expenses to the bare minimum.</li> <li>• Promote greater transparency in its finances, greater administrative rigor, increase internal and external surveillance to improve the internal control of the Organization.</li> <li>• Focus your efforts on your substantive activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promote the expansion and diversification of the international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests;</li> <li>○ Promote the sustainable management of tropical timber producing forests.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	I

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promote business plans focused on small producers.</li> <li>○ Continue to carry out dissemination and training events, with a vision of getting closer to the people</li> </ul>	
Would be good to secure appropriate and relevant short articles from different continents and publish in the TFU	I
What is required to have some specific market reports on PNG timbers?	I
ITTO could reach the general public more effectively by translating raw forestry data into more digestible and engaging products, particularly through thematic analysis and narrative pieces of key trends. In this way, the data can be used more broadly and increase outreach	I
We support further measures for increased transparency, such as posting organizational documents online. We appreciate a user-friendly website and easy access to past and present documents online.	I
Raising ITTO's visibility in host country Japan (and host city Yokohama): Japan now has a big focus on ESG/carbon-neutrality, but are any of the large famous global companies in Japan involved in any of ITTO's activities/TAG/CSAG? These players could be big co-financiers of market-related projects.	I

*\*Many respondents skipped this question.*

## Annex 4: Messaging

24 September 2021

### MESSAGING GOALS

- First, we need to explain the global environmental crisis and how the world's tropical forests can be part of the solution—if they can survive.
- Second, we need to define sustainable forestry as a key tool to ensuring the conservation of tropical forests and their capacity to mitigate climate change.
- Third, we need to assert ITTO as the go-to partner for sustainable forestry.

### VALUE PROPOSITION

- The world faces many planetary emergencies: climate change, biodiversity extinction, social and economic inequality and escalating pandemics.
  - Tropical forests, which provide a home to millions of people and harbor most of our planet's remaining biodiversity, are a key solution to these crises.
- Sustainable forestry—managing a forest so that the production of goods and services unduly reduce its values or future productivity—is the path forward for addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and poverty.
  - Sustainable forestry can produce a wide variety of goods—such as timber, resins, nuts, fibers, medicinal plants—and services—such as clean air, biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, water filtration, and erosion prevention.
  - Sustainable forestry is more like a trim than a buzzcut, allowing logged areas to recover quickly. Once trees are harvested, they can be replanted to keep forests standing instead of converting the land to farmland, urban developments, or other land uses.
  - Sustainable forestry in the tropics is often practiced by forest-dependent communities; any projects that involve forests must respect their rights and not threaten their wellbeing.

- ITTO works to improve the health and value of tropical forests worldwide. As an international entity with direct ties to projects on the ground, ITTO has the policy, trade, and technical expertise to effectively promote the implementation of sustainable forestry across the tropics.
  - ITTO's partners, donors and members represent more than 80% of the world's tropical forests and about 90% of the global trade in tropical forest products.
  - Despite the sustainable value that the forests can provide, these regions often contain pockets of extreme poverty, especially where deforestation has razed the landscape and ruined livelihoods.
  - Through more than 1200 projects in over 40 countries, ITTO has demonstrated how to improve the livelihood and wellbeing of communities living in or near tropical forests. In its policy and field work, ITTO:
    - Supports economic development efforts that benefit women, young people and other vulnerable groups.
    - Encourages community forestry, locally based forest enterprises, local food security, and equitable benefit sharing.
    - Builds capacity in rural communities to manage forests sustainably and add value to forest products, thereby improving local livelihoods for generations.
    - Promotes the economically viable restoration of degraded landscapes and the sustainable production of wood and wood-based energy.
    - Empowers local communities and other forest owners and stakeholders to earn income exporting sustainably produced wood and non-wood products.
- ITTO works with the private sector to improve the tropical timber industry's economic, social and environmental sustainability while increasing the transparency of the marketplace.
  - With more than 30 years of experience, ITTO advocates for a wider embrace of sustainable forestry so that the environmental, social, economic and public health goals, contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2030) can be achieved.

## PROBLEM

- The world faces many planetary emergencies: social and economic inequality, climate change, biodiversity extinction, and escalating pandemics.
  - Tropical forests, which provide a home to millions of people and harbor most of our planet's remaining terrestrial biodiversity, sit in the crosshairs of these crises.
  - Solutions require concerted action by governments, the private sector and civil society to achieve cross-cutting transformations.
- Tropical forests can provide a healthy environment, improve the living standards of rural populations and reduce climate change. Yet deforestation and forest degradation continues.
  - According to the World Bank, about 350 million people live within or close to dense forests and depend on them for their subsistence and income.
  - According to the United Nations, the estimated rate of deforestation worldwide was 10 million hectares annually between 2015-2020 and 12 million annually during 2010-2015.
  - Tropical forests are incredibly biodiverse; they support at least [two-thirds of the world's terrestrial biodiversity](#) despite covering [less than 4% of Earth's land surface](#).
- The timber industry globally faces widespread criticism because of the perception that chopping down trees is inherently bad.
  - It is well-documented that one of the major drivers of deforestation is the [expansion of the agricultural frontier](#), which replaces the forested landscape in favor of other land-uses. Another driver of deforestation is urbanization, the expansion of cities into previously undeveloped lands.
  - Illegal deforestation, which generates [up to \\$152 billion](#) in timber annually, threatens not only the forests that are cleared for illicit gain but the communities that depend on those forests for their subsistence.
  - The COVID-19 pandemic has also worsened the many barriers faced by the tropical timber industry and its international trade.
  - In 2020, the value of tropical wood products globally declined for the second straight year.
  - Production and exports have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels in most tropical producer countries, impacting the economics of all who work



or live in these lands, from timber industry revenues to the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities.

- When people want a table, they want a wood table, not a plastic one. Yet production of tropical timber declined dramatically during the COVID-19 economic downturn.
  - Production of tropical industrial roundwood (“logs”) in ITTO member countries totalled 294.1 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2019. Production in 2020 is estimated to have declined to 285.1 million m<sup>3</sup>, due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions imposed in most producer countries.
  - As domestic production of tropical wood products increases, tropical log imports by ITTO members have declined every year since a peak in 2014. Imports dropped to 14.5 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2019, about 13 percent less than the previous year, and then plummeted to 12.2 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2020, the lowest volume since ITTO began its assessments in 1987
  - In 2019, ITTO member countries imported about 86% of global secondary processed wood products (SPWPs) imports—\$98.3 billion worth—62% of which was wooden furniture and parts.

## SOLUTION

- Sustainable forestry is managing a forest so that the production of goods and services does not alter its environment.
  - Sustainable forestry can produce a wide variety of goods—such as timber, resins, nuts, fibers, medicinal plants—and services—such as clean air, biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, water filtration, and erosion prevention.
  - Forest-dependent communities have often practiced sustainable forestry for generations; any projects that involve forests must respect their rights and not threaten their wellbeing.
- Sustainable forestry nurtures tropical forests so that they can consistently produce valuable goods and services used every day, not just the wood in household furniture but everything—from coffee and açai berries to the ingredients in antibiotics and cancer medicines.
  - Sustainable forestry can provide economic development while conserving biodiversity and helping mitigate climate change.
  - Today, timber harvesting is more like a trim than a buzzcut; reduced impact logging is practiced across the tropics, allowing logged areas to recover quickly.
  - Once trees are harvested, they can be replanted to keep forests standing instead of converting the land to farmland, urban developments, or other land uses.
  - Sustainable forestry keeps tropical deforestation in check, [stopping a key driver](#) in the growth of zoonotic diseases and the potential pandemics they can cause.
- ITTO works to improve the health and value of tropical forests worldwide.
  - Through more than 1200 projects in over 40 countries, ITTO has demonstrated how to improve the livelihood and wellbeing of communities living in or near tropical forests. Despite the sustainable wealth that the tropical forests can provide, these regions often contain pockets of extreme poverty, especially where deforestation has razed the landscape and ruined livelihoods. In its policy and field work, ITTO:
    - Supports economic development efforts that benefit women, young people and other vulnerable groups.
    - Encourages community forestry, locally based forest enterprises, local food security, and equitable benefit sharing.

