# GBIF Communication Strategy

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## BACKGROUND

In just over a decade, GBIF has established an effective infrastructure that delivers primary biodiversity data and multiplies the impact of hundreds of other organizations and initiatives. However, the influence and extent of GBIF’s global network remain relatively underappreciated.

To capitalize on its successes to date, and to fulfil the needs of the biodiversity science and policy communities, the GBIF community must refine and refocus its efforts to communicate the fundamental value of this unique and highly effective enterprise to each of the audiences it serves. This task is best conducted with a fresh, up-to-date understanding of those audiences, how and why they should support or participate in GBIF, and how best to deliver on the promise that inspired the establishment of GBIF.

The challenge of communicating clearly about GBIF begins even with the simple description of what it is and what it does. This is in part because GBIF is not a formal, treaty-based institution, but the product of a voluntary collaboration between Participant countries and organizations, with an international coordinating body (the Secretariat) funded jointly by those Participants. So how does one best describe GBIF?

More than a formal structure or entity, GBIF is a pledge towards common actions and goals. A pledge to make biodiversity data freely and openly available. A pledge to enable their constructive use and application across relevant research and policy realms. A pledge to continuously improve and increase these data over time. And a pledge to be at the forefront of building a culture of open data and transparency.

The body of individuals and institutions coalescing around this pledge, even if it is not a legally-defined institution, increasingly sees itself as a community with a shared purpose, vision and collective identity. Strong communication with relevant audiences lies at the heart of its future success.

This document summarizes how GBIF can give structure to its communication activities within its present community, while seeking to expand in the coming years. The strategy’s key components include:

* GBIF’s value proposition
* An message-oriented use-case analysis and grouping of GBIF’s audiences
* Segmentation of audiences, along with messaging aligned with the needs and interests of these audiences
* A discussion of the channels the Secretariat intends to use in reaching these target segments

This is a communication strategy for the whole GBIF community. While each GBIF Participant will have specific communication needs, the analysis of audiences and messages outlined here is relevant both to global communication through the Secretariat, and to a large portion of national activities.

The strategy provides the means for the Secretariat, in collaboration with the GBIF community, to set priorities for developing new documentation and for initiating translations into key languages. This needs-based assessment and prioritization will help to ensure that GBIF’s communication with all audiences is consistently and effectively disseminated. It also provides a flexible, long-term framework for adjusting the strategy over time and improving its relevance to the communities it intends to cultivate and grow.

## GBIF’s value proposition

While much of the work of this communication strategy revolves around the details of clarifying and targeting specific audiences, a strategy must flow from a clear, coherent understanding of GBIF’s fundamental value. At its broadest level, GBIF’s value proposition can be summarized as follows:

**GBIF enables free, universal access to all available evidence on where species have lived, including changes over time**

***by***

**Building the collaborations and technical infrastructure to provide cost-effective sharing, discovery and re-use of digital data**

***in order to***

**Support research not possible before, and promote evidence-based decisions affecting life on Earth and sustainable human development**

## GBIF’s Audiences

Previous assessments have reviewed the make-up of GBIF’s audiences with an emphasis on institutional affiliations—that is, whether an individual works for or represents a national government, a multilateral environmental agreement, a nongovernmental or intergovernmental organization, or a research body; and in the case of GBIF Participants, whether individuals work as Heads of Delegation, node managers or in other roles.

While such information can be meaningful and relevant, the emphasis here is placed on the individuals and what they need from GBIF. More specifically, the strategy places its focus on how an individual would use or interact with GBIF. The audiences are selected based on the distinct communication needs they share, and the common messages and information resources required to meet them.

The strategy identifies distinct engagement needs across a set of six broadly defined audiences, and within those broad groups it distinguishes functionally coherent, actionable audience segments. It should be emphasized that these are non-exclusive groups: many individuals will fall into more than one category but may require separate sets of messages and information resources for multiple roles relevant to GBIF’s activities. The strategy defines GBIF’s main audiences as:

* **The GBIF ’family’**
* **Data holders**
* **Biodiversity knowledge holders**
* **Users of species occurrence data**
* **Funders and executive decision-makers**
* **Secondary audiences**

To maintain its current activities and to grow into emerging ones, GBIF must improve the effectiveness of its communications with each of these broad audiences.

## Audience Segmentation

Each audience encompasses several constituent segments, whose related interests in GBIF vary in specific emphasis or detail. These segments provide the true locus for implementing the strategy, because they enable GBIF to prioritize specific groups and then act to engage them. Segmentation enables GBIF, for example, to acknowledge the inherent similarities between natural history collection curators and citizen scientists as ‘data holders’, while choosing to target outreach activities towards each segment at different times and to use different engagement techniques.

Effective engagement with each of these audiences will enhance GBIF’s ability to achieve its mission, and effective targeting of specific segments will expand knowledge and appreciation of GBIF across the several overlapping communities that make up the network, and who use and benefit from its activities.

### AUDIENCE 1. The GBIF ‘family’

*Constituent segments*

* Node managers, staff, and governance members
* Heads of delegation and other Governing Board delegates
* Advisory committee members
* Secretariat staff and contractors
* Relevant staff in GBIF affiliate organizations and those with memoranda of cooperation with GBIF Secretariat

*Primary communication needs*

* *Clear information on how to participate effectively in GBIF and the benefits arising from participation*
* *Resources to help communicate onwards the means and benefits of participation to relevant stakeholders*
* *Efficient mechanisms for bidirectional communication to ensure rich sharing of information across the community and to external audiences*

This audience may be described as ‘GBIF insiders’: those working explicitly to implement GBIF’s mission, strategic plans and work programmes, either as signatories to the MoU, memoranda of cooperation or under contracts. It is a diverse group as reflected by the constituent segments, but all share some critical communication needs. Broadly speaking, all need to understand precisely why they are involved with GBIF; how they can participate most effectively; and the benefits they derive, or could derive, from such participation. In addition, they need to be equipped with the information resources to communicate onwards GBIF’s activities and value to a wide range of relevant stakeholders.

