



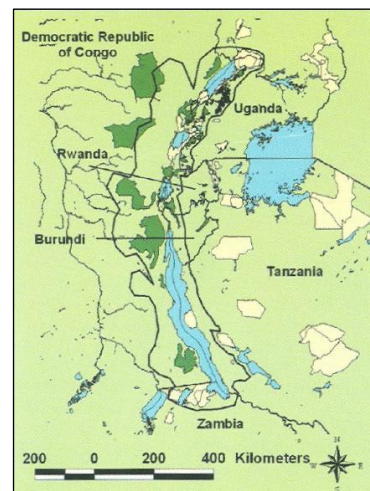
ARCOS Communication Strategy

Background

ARCOS was created in 1995 with the mission to **enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in the Albertine Rift region through the promotion of collaborative conservation action for nature and people.**

ARCOS operates in all the countries of the Albertine Rift region (Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania) through its offices in Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. ARCOS is also registered in UK as a charity and company limited by guarantee. The organization has an international Board of Directors and Trustees comprised of representatives from the Albertine Rift region and experts from other countries. The day to day management of the organisation is under the responsibility of the Executive Secretary.

The ARCOS Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 recognizes three main challenges to tackle within these five years: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Climate Change and Environmental Governance and Threat Mitigation. ARCOS, being aware of the need to take a holistic approach, builds on collaborative action, NGO support and regional information systems (ARBMIS).



Objectives and Guiding Principles of this Communication Strategy

The **overall goal** of this strategy is to align the ARCOS communication activities with the ARCOS Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015. In pursuing its mission ARCOS communication activities strive to

- 1) Enhance and disseminate information on the status of biodiversity and the environment in the Albertine Rift,
- 2) Strengthen the capacity and awareness of its partners and the public towards sustainable development of key conservation sites,
- 3) Catalyse informed decision-making, effective policies and practices to reduce environmental threats and
- 4) Strengthen ARCOS' profile, capacity and resources to undertake its conservation programme.

Three **guiding principles** underpin the Communication Strategy:

- Partnership is paramount.
- Communication is by and through the partners.
- Communication languages are English and French (with local languages occasionally).

The ARCOS Network and Target Audience

ARCOS identifies 10 categories of involvement with the organization:

ARCOS Board of Directors	ARCOS NGO Network
ARCOS Staff	Albertine Rift Conservation Partners
ARCOS Honorary Partners	ARCOS International Partners
Friends of the Albertine Rift	ARCOS Corporate Environmental Responsibility Forum
ARCOS Associates	The Regional Forum

Groups targeted by this strategy are the following:

National and local governments	International organizations
Local communities	Donors
NGO/CBO partners and civil society	Private Sector
Research institutions	Media
Site managers	ARCOS Staff and Board

Communication Tools and Outputs

1. The ARCOS Website including the Biodiversity Portal and ARCOS Contacts Database
2. The ARCOS Newsletter “Backbone/Le Pilier”
3. ARCOS Outreach Materials
4. Friends of the Albertine Rift Bulletin “Turaco Note”
5. ARCOS Factsheets and Technical Publications
6. Press: Print, Media and TV, including Press Releases and Advertising
7. Film and Video
8. Public Relations/Events

External Communication Protocol

1. All ARCOS-related communication materials should clearly indicate the organization’s name. When used for the first time, the full title should be referred to: “*The Albertine Rift Conservation Society*”. Thereafter the abbreviation “ARCOS” can be used. The abbreviation should always be in CAPITALS. ARCOS also encourages to be referred to as “ARCOS Network”, to stress the partnership nature of the organization.

2. ARCOS is the organization’s title to be mentioned at all times when presenting project results and project initiatives. When space allows, the following extended standard definition of ARCOS should be used:

ARCOS is a conservation organization with a focus on biodiversity conservation at the regional level in the Albertine Rift. Its overall goal is to enhance conservation of critical ecosystems and biodiversity values in the Albertine Rift and generate collaborative relations between the various conservation partners.

3. The motto of the organization is “**Collaborative Action for Nature and People**”.

4. The website for global audiences is www.arcosnetwork.org, which provides information about ARCOS, but also about partners’ activities and regional news. Partners are encouraged to refer to this website.

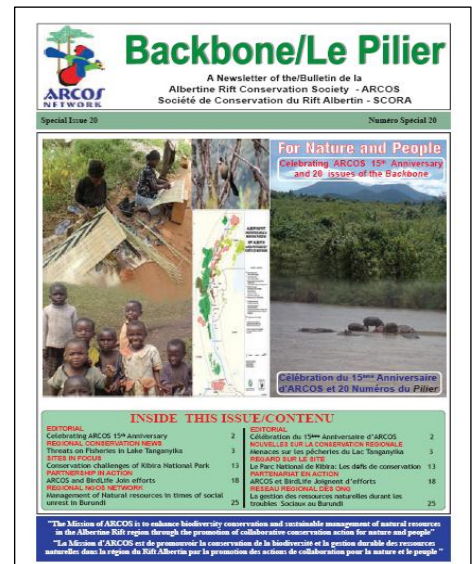
5. Names and/or logos of ARCOS and the respective main partner should be clearly visible on all printed, web and audio-visual materials. When using the logos is not technically feasible (for instance in the case of releases by e-mail), they are to be named individually, with a link to the ARCOS website (www.arcosnetwork.org) and - if possible and appropriate - a link to the respective partner’s website.

6. Names and/or logos of donors should also be clearly visible on all printed, web and audio-visual materials. Please contact the Communications Department for more details.

7. All views presented by partners with regard to ARCOS-related issues and activities should be developed in line with the strategy document. ARCOS encourages partners to refer to its mission and activities, but please note that **views expressed in partners’ communication materials are those of the partner and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of ARCOS.**

8. It is the responsibility of the partners issuing a press release or other communication materials to inform ARCOS, other involved ARCOS partners and donors of such a release, providing adequate time to respond wherever possible. The ARCOS Communications Officer should in turn inform partners and donors of the publication of all main project communication materials well in advance, so as to be able to provide inputs and feedback.

9. ARCOS explicitly welcomes input from its partners in form of news articles and information to be posted on the ARCOS website and/or be published in the regional newsletter *Backbone/Le Pilier*.



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