- Builds capacity in rural communities to manage forests sustainably and add value to forest products, thereby improving local livelihoods for generations.
  - Promotes the economically viable restoration of degraded landscapes and the sustainable production of wood and wood-based energy.
  - Empowers local communities and other forest owners and stakeholders to earn income exporting sustainably produced wood and non-wood products.
- There is power in small-budget projects; their impact can extend much further than their initial grants. ITTO projects are often affordable enough to secure funding from other sources to build on project outcomes, expanding their scope and benefits.
- ITTO works with the private sector to improve its economic, social and environmental sustainability while increasing the transparency of the tropical timber industry.
  - Policy discussions about the forest industry are not just about companies pledging zero tropical deforestation commitments. ITTO brings in the voice of people who work in the sector, on the ground, to inform environmental, social and economic development policies.
  - ITTO monitors the international trade in tropical forest products, compiling and analyzing valuable data and then making this work accessible.

## BRAGGING POINTS

- ITTO launched an education project for rural communities that taught conservation practices in the region's forests, a delicate and rare ecosystem that covers 3.93 million hectares in Northern Peru. The communities worked with a private-sector concern to protect native trees with hedges; as compensation, the communities received support for social projects based their development priorities. In addition, the community enterprises generate income from beekeeping, production of essential oils, and raising livestock. This initiative began with a US\$500,000 grant from ITTO and has now expanded to become a US\$50 million project with government and external donor funding.
- In 2002, ITTO created technical guidelines on forest landscape restoration—a groundbreaking solution at the time, when forest restoration was not part of the international dialogue on forests.
- ITTO Council meetings were the first places where illegal logging was discussed, in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

## SUCCESS STORIES

- [Restored 137 hectares of degraded mangrove forests](#) and improved the livelihoods of families and the women who lead them around in the Rewa Delta, where Fiji's largest river enters the Pacific Ocean. The project also facilitated the inclusion of women in community decision-making processes, enabling them to lead and advocate on environmental issues that affect their lives.
- A small grant from ITTO in 2009 provided the stimulus for MALEBI, a women's association in Côte d'Ivoire, to improve charcoal production using efficient, eco-friendly techniques, increasing the standard of living in the local community and promoting the importance of forest conservation. MALEBI then undertook a larger ITTO project in 2016 to restore a 100-hectare area in the nearby Ahua gazetted forest to ensure a continuous supply of wood for charcoal production.
- In many countries, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are the largest collective source of employment, vital for national economies. An ITTO project, the Forest MSME Management Project, encouraged informal businesses to become part of Guatemala's formal economy and provided education and training in business management—awarding 320 participating owners and staff of MSMEs with diplomas. Forest-related enterprises in the project have gained greater control over production and continuously innovate; they are finding new ways to promote their businesses and expand their client portfolios.

### **ASK: What more is needed?**

- There is no better way to conserve tropical forests than to sustainably manage it.
  - Feel good, use wood. Purchasing sustainably produced tropical forest products rewards proper forestry, helps conserve forests and improves the standards of living for forest-dependent and forest-dwelling people.
  - Bringing small producers into the sustainable tropical forest products trade is one of the keys to solving tropical deforestation and achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

### **WHY SHOULD I CARE?**

- Tropical forests are central in climate change discussions today and will continue to play a prominent role in the future. The voices of forest-dependent communities and the timber industry are critical to achieving transformational change.
- In the COVID-19 era, governments are looking at green recoveries—how to build both a resilient environment and a strong economy—and ITTO has a proven track record in implementing such ventures.

## Annex 5: Website Audit

### Introduction

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) website (<https://www.itto.int/>) is full of important resources that promote the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests and the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests. The goal of this memo is to provide recommendations that, if implemented, will help your website visitors find and engage with those resources more easily and help expand ITTO's influence among media and partners.

From our initial call with you, we understand that your goals are to:

- Maximize website visitors and encourage them to organically share ITTO resources with their networks
- Increase website traffic from English- and French-speaking countries, as most of the current visitors are from Spanish-speaking countries

Your main target audiences include:

- Current donors
- Potential donors
- Media outlets covering environmental and sustainable development issues
- ITTO members
- Tropical timber traders/processors/product manufacturers

### Messaging, Design and User Experience

*The recommendations below focus on what you're saying about ITTO, how the site is designed and how your audience sees/navigates the site.*

Observations	Recommendations
<b>Top priority: Homepage and menu</b>	
At first glance, the "Homepage" has too much information, which can overwhelm a user and cause confusion. The homepage should	The first featured block/image (where the carousel is) on the homepage should be something that better explains the importance

feature a limited amount of content from other pages on the site to give users an idea of what's available.	<p>of what ITTO does. Consider removing the carousel and placing information similar to the blurb under "About ITTO" in that spot so new users can automatically know what your organization does.</p> <p>Because ITTO is dedicated to sharing resources, the featured resource buttons that sit below the current carousel are in a good position to complement the about block.</p>
The "News," "Call for Proposals," "Announcements" and "Events" sections are very far down on the homepage and feature most of the information on the actual pages.	If this is a key reason users visit the website, we recommend no more than one of each listed on the homepage with a link. We want to use the one featured item to push users to the full list of events, news and proposals on their respective pages.
The "Resources" area on the homepage serves a similar purpose as the three buttons below the carousel on the homepage.	This resources panel can be removed from the homepage. The most important resources should be housed toward the top of the homepage below the carousel.
The quick links section in the footer has more than a dozen links.	Five links maximum would work here so users can navigate to and find what they're looking for quickly. It should take them to the most popular and useful pages on your site.
The triple mailing list sign ups could be confusing.	Combine into one form that allows users to sign up for one, two or all lists. The choice will be very explicit and add the functionality of allowing someone to subscribe to multiple lists simultaneously.
The target audiences could have a hard time finding information using the site navigation.	<p>Restructure navigation in line with expressed goals and target audiences in mind to keep priority pages easy to find. Consider adding a place where donors can easily locate how to get involved as well as a place where media can find press releases.</p> <p>Potential content structure:</p> <p>About Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- About ITTO (focus areas can be combined with this section)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Our Team</li><li>- Our Members</li><li>- Contact Us</li></ul> <p>ITTO Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Councils &amp; Committees</li><li>- Reports</li><li>- Decisions</li><li>- Rules &amp; Procedures</li></ul> <p>Projects &amp; Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Project Manuals</li><li>- Project Search</li><li>- Activities in Japan</li></ul> <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Statistics Database</li><li>- Publications and Reports</li><li>- Guidelines</li></ul> <p>News &amp; Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- ITTO in the News</li><li>- Photo Gallery</li><li>- Blog</li><li>- Press Releases</li><li>- Media Resources (publicity materials, media contact)</li></ul> <p>Join Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Events</li><li>- Donor Information</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call for Proposals</li> <li>- How to Become a Member</li> <li>- Job Openings</li> <li>- Fellowship Programme</li> </ul>
<b>Other priorities</b>	
<b>Observations</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<p><b>About Us</b> - Many of the pages under this drop-down have little to no information, such as the How to Become a Member page and the ED/Secretariat Page.</p> <p>There also isn't a staff/team page to show users the people behind the organization.</p> <p>The pages are also text-heavy and lack attention-grabbing visuals.</p>	<p>Replace the ED/Secretariat page with an "Our Team" page to show users the leaders of ITTO. This can include a photo and short bio of each team member. The organizational chart can be placed on this page as well.</p> <p>The ED job posting and future openings can be moved to the "Job Openings" subpage under "Join Us." Key openings can be displayed on the homepage using a banner.</p> <p>Images from the photo gallery can be used throughout the "About Us" pages to illustrate the work the ITTO does.</p>
<p><b>Council &amp; Committees</b> - This section appears to be very specific to ITTO members.</p>	<p>Consider renaming this section "ITTO Members" so members will know where to find this information as soon as they get to the site.</p> <p>Combine some of the subpages to make the dropdown shorter and less repetitive (see potential content structure above).</p>
<p><b>Projects</b> - Some of the content on the drop-down can be combined and reformatted.</p> <p>Most of the projects listed in the photo gallery search function do not have photos.</p>	<p>Consider combining the two manuals pages underneath and reformatting the content to match the presentation style on the "Manuals for Projects Under Implementation" page.</p> <p>The photo gallery can be moved to the "News &amp; Media" section for organization purposes.</p>
Currently, the " <b>Resources</b> " page has a lot of	"Photos," "Videos," and "Publicity Materials"

<p>different content types such as newsletters, reports, action plans, and guidelines to name some. Although they are organized into their own categories, this can still overwhelm the user because as one clicks on a content type, there is a lot of content to sift through. For example, the “Tropical Forest Update” on its own has many different volumes to scroll through.</p>	<p>from the “Resources” page should be consolidated under “News and Events.” Keep this “Resources” page exclusively to “Publications &amp; Reports” and “Guidelines.”</p> <p>We highly recommend that the resources page needs to be redesigned as a searchable database showcasing content in a simpler way, with each resource tagged for its content and type. (Example of a more organized resource page: <a href="https://phsharing.org/resources-and-tools-library/">https://phsharing.org/resources-and-tools-library/</a>)</p>
<p>At first glance, the “<b>News &amp; Events</b>” subpages look very busy. These pages are very text-heavy despite the filter tag system. It appears that there are 355 “top stories,” but it would be difficult for a user to seamlessly find the one that they’re looking for. The filter tag system on the right sidebar looks very cluttered and hard to sift through.</p>	<p>On this page, we recommend having a subpage dedicated to press kits that include publicity materials, contact for media inquiries, and news releases.</p> <p>What is the difference between “Top Stories” and “News”?</p> <p>Same recommendation as listed in the above. We highly recommend that ITTO invests in developing a database system for its news and articles with a search and filter function. The filter tags ITTO currently has are great, but they can overwhelm a user because the design is very busy. Same applies for “Events.”</p> <p>“Calls for proposals” can be housed under the “Join Us” menu page. To people who are unfamiliar with how ITTO proposals run, we recommend including a brief overview of what these proposals are and the purpose of putting out a call.</p> <p>“Activities in Japan” can be consolidated under the “Projects” menu page and “Projects” can be renamed to “Projects &amp; Outreach.”</p>
<p>The “<b>Statistics Database</b>” is straightforward. However, it appears that the “Clear selections” and “Download data” buttons are unresponsive.</p>	<p>Buttons should be checked and updated so they don’t present any issues for the user. This page can also be moved under the “Resources” heading.</p>
<p>Quick Links</p>	<p>“Back issues” should be changed to “Previous</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Tropical Forest Update” page</li> </ul>	<p>issues.” The opt-in form for the newsletter is missing a link to the <a href="#">Privacy Policy</a>, which can be a liability. We highly recommend that ITTO work with a developer to build that into the form and have a check box next to the privacy policy so that users can acknowledge that they’re opting in to receive ITTO newsletters and other forms of outreach.</p>
<p>Quick Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Fellowships awarded” page is very text-heavy.</li> </ul>	<p>We recommend including headshots of the Fellowship recipients to break up the text on this page.</p>
<p>Quick Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status of Tropical Forest Management 2005</li> </ul> <p>After selecting a country from one of the drop-down menus titled “Find a country,” categorized by continent on the left sidebar, and the site populates the page for the selected country, the user is unable to make another selection from any of the three drop-down menus on the left sidebar.</p>	<p>We recommend constantly checking the widgets and features on different pages of the website, especially the older ones, and update features as necessary to prevent any issues for the user.</p>
<p>Quick Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thematic programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The link for “User Manual (ITTO ProTool)” is broken.</li> <li>○ The hyperlinks for “Full report” and “Executive Summary” under Review Effectiveness of TP Pilot Operation lead to the same material. Was this intentional? Same thing for the same buttons under “Taking Stock of the Implementation of TFLET and REDDES.”</li> <li>○ The hyperlinks for their corresponding text under “TFLET Projects” take the user to the “Project/activity search” database. Was each</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update all buttons and links.</li> <li>• Update content materials with the most recent point of contact and their contact information to prevent confusion on the user’s end. This is crucial because ITTO would ideally like for its audience to contact them based on reliable information.</li> </ul>

hyperlink supposed to link to a page with further descriptions of the project?	
<p>Quick Links: ITTO-CBD Collaborative Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text-heavy</li> <li>• Have the targets under “Progress to date” been reached?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We recommend that ITTO uses more visuals to break up text-heavy web pages like this one.</li> <li>• Update pages with ongoing projects like this if these targets have been reached, etc.</li> </ul>
Overall, there’s an inconsistency of how texts are written out across the website. For example, there are some phrases where all of the first letters of the words are capitalized Like This. But there are others that show up Like this.	We recommend standardizing the type style, spelling, grammar, writing mechanics, punctuation and cadence across the website for a more polished look.
At first glance, there are accessibility issues.	We highly recommend that you use a website like <a href="#">UserWay</a> to help you pinpoint what you need to do to make your site accessibility-friendly. The best type of site is an accessible site and is compliant with disability laws.

## Next steps

We appreciate the opportunity to review your website and look forward to discussing our recommendations. Below are proposed next steps:

- Receive your feedback on this memo on a scheduled call to discuss.
- Determine which recommendations you want to pursue.

We look forward to continuing the conversation!

## Annex 6: Digital audit and influencers list

### Summary

The memo below includes a digital audit and recommendations for the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

The strategy comes first and provides a big-picture overview of what ITTO should be doing in the digital space to achieve your goals. It provides a strategic foundation and structure for creating and promoting content across your social media channels. We make several recommendations; some are to continue activities that you are already doing, and some are activities that you should start doing.

The audit can be found in the appendix and includes specific findings by platform throughout the past year. Overall, your team has done a great job of keeping your social channels active and highlighting the important moments. The biggest focus opportunities we identified include diversifying your content types, improving quality of content across platforms (ensuring all content posted is high-quality and engaging), and implementing a consistent editorial calendar across all platforms.

### Digital Strategy Overview and Goals

*THE ITTO SOCIAL CHANNELS SERVE TO FULFILL THE BELOW GOALS:*

- Increase recognition of ITTO as a leader in sustainable forest management (SFM) in the tropics.
- Disseminate the news based on the organization's activities with a focus on news that has widespread appeal to larger audiences.
- Maximize the visitors to your website and social media so that they organically share/replicate/disseminate your messages to their networks.

*IN ADDITION, ITTO'S SOCIAL MEDIA WORK INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING AMBITIONS:*

- Gain a more balanced composition of geographical visitors to your website and social media (by increasing traffic from English- and French-speaking countries to a similar number to visitors from Spanish-speaking countries).
- Increase the amount of followers on social media platforms to a few thousand per channel with a corresponding increase in likes.

*HERE ARE YOUR PRIMARY AUDIENCES—PEOPLE YOU NEED TO REACH/INFLUENCE TO MOVE CLOSER TOWARD YOUR GOALS:*

- Current donors
- Potential donors
- Media outlets covering environmental and sustainable development issues
- ITTO consumer members
- ITTO producer members
- Tropical timber traders/processors/product manufacturers
- Online influencers

*HERE ARE THE DIGITAL CHANNELS YOU HAVE AVAILABLE TO REACH THESE AUDIENCES:*

- Facebook
  - Use for event/program promotions, video content, news shares and live videos during annual council sessions
  - Post around once a day (2-3 times a day during annual council session)
- Twitter
  - Use for tropical and timber factoids, news shares, video content, promoting new research/early career investigators, annual meeting/tropical timber/environmental moment-specific content
  - Post at least 4 times a day (5-15 times a day during the annual council session)
- Instagram
  - Use for tropical and timber factoids, video content, graphics that highlight factoids and/or research, events, webinars, etc.
  - Post around once a day (2-3 times a day during the annual council session)
- LinkedIn
  - Use for noteworthy tropical timber field news and promoting annual council sessions (noteworthy research being presented there) and events/webinars

- Post at least once a day (1-2 times a day during the annual council session)
- YouTube
  - Repository for all ITTO videos, either produced in-house or by Executing Agencies of ITTO projects
  - Post as needed (try to include at least one new video for each annual council session, like an annual report/round up, but in a video if possible so members will not have to sort through all of the documents to get an idea of the work that has been done over the past year.)

## ITTO Voice

Voice is the character of your brand. These are the core tenets, the evergreen principles, that stay consistent regardless of situation or platform.

- **Voice:** ITTO's voice is **educational, factual, friendly, accessible, and collaborative.**
- **Rationale:** ITTO is positioned as a leader in sustainable forest management (SFM) in the tropics through its newsletters such as the Tropical Forest Update, on-the-ground projects, guidelines, its publications and reports such as the Tropical Timber Market Report, and videos promoting sustainable forest management around the world.
- Voice and tone should reflect this positioning.

- **Examples of social posts that accurately reflect this voice:**



## Content Themes

These themes should inform all digital content being shared across your social platforms. Across channels, you will aim to post content that hits on each theme (though there will be overlap between themes and that's fine!). For example, if you've posted three pieces of content in a row that hit on theme 1, your next piece of content should hit on a different theme. This will help ensure that you create and share a diverse set of content that drives toward your digital goals.

Under each theme, we've listed several content ideas. These could be links to articles, photos, live videos, simple edited videos or text-only posts. You are already accomplishing the majority of the below themes; the purpose here is to ensure that these keep your content organized and purposeful.

### Theme 1: Promoting the Sustainable Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and the Expansion and Diversification of International Trade in Tropical Timber

- Posts highlighting sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests and diversification of internal trade in tropical timber. E.g., links to external news articles covering these issues



## **Theme 2: Participating in Environmental, Forestry, Climate-Change Moments**

- These are moments around which you may want to plan larger-scale campaigns, both online and offline, to highlight your research expertise and data, with heavy focus on paid advertising:
  - International Day of Climate Action
  - Amazon Rainforest Day
  - World Nature Conservation Day
  - World Rainforest Day
  - World Wood Day
  - World Wildlife Day
  - World Environment Day
  - International Day of Forests
  - World Earth Day
  - World Soil Day
  - International Day of the World's Indigenous People
  - World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
  - The 16th Session of the UN Forum on Forests, 26-30 April, 2021
  - The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 17–21 May 2021 Kunming, China
  - The UN Climate Conference, 1–12 November 2021, Glasgow, UK
  - The World Forestry Congress (Seoul, Korea), postponed to 2022
  - Major reports coming out of the UN Climate Change, World Wildlife Fund, Greenpeace, etc. when you have notice they are coming up and the field is going to be engaged

## **Theme 3: Sharing ITTO's Own Work**

- Links to weekly ITTO articles with content that is more engaging and visual

- Posts that promote sign-ups for ITTO webinars and webcasts
- Graphics with ITTO specific factoids and link to the source ([like this example](#)). These could become a series of new posts that are posted on a weekly basis (something like “#ITTOFacts”)
- Announcements of and accolades for ITTO-specific fellowship and grant recipients
- Posts that encourage people to apply for an ITTO fund, grant, or award and link to those opportunities ([like this example](#))

#### **Theme 4: The Annual International Tropical Timber Council Session**

- Posts highlighting benefits of attending annual meeting with links to register, to increase attendance among membership agencies and institutions
- Teaser video that features soundbites from attendees and links to registration page, also to increase attendance among membership agencies and institutions
- Live tweets and engaging Instagram stories from the event including images/video of attendees, noteworthy studies presented, and links to meeting specific blogs or coverage
- Facebook and Instagram live streams from meeting sessions
- Resharing of member and partner content, and research presented during the meeting

#### **Theme 5: The People of ITTO**

- Photo posts that highlight staff member and member bios, backgrounds, and motivations. These could be packaged as an “ITTO spotlight” series that introduce the people behind the scenes
- Photo or short video posts that show where ITTO staff are and what they are doing, e.g., a soundbite from an ITTO staff member’s trip to a conference where they say what they’re learning in 15 seconds, soundbite from members giving a tour of field projects
- Photo posts featuring Fellows and their work with the hashtag #ITTOFellowSpotlight

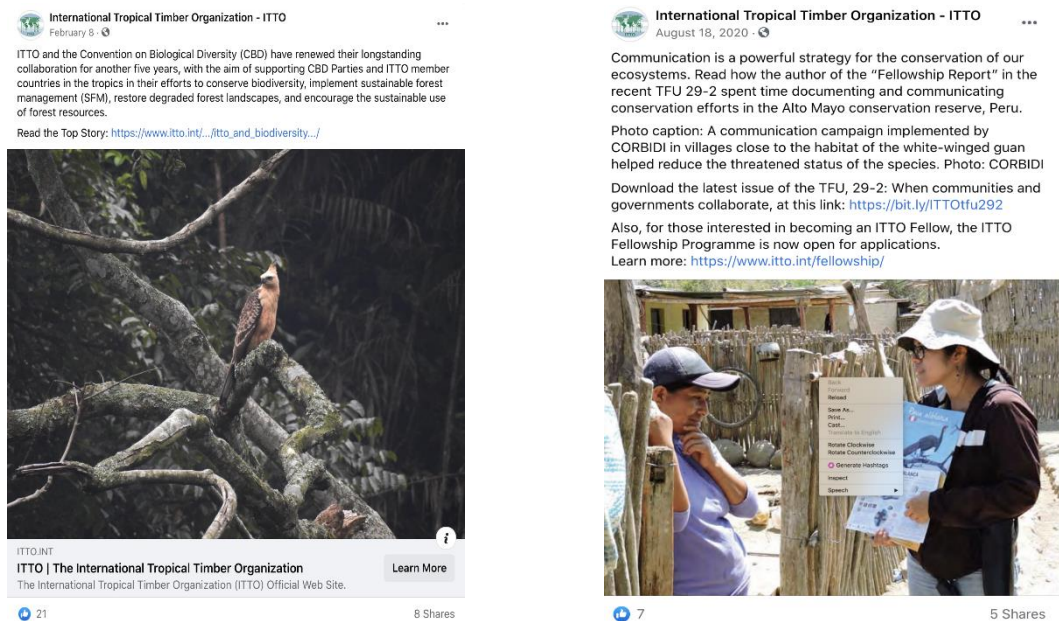
## Social Audit by Channel

### Facebook:

#### Content Observations and Recommendations:

- Post frequency on the Facebook page is currently active with around 4 posts a month. We recommend posting around once a day; and 2-3 times a day during special events such as the annual council session.
- Posts promoting news stories or ITTO opportunities (fellowship/proposal applications) tend to produce the highest engagement numbers.
- As opposed to Twitter, there aren't any major spikes in engagement or follows within any specific time periods. The account fluctuates evenly throughout the year and doesn't rely on specific moments like International Day of Forests for increases in engagement.
- There have only been 26 videos posted to your channel since 2017.
- There only appears to be 1 past event ever created on your Facebook page.
  - Take advantage of Facebook event pages as often as you can (while using paid ad dollars to boost them). These will ensure higher registration turnouts for events.
- Some posts feature low-resolution images (like the example below). These types of visuals can turn off your followers, so we recommend working with a developer to create meta image thumbnails and headlines on your website. That way, each website link will include a pre-set image and headline that automatically populates when you share it on social.
  - Additionally, whenever one clicks on an article's pre-set image (like the example below), the URL brings the user to the ITTO homepage, and not to the specific article intended for the reader. We recommend following the recommendations in the above to prevent any confusion on the user's end.

- There is a post that appears to be a screenshot of an image, but a right-click drop-down menu appears over the image (like the example below). This type of



visual can also turn off your followers, so we recommend establishing a process where another person can check each post for quality assurance. This recommendation applies to all platforms.

- Your account currently makes good use of your page header, profile icon, and the “about” information present on the page.
- ITTO’s Facebook page has a few thousand likes and follows, which is great. This means Facebook is potentially as useful for engaging your audiences as Twitter (though, as noted in this audit, there are some ways that Facebook is more useful than Twitter and vice versa).
- Facebook is an optimal platform for getting your audience to perform a non-digital action (apply for a program/join a fellowship).
- Like on Twitter, we recommend diversifying your content by using more video, which may lead to higher engagement. Specifically, you can repurpose the annual council session video content throughout the year and use snippets of on-the-ground projects, if available.
- Use paid promotions to garner more clicks to a website, increase video views, and generate email and event sign-ups.
- Facebook Live will also serve as a beneficial tool to keep members who can’t attend the annual council session engaged and keep a good record of interesting conversations. It is also another way to livestream any webcasts or webinars.

- Based on the languages that you provide on your website, we recommend that you apply the same set of languages to your social media posts as much as possible.

## Instagram

### Content Observations and Recommendations:

- Post frequency on the Instagram account is currently active with around 2-5 posts a month. We recommend posting around once a day; and 2-3 times a day during special events such as the annual council session.
- Posts promoting factoids and ITTO opportunities (fellowship/proposal applications) tend to produce the highest engagement numbers.
  - Use [Canva](#) to create visual templates ready-made for things like events, facts, and news.
    - Since graphs and charts seem to attract the highest amount of engagement, consider doing a “did you know” or “ITTO Facts” series that are pushed out on Instagram on a weekly basis.
- Similar to Twitter, posting during moments like International Day of Forests can help with your post reach, especially if you use the corresponding hashtags.
  - Use hashtags, but 11 is the perfect number to use. Remember to #WriteOutHashtagsLikeThis in camel case, and not like #writeouthashtaglikethis, for accessibility purposes.
  - The following are global best times to post on Instagram ([source](#)):
    - Monday: 6am, 10am, and 10pm EST
    - Tuesday: 2am, 4am, and 9am EST
    - Wednesday: 7am, 8am, and 11pm EST
    - Thursday: 9am, 12pm, and 7pm EST
    - Friday: 5am, 1pm, and 3pm EST
    - Saturday: 11am, 7pm, and 8pm EST
    - Sunday: 7am, 8am, and 4pm EST
- There have only been 15 videos posted to your channel since 2014.

- Some videos such as this [one](#) and this [one](#) have a blank thumbnail, which can be a turnoff for your followers and may confuse them. We recommend making sure you select an appropriate and attention-grabbing thumbnail using the “Cover” feature in the step when Instagram asks you if you want to apply a filter; the third feature to its right on the bottom is “Cover.” There, you will be able to select a suitable thumbnail.
- Some posts feature low-resolution images (like the example below). These types of visuals can turn off your followers, so we recommend ensuring that every image you upload to the platform is in its highest resolution.



- Your account currently makes good use of your page header, profile icon, and the “about” information present on the page.
- ITTO’s Instagram has 713 followers, which is great to start with. We recommend implementing an editorial calendar with consistent, engaging content. Think of Instagram as a medium to interact with your audience in an informative yet approachable way. Please see the following recommendations as ways to drive high-quality traffic to your profile and to actively engage with your followers.
  - Utilize Instagram Live to livestream annual meetings and other important events.
    - Use the Q&A sticker to answer questions live
    - Plan shared livestreams with partner organizations

- Utilize the “Stories” function to share your posts to gain traction and/or to engage your audience through polls, quizzes, fun facts, etc. Imagine Instagram as a vehicle for spreading awareness about ITTO through visual mediums
  - Post up to 5 times a day (post 3-5 times a day during the annual council session and up to 30 times on stories).
  - Upload stories and save to story highlights. Organize highlights by content themes. For example: Fun Facts, Quizzes, Announcements, Annual Meeting 11/2021.
  - Utilize the “Highlight” function as a way to organize your story content that is accessible to your audience even after the story reaches its allotted time.
- Like Facebook, Instagram is also an optimal platform for getting your audience to perform a non-digital action (apply for a program/join a fellowship) through its multiple user functions as listed in the above.
- Like on all of your social media platforms, we recommend diversifying your content by using more video and infographics, which may lead to higher engagement.
  - Use the carousel function (the ability to post multiple photos to one post) to engage your audience by treating it like a brief, digestible presentation deck but with sleek, interactive infographics.
- Use paid promotions to garner more clicks to a website, increase video views, and generate email and event sign-ups.
- Based on the languages that you provide on your website, we recommend that you apply the same set of languages to your social media posts as much as possible.
- We recommend that you use a [Linktree](#) for the link in your bio so that all of the content you share via your posts and stories have a place to live.
- Some organizations with similar content to look at: [Environmental Defense Fund](#) and [Greenpeace International](#).

## LinkedIn

### Content Observations and Recommendations:

- Your LinkedIn account sees about 5 posts a month, with inconsistent, sporadic posting. We recommend 1 post a day and establishing a consistent editorial



calendar so that your posts don't seem so sporadic to your followers. Use a tool like [Sprout Social](#) to help schedule posts and keep content organized. Some of your posts feature low-resolution images. (See below)

- Focus on posting properly-sized, high-definition images in order to maintain a professional look and feel.
- The account currently attracts 595 followers. While this isn't as large as ITTO's Facebook following, it is still a notable amount for the platform and indicates that your audience wants to keep up with ITTO on LinkedIn.
- LinkedIn is a platform that focuses on professional development and individuals in the workplace. Therefore, outside of posting reports and events, consider showcasing content that highlights the accomplishments and careers of the incredible people behind ITTO.
- Use LinkedIn advertising to promote your events and webinars. Through LinkedIn Sponsored InMail, you can target people in specific careers and industries and deliver content directly to their inboxes for a more personalized ad experience.





## Twitter:

### Content Observations and Recommendations:

- Your current tweet frequency is sporadic, with 2 tweets in April and none in February. We recommend that you build and implement an editorial calendar that is filled with evergreen content and content that speak to moments (i.e., World Earth Day, International Day of Forests, etc.) Post at least 3-4 tweets a day to keep your audience engaged. When there are special events and relevant moments, we recommend tweeting around 5-15 times a day.
- Most of your top-performing tweets involve event promotions and ITTO opportunities like the Fellowship Programme and projects. We suggest identifying opportunities to create more of these.
- Your tweets with hashtags generate much higher results than those without them. Consider always incorporating them into your Twitter content.
  - Remember to #WriteOutHashtagsLikeThis in camel case, and not like #writeouthashtagslikethis, for accessibility purposes.
- Your Twitter channel currently includes multiple posts with visuals, which is great. Here are recommendations for diversifying content even further:
  - People watch 2 billion videos on Twitter per day. Certain ITTO videos should be continually posted on your channels for higher engagement.
    - These include promotions of all annual council sessions and snippets of talking heads from videos like ITTO members, Fellows, and other important individuals in the field.
  - Use [Canva](#) to create visual templates ready-made for things like events, facts, and news.
    - Since graphs and charts seem to attract the highest amount of engagement, consider doing a “did you know” or “ITTO Facts” series that are pushed out on social platforms on a weekly basis.
  - Your account makes good use of your Twitter bio, header, and profile icon.
  - If possible, we recommend that you change the profile name from “sustainableforestry” to “International Tropical Timber Organization” for visibility purposes and to enhance your brand image.
- ITTO’s Twitter account has 789 followers, which is great, but we can expand reach by identifying accounts to follow. Consistent engagement with partner organizations and influencers can increase post engagement. Social research of relevant influencers and organizations will help ITTO identify accounts to follow;

following more accounts will help ensure higher visibility and foster new relationships for ITTO. Please see our Influencer Research Report for guidance.

- Use paid advertising to increase your content's reach on Twitter and attract relevant accounts.
- Promoting during the annual council sessions or specific environmental moments will be optimal on Twitter as it allows you to target specifically by keyword and hashtag (a feature not currently available on Facebook or LinkedIn).
- Increase your channel's visibility by either joining or hosting Twitter chats. These would be especially valuable around the annual meeting or other notable conferences.

## YouTube:

### Content Observations and Recommendations:

- You currently have about 8 videos per year. If possible, we recommend posting at least 1 video per month.
- Audiences in consumer countries appreciate the high-bandwidth content. Audiences in producer countries may, however, prefer low-bandwidth content. This dichotomy should be kept in mind for your overall content strategy.
- Some image thumbnails for videos include too much text or are not as engaging as they could be (see example below):
  - Consider selecting more appealing thumbnails for some of the



videos posted.

- The videos currently lack specific keywords and tags in the video descriptions. To ensure your content is discoverable by search engines, include these in the video descriptions when you're setting up your video to be published so they can be easily found by people in the field.
  - Use 2-3 word phrases for keyword tags. Don't go overboard with tags; stick to the necessary keywords so that your audience knows what the video content is about.
- Current YouTube page name ("SFM Itto") does not give off the brand consistency as the other channels do. Change channel title to "ITTO" so it is more appropriate for this public-facing channel.
- Continue to use YouTube to promote the annual council session with video content.
- Use b-roll footage and talking heads for promotional videos. To generate quick content, interview some of the experts in the tropical forest and timber field, and ask for their help sourcing footage that can visually show their work and research.
- Take advantage of the many video assets you have available on YouTube and share links to the videos more frequently across your social channels.
- Instead of relying on auto-generated captions for videos, which can often be incorrect, invest in working with your video editor to supply a custom captions file that you can upload to each video for better accuracy and accessibility purposes.
  - Use a social media accessibility checklist like [this one](#) to guide you through the creative process to ensure that your videos are accessible to everyone.

## Potential Influencers

We used the social listening tool Pulsar and manual research to identify people around the world talking about sustainable forestry. The names listed below rose to the top of the pile, and were selected based on their activity on digital media, as well as their potential as influencers to help share ITTO resources with their networks and increase traffic on the ITTO website and social media channels.

## Individuals

- [Scott Poynton](#) - Poynton has supported “individual, organisational and sector-wide transformations in the garden furniture industry, in the Congo Basin forest industry, in the Indonesian teak industry, and in the palm oil and pulp and paper industries. In 1999, I founded The Forest Trust to anchor this work and when I stepped aside as CEO in 2015, TFT people were operating in 48 countries, working to bring change in 20 commodity sectors, impacting the environmental and social responsibility of more than \$1 trillion in annual supply chain transactions.”
- [Julia P G Jones](#) - Professor of conservation science, commenting on environment & development (with a particular interest in Madagascar), impact evaluation, & Welsh life.
- [Tommaso Jucker](#) - Researcher at the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Bristol, focused on understanding the processes that shape the structure, diversity and function of the world’s forests, in an effort to predict how these will respond to rapid environmental change and how this in turn will impact society.
- [Ben Salt](#) - Adventurer collecting moments & sharing stories that matter. Patron of sustainable tourism & development. Love wilderness. Crave science.
- [Emma Ochieng](#) - Passionate about matters environment and sustainability / Founder of Toward a Better Earth Initiative
- [Lamech Opiyo](#) - Student at Kenyatta University pursuing a B.S. in environmental studies and community development. Lamech is passionate about the environment, sustainability and humanity.
- [Yadvinder Malhi](#) - Professor of Ecosystem Science, loves tropical forests, interested in biosphere, Earth & humanity in all places & at all scales.
- [Hindou Oumarou](#) - Hindou is an environmental activist and geographer. She is the Coordinator of the Association of Peul Women and Autochthonous Peoples of

Chad (AFPAT) and served as the co-director of the pavilion of the World Indigenous Peoples' Initiative and Pavilion at [COP21](#), [COP22](#) and [COP23](#).

- [Dominic Martin](#) - Geographer & ecologist working on land systems & conservation.
- [Andy Heald](#) - Sustainability professional fascinated by trees, forests, certification and concept of natural capital. Based in Scotland but works globally.
- [Siya Sokomoni](#) - Founder of Nguni Nursery, co-founder of Township Farmers, and official ambassador of the AFR100 Initiative.
- [Robert Nasi](#) - Director General, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) but the tweets are certainly my own

## Organizations

- [Bangor University Forestry](#) - Our research team is multidisciplinary and spans the entire breadth of the forest discipline. We have active research programmes spanning from boreal to tropical forests. Our work concerns forests and climate change adaptation, mitigation, deforestation, biodiversity, disaster recovery, food security, flood protection, nutrient cycling, human wellbeing, conservation and the role of forests in recreation.
- [Forest Peoples Programme](#) - We support forest peoples and indigenous organisations to promote an alternative vision of how forests should be managed, based on respect for the rights, knowledge, cultures and identities of the peoples who know them best.
- [Environmental Justice Foundation](#) - Forests are at the centre of our world. They regulate climate – both local and global – purify water and prevent flooding, they reduce air pollution and provide life-saving medicines. EJF is campaigning to stop the senseless destruction of these crucial habitats.
- [Global Forest Observations Initiative](#) - The Global Forest Observations Initiative (GFOI) is an informal partnership to help coordinate international support to developing countries on forest monitoring and greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting for REDD+ and related activities.
- [Ashwells Timber](#) - We've been reclaiming and reusing [tropical timber](#) for more than 20yrs, and we're passionate about creating sustainable products for future generations.
- [Tropenbos International](#) - Tropenbos International (TBI) brings the knowledge together to address complex questions regarding sustainable management of

forests and trees, organizes interactions with all the stakeholders and actively helps to create broad support.

## Annex 7: Research interview notes

As we discussed in our proposal, the best communication strategies are grounded in research on your target audiences—the people you want to reach. We conducted eight interviews with funders, stakeholders, allies, and potential funders, seeking insights and perspectives so we can craft communications strategies that will reach them.

If there was a common theme in these interviews, it is that ITTO has a wealth of technical expertise that needs to be amplified. This is especially important in the next few years; as the climate change and biodiversity crises continue to heat up and the spotlight continues to shine on tropical forests, the need for sustainable forest management—and ITTO’s expertise—becomes more and more pressing.

This memo presents our notes from these interviews, with bulleted items that will help feed the eventual communications strategy and messaging.

### Interview 1 (5 April, 2021)

#### Strategy takeaways

- Short videos created in Guatemala—did a good job of showing how ITTO made impact in Guatemala.
- Reviews and audits that happen, evaluation after projects are completed, can feed comms work.
- Interview program managers: Tell us what your star projects are and the people it has affected, you will find your stories there.
- Need to tailor messaging and communications to suit the intended audience.
- Do a graph of trees that have been monitored or protected under CITES, and you'll see an impressive curve (note—and match that to a graph of sustainable forestry economic growth).
- Audiences: donors (national including Norway and USAID, international, and multilateral), communities, forest sector internationally.
- Tools
  - Monthly Tropical Timber updates—valuable and well received. Email distribution is great, should be readily available online though
  - Need more success stories
  - Website revamp helpful
  - Quarterly updates helpful, requested to have a story upfront, a trend highlight, “so you have something to read without reading the whole report”
  - Social media--ITTO does not have a constant stream of content, making it more difficult to keep current
  - One-pagers on program lines including livelihoods, biodiversity, and supporting legal access would be helpful

#### Messaging takeaways

- The power of small projects and the impact for small dollar projects.

- ITTO was the first place to discuss illegal logging in late 80s early 90s
- How small producers can get into the sustainable timber trade is one of the keys to solving deforestation.
- When talking about the forest industry, it is not just about companies pledging zero deforestation commitments on the climate change side, or agricultural companies, but actually people who work in the forest sector, and they have that voice to inform that policy.
- Not every policy international body has work with direct ties to projects on the ground; this is unique about ITTO. It has both policy and technical expertise. The projects are where these two are merging.
- ITTO projects are often affordable enough to procure funding from other sources once the seed funding has been used.
- In 2002, ITTO created technical guidelines on forest landscape restoration. This was a groundbreaking solution at the time, and ITTO brought these issues to light before other organizations were talking about countries' commitments to restoring forests.
- The aim of ITTO is to have sustainable forest management in the tropics, both economically and environmentally. And find ways to help the communities, without trying to take something away.
- In the COVID era, governments are looking at green recovery, at the intersection on how to build a strong environment and economy, and ITTO is really focused on this.
- ITTO sits at the intersection of a couple of key issues: trade and economics and environment. On climate change and biodiversity, but also ecosystem services more broadly: water, soil, climate change mitigation and adaptation, which translates into their technical work.

#### Additional takeaways

- They have a fellowship program that they fund for the studies of master's and PhD students in Forestry; some of these students have excelled in the research department
- ITTO is well respected for their technical expertise, often advising other multilaterals who are working on these issues, such as CITES organizations. Their expertise translates to the direct relationships with forest countries.

#### Interview 2 (8 April, 2021)

##### Strategy takeaways

- ITTO's general market reporting is well regarded, statistically based. The organization's overall profile, though, is not prominent.
- Journalists in the overall sector would be interested in ITTO, could do a round of desksides with trade reporters.
- ITTO projects on the ground are the sort of story that would get interest from the industry sector, from funders, and general public. Also from architectural/design sector, which is increasingly concerned with sustainability and sourcing.



- The best way to reach these audiences: timber trade media, certainly, but maybe a website that details these things, who is ITTO, what do they do.
- Add multimedia component to newsletter, either photo slideshow or video or podcast  
(This came up in the debrief afterwards).

#### Messaging takeaways

- The timber industry battles with this image that chopping down trees is a bad thing, struggles with trying to show that it is sustainable.
- Today, the timber industry is very much “on the back foot” because of deforestation stigma; it’s a bad thing to chop down trees.
- There’s an increased understanding of the economic value of sustainability, once land is harvested to replant and not converted to farmland.
- There’s a tension: chopping trees down, bad, maintaining forest, good.

#### Additional takeaways

- The American Hardwood Export Council, a rival--market their products as an alternative to tropical hardwoods. They have a tracking effort to show sustainability.
- Temperate vs. tropical business rivalry—companies are both tropical and temperate. US has its own hardwood group that pushes their sustainability while hinting that tropical guys aren’t.
- Other rivals are synthetic materials or chemically processed softwoods, presented as alternative to tropical hardwoods.
- Tropical hardwood has lost market share in the west, imports have recovered a bit in US but not in EU as the environmental concerns have increased. Countries that are not as concerned with deforestation are still consuming.
- Supply chain tracing—not starting from the final buyer but from the point of origin—this is an ITTO project
- Isotope tracing can let you track timber within 40-50 km of where it was harvested, an American hardwood council initiative.

#### Interview 3 [A multilateral commodity organisation] (8 April, 2021)

#### Additional takeaways

- [A smaller multilateral commodity organisation] has only one communications staff member. They rely on consulting firms to handle their two annual meetings.
- The ITTO communications budget appears much larger than the [smaller multilateral trade group] budget—they do not have newsletters or videos.
- For project write-ups, [The smaller multilateral commodity organisation] has a basic listing and a small summary of each project. ITTO has done more videos and more storytelling.
- For [smaller multilateral commodity organisation], a separate firm handles the larger annual meeting and internal staff handles the 2nd, smaller annual meeting.

- [The smaller multilateral commodity organisation] also has a low media profile, but they are not concerned with this.
- The homepage of USDA ERS can provide a great resource and benchmark (discussed in debrief afterwards).

#### Interview 4 (14 April, 2021)

##### Strategy takeaways

- ITTO provides plenty of technical information that they distribute to their members.
- French and Spanish versions of the website are not as strong as English, and more difficult to navigate.  
(This also came up in other interview.)
- Website could also have Portuguese translation, to cover Brazil, and possibly Bahasa, to cover Indonesia.  
(This came up in the debrief afterwards.)
- Not a lot of content focuses on Congo Basin, Central Africa.
- They coordinate a network of communications officers from members (using WhatsApp).
- Radio is an important medium for reaching communities without internet access.
- Can the newsletter include a podcast, or audio versions of each story, that can be used for radio content?  
(This came up in the debrief afterwards.)
- Members need timely and useful information concerning climate change, conservation biodiversity, land use, sustainability. At the international level, it's difficult to access useful information from the field, for example, if there is illegal logging or trafficking, if there's a conflict between rangers and communities.
- Printed material is the best way to communicate to members; internet bandwidth is always an issue. Video for this audience should only be two minutes because of bandwidth issues.
- They publish all the key job postings as a way to attract visitors to their website.
- Better and faster translations of newsletter and other materials would be helpful  
(This came up in the debrief afterwards.)
- Tropical Forest Update: articles should all have publication date; can they be moved from a hyperlinked pdf to their own web page?  
(This came up in the debrief afterwards.)

##### Additional takeaways

- They're seeing an increased presence from China, Vietnam, and other Asian countries.

## Interview 5 (20 April, 2021)

### Strategy takeaways

- More visibility of sustainability as a fundamental initiative is needed. It is not prominent, and it needs to be for ITTO to better attract more funding.
- Audiences to focus on: members, donors, private sector—but not the general public as a primary target.

### Messaging takeaways

- Timber organizations and companies have shared goals and commitments for improving the industry's sustainability.
- The timber industry is relevant in climate change discussions today and will continue to be more prominent in the next 10-20 years.

### Additional takeaways

- Not a lot of visible connections with the private sector; need to connect them into sustainability projects and initiatives.
- ITTO's financial architecture is transparent and reflects positively to the projects' investors.
- Civil society pressure in the timber sector targets governments, not the private sector. Different in coffee and cocoa, probably because they're consumer goods. Timber companies are different; their brands aren't as well known, less visibility.
- Funding priorities and decisions stem from a mandate from parliament, according to areas, countries, sectors, etc. Within the countries, how well does the project fit within the portfolio? You don't want "stand-alone projects" without any connections. Exceptions stem from political or strategic reasons, and they are bound to public procurement rules and regulations. They can't just finance whatever; it can be a nice idea, but it has to be sound from a procurement perspective.
- How they find projects: the majority comes from the country profiles that they compile. They figure out the overlap with the country's development priorities and donor priorities.
- ITTO's target audience is not readily apparent. They have been more internally focused.
- Dividing the members into producer and consumer countries does not help the dichotomy that exists between the two; there's a bit of a schism. (this also came up in other interview.)
- In the tropical timber sector, the challenges are huge. ITTO has limits from internal issues, the member dues conversations weaken them, but there are so many opportunities though.

## Interview 6 (21 April, 2021)

### Strategy takeaways

- Overall, the forestry sector needs to invest in communications more and collaborate more on upcoming campaigns; such collaboration extends their impact.
- It is important to land on the right messaging to cut through negative perceptions of the forestry sector, and to get to the sweet spot between technical language and a message that may become too diluted.
- The lengthy approval process—what feels like 20,000 clearances at times—provides its own process of message testing.
- Not communicating is wrong; if you don't say anything someone else will. Deforestation is a great example; you can't just ignore it.
- On staffing, ITTO is similar to IUFRO in that there are internal and external audiences that are important to consider. But the large Global Landscape Forum staff should be the goal; everyone in the forest sector needs to increase external communications so that they become more visible.

### Messaging takeaways

- When people want a table, they want a wood table not a plastic one.
- Today, timber harvesting is more like surgery than a buzzcut.

### Additional takeaways

- ITTO works in partnership with other organizations on events and conferences, including developing tools for these.
- Since the start of the pandemic, attention has shifted to the environment space. The end of the pandemic will create a key moment; the forestry sector should use their communications to capitalize.
- The media challenge lies in determining which messages stick with certain audiences—and determining the communications focal points for policymakers, local farmers, general audiences, etc.

## Interview 7 (22 April, 2021)

### Strategy takeaways

- ITTO value can be seen in studies about trends in the timber market and the place of forests in the future bio economy. Communications need to show the value that ITTO brings; they are not alone in the forestry sector.
- ITTO communications outreach is limited due to staff constraints. The situation has improved since 4-5 years ago when ITTO almost shut down.
- He finds the ITTO's website difficult to navigate and is not fond of the design.
- He subscribes to the ATIBT newsletter, a one-page newsletter with 3-4 topics, that he finds effective. In ten seconds, he knows what he wants to know.  
(This "one-pager" approach echoes what was said in interview #1)

#### Messaging takeaways

- ITTO works to improve the wealth of forests worldwide.

#### Additional takeaways

- The question of sovereignty has been called into question, especially with regards to the Amazon—exemplified by the recent conflict between Bolsonaro and Macron.
- The dialogue between producer and consumer countries at ITTO council meetings has too often been one of conflict. Meetings should be strategically managed to alleviate this conflict. (This also came up in two other interviews)
- Council meetings should look at results of completed projects and not a micromanagement of smaller projects. That being said, he doesn't see the basis of selection for some of the projects; it feels political.
- ITTO Council meetings should discuss projects in a broader sense, on how it's affecting countries' policies, helping fight illegal logging, its long-term benefits, etc.
- ITTO is delivering perfectly on independent timber market monitoring from VPA partner countries, on the FLEGT IMM action plan.

#### Interview 8 (6 May, 2021)

#### Strategy takeaways

- ITTO, in carrying out mandates from member countries, needs to show synergies with other international initiatives like UNFCCC and also CBD.
- She gets the newsletter, Tropical Forest Update, finds that the content is helpful, she uses the features sometimes to prep leadership.
- Relies on FAO for forestry news, FAO's forest newsletter.  
Could a round of desksides include the newsletter editor?
- Perhaps the website should have a page for each country, listing newsletter articles, projects, market updates.

#### Additional takeaways

- Organizations like ITTO provide expertise, guidance, manuals, and information on projects.
- In her work, she sees government submissions regarding tropical forest initiatives. ITTO is not involved or mentioned even though the content is in their wheelhouse.
- People see ITTO for forest certification, as a trade organization rather than as an organization that can provide technical expertise and guidance on how to reduce deforestation or how to implement REDD+ on the ground.
- The Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) process (run by FAO) brings in focal points for other processes (UNFCCC and SDGs, for example)—much of the data in the FRA is the same data. ITTO can facilitate because they work with producer countries through their council.

- FRA is data source for REDD+ reviews, Global Forest Watch as well, but their experts and submitting countries don't use ITTO data as reference.
- ITTO partners don't know of all linkages, don't fully understand how ITTO can make a difference. It's not just about production and consumption data, all this talk about substitution, how can wood replace concrete in building materials, how can that information contribute to conversations on climate change and sustainable forest management.
- Need to show relevance—they have so much information, but it needs to be elevated.
- “Soft” communication is so important. Not so much a paper document, very important in international circles, it's about generating trust and confidence in the organization. Every organization needs that.

## Annex 8: Research review documents

In building your next communications strategy, it has been helpful to review both your past strategies and some of your current communications tools.

As with the key audience interviews, this exercise makes clear that ITTO has extensive expertise and a wealth of information to communicate. The challenge is to organize the information and adjust how it is presented for your key audiences.

This memo presents our notes from reviewing these documents, with bulleted items that will help feed the eventual communications strategy and messaging.

Item:

### **2016 ITTO Communications Strategy**

#### **Strategy takeaways**

- Overall aim of strategy:  
“Increase the Organization’s effectiveness in disseminating the outcomes of its work and thereby increase the benefits accruing to member countries”
- Strategy drafted for 2016-2018
- Table of Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats worth repeating
- Will need to address commemorative days like “International Day of Forests”
- Formatted by objective:
  - Primary desired change
  - Audiences
  - Key message
  - Timing
  - Target
  - Measuring achievement of target
  - Proviso
  - Immediate key actions
  - Longer-term key actions
- Objectives:
  - Maintain or enhance the perception of ITTO as a trustworthy organization with important benefits for members
  - Raise awareness of the outcomes and impacts of ITTO field projects and activities
  - Increase recognition of ITTO as a leader in SFM in the tropics (Audience: Yokohama citizens and companies, and Yokohama is part of the greater Tokyo metro area)
  - Raise awareness of ITTO’s work in developing the sustainable tropical timber industry and trade
- One of the appendices was a “matrix of communication activities” that could be good to repeat for this new strategy

#### **Messaging takeaways**

- ITTO has funded more than 1000 field projects and activities (as of 2016), with considerable local, subnational and national impacts. They have helped increase the uptake of sustainable forest management practices, develop

viable forest-based industries, and increase the transparency and efficiency of the tropical timber trade.

- Tropical forests, which are rich in biodiversity and home to millions of people, and can help reduce climate change, are being lost and degraded.
- Sustainable forest management means that tropical forests can be conserved while also producing valuable goods, conserving biodiversity, helping reduce climate change, and enabling forest people to earn income from forests.
- The tropical timber industry and trade faces many barriers—bureaucratic, financial, and image-related—that limit the profitability and viability of companies.
- ITTO, through its Trade Advisory Group, can work with the private sector to address such barriers while also increasing the transparency of the tropical timber industry and trade and its economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

#### Additional Takeaways

- Historically, the 2016 Comms Strategy was the organization's first, and the first time the basic messaging was established.
- Produced after financial impairment issues.
- Document hints at decline in funding over previous years due to low organizational profile.
- ITTO is the only global inter-governmental organization dealing specifically with tropical forests—still true?
- Social media policy was supposed to have been developed as per this strategy.
- Visual Identity Guide was supposed to have been developed as per this strategy.
- ITTO logo usage guidelines were supposed to have been developed as per this strategy.
- Were targets met for each objective?
- Action items to follow up on:
  - Convene three regional workshops (one in each tropical region) to train the coordinators (or designated communication officers) of projects and activities in documenting and reporting on the impacts of their projects and activities.
  - For programmes and projects with known exceptional impacts, commission writers, photographers and, potentially, videographers to generate impact stories with high production values for presentation on the ITTO website and in other media and at meetings such as Council sessions.
  - Take more advantage of Council Sessions in order to disseminate the value of the field work of the Organization by arranging photo exhibition of field work, multimedia presentations, among others.



Item:

**ITTO's outreach**

**Strategy takeaways**

- Presentation and plan presented at the 54<sup>th</sup> council meeting in 2018
- Format:
  - Purpose of outreach
  - Key themes
  - Target audiences
  - Tactics: Tropical Forest Update (newsletter); website revamp; publications, public relations, education and outreach; social media; governance information
- Key themes do not include Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Indigenous and local communities:
  - Productive forests
  - Sustainable supply chains
  - Gender equality and empowerment of women
  - Wood security
  - Sustainable Development Goals

Items:

**Materials discussing the recent Dry Forest Conservation Project in Peru**

**Strategy takeaways**

- This project, which ended in the second half of 2020, has been touted by Steven Johnson as an example of a successful ITTO project that has been expanded with significant external resources (\$0.5 million investment from ITTO has attracted tens of millions of dollars from the government of Peru, the World Bank, and the Global Environment Facility). Yet it was difficult to locate a write-up of the project on the ITTO website without assistance.
- The mini comic books that this project produced can be touted as an effective communications tactic in low-internet bandwidth areas.

Item:

**ITTO 2019 Annual Report**

**Strategy takeaways**

- Language could be reframed to comb out the industry terminology and jargon that are not easily understood by lay audiences.
- Very text heavy.
- Project write-ups should be more dynamic, with better visuals and a more open design to the format.
- Section on ITTO's economic and market reporting should have some charts and graphs as accompanying visuals.
- Section on international cooperation can be redone using a timeline or calendar visual as the anchor for the write-ups.

Item:

**Decision 4(LVI): Implementing ITTO's New Financing Architecture – Phase II**

**Strategy takeaways**

- Starting these documents with a summary paragraph would be helpful for stakeholders who have a difficult time navigating the formal procedural language.

Item:

**Tropical Forest Update, Volume 30 No.1 2021**

**Strategy takeaways**

- Helpful to list the publication's date of publication (i.e., January 2021 instead of Volume 30 No.1 2021)
- Articles have a good mix of photos and maps, but they get lost as the copy is too long. Lower wordcount pieces will help readability.
- Table of contents sends the reader to bookmarked places in the PDF, but how many print out the PDF? Better to send to individual web pages, or individual PDFs perhaps.

Item:

**Tropical Timber Market Report Volume 25 Number 7, 1-15 April 2021**

**Strategy takeaways**

- Terrific and impressive amount of country-specific content.
- The layout is somewhat basic and very reliant on text. We would recommend that a designer revisit the document template, that the front page have a feature chart and that the table of contents have hyperlinks.
- It would be helpful if all of this material was more readily available on the ITTO website.

**From 2016 plan: international days with potential for promoting ITTO impact stories**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name of day</b>
<b>2 Feb</b>	World Wetlands Day
<b>3 March</b>	World Wildlife Day
<b>8 March</b>	International Women's Day
<b>21 March</b>	International Day of Forests
<b>22 March</b>	World Water Day
<b>22 April</b>	International Mother Earth Day
<b>15 May</b>	International Day of Families
<b>21 May</b>	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
<b>22 May</b>	International Day of Biological Diversity
<b>25 May</b>	Africa Day
<b>5 June</b>	World Environment Day
<b>17 June</b>	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
<b>4 July</b>	International Day of Cooperatives
<b>9 August</b>	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
<b>27 September</b>	World Tourism Day
<b>3 October</b>	World Habitat Day
<b>13 October</b>	International Day for Disaster Reduction
<b>15 October</b>	International Day of Rural Women
<b>16 October</b>	World Food Day
<b>17 October</b>	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
<b>5 December</b>	World Soil Day