To maintain and grow the GBIF network, communications must directly address and engage this critical audience, as a means of keeping a sense of purpose for GBIF and gluing the community together. The GBIF ‘family’ has a general need for information that clearly and accurately describes GBIF across all levels of its activities and organization, from formal characterizations of its structure and governance to the technical details of data standards and publication.

Communications within the GBIF ‘family’ must be in both directions: ensuring both that all parts of this audience have timely access to relevant information, and that efficient mechanisms enable all to disseminate their activities to the wider community and to external audiences, with the Secretariat coordinating this bidirectional communication.

The entire GBIF community performs the work of outreach to national or thematic stakeholders, so all have an interest in reducing communication-linked barriers to participation for the other audiences (data holders, biodiversity knowledge holders, users of species occurrence data, funders and executive decision-makers). Each segment of the GBIF ‘family’ stands to benefit from the creation of an extended set of information products that systematically offers answers to questions such as: ‘*Why am I in GBIF? How do I best participate? How do I communicate the benefits of GBIF to those whose support is essential for the future of the network? How do we make GBIF better?’*

By providing GBIF ‘family’ members with the framework, vocabulary and materials that tell their collective story—why they are engaged in GBIF, how that engagement works, and what tools and techniques enable it— the combined efforts of the network will be better understood, recognized and valued. Meeting the communication needs of this audience is a critical first step towards long-term sustainability for the GBIF collaborative enterprise and the ideals it encapsulates.

#### Key messages

GBIF is of particular value to members of this audience because it:

* Enables them to solve problems and deliver solutions together through GBIF’s collaborative mechanisms
* Offers common tools, practices and information resources to help meet national or organizational needs for mobilizing and managing biodiversity data, including through development of national or thematic web portals
* Enables data from national sources to be integrated with relevant data published from other countries
* Offers researchers within countries or organizations a cost-effective means of accessing all available data on the occurrence of species
* Supports national commitments on promoting open access to scientific data, and on conservation and sustainable use of national biodiversity resources

### AUDIENCE 2. Data holders

*Constituent segments*

* Current GBIF data publishers
* Natural history collection curators, informaticians and scientists
* Field biologists
* Citizen scientists, voluntary recording networks and observation aggregating sites
* Authors, editors and publishers of scientific research
* Libraries and other custodians of historic biodiversity-related literature and multimedia archives
* Generators of remotely-sensed data including camera traps, acoustic monitoring and satellite/aerial observations
* Organizers and practitioners of surveys and monitoring programmes carried out for public agencies, protected area management and non-governmental organizations.
* Corporate staff and consultants and regulatory authorities holding primary biodiversity data from environmental impact assessments
* Researchers conducting genetic sequencing, barcoding and metagenomic sampling
* Indigenous and local communities

*Primary communication needs*

* *Information on the importance and benefits of sharing/publishing data in formats that make them widely discoverable and re-usable*
* *Clear guidance on how to publish data*
* *Onward communication tools to make the case for investment in digitization and publication of biodiversity data*

This audience represents the owners and custodians of the biodiversity data currently or potentially documented through the GBIF network. Much of the work to date across the GBIF community has focused on mobilizing these data. To advance GBIF’s mission, a number of critical communication needs must be met for this audience.

First, the importance of and benefits from sharing biodiversity data in suitable formats and under clear conditions of use must be constantly re-iterated and expressed in compelling terms. This is true not just for potential new data publishers, but for existing publishers who need to be convinced they should continue to make their data freely and openly accessible through GBIF.

Second, data holders need appropriate information resources, including guidance on how to mobilize and publish their data using common formats and exchange protocols that make them discoverable and available for re-use in research and decision-making. Data holders are much more likely to overcome the social and cultural barriers to data sharing if they have clear recommendations and support for the technical steps needed to publish their data.

Finally, data holders need onward communication tools that enable them to make the case within their own institutions or to potential funders, for investment in the data mobilization effort, for example to demonstrate value from large-scale digitization of natural history collections. These tools can include mechanisms to report the uses made of individual datasets and records based on download requests and citations.

To reach the whole of this audience, communication tools need to be suitable for engaging a wide range of different groups including those still unfamiliar with the arguments for and techniques of biodiversity data publication. These may include local authorities, indigenous and local communities, and corporate holders of biodiversity data.

For this audience too, bidirectional communication is important. Through its global communication channels, GBIF can and already does publicize the efforts made by individual publishers to share their datasets for the public good; this can help to bring recognition for those efforts and even encourage competition among institutions to establish a good reputation for data sharing.

#### Key messages

GBIF is of particular value to members of this audience because it:

* Enables efficient means to mobilize, manage and publish digital biodiversity data
* Helps provide visibility and recognition for individuals and institutions that share biodiversity in formats suitable for discovery and re-use
* Provides free, open-access tools and guidance for publishing digital datasets
* Promotes practices that ensure data persistence
* Helps comply with open data regulations and requirements

### AUDIENCE 3. Biodiversity knowledge holders

*Constituent segments*

* Zoologists, botanists, mycologists and other species specialists
* Taxonomists
* Ecologists
* Expert networks (e.g. IUCN, Birdlife)
* Nomenclatural associations

*Primary communication needs*

* *Familiarity with GBIF’s up to date activities, capabilities and potential as a global virtual natural history collection*
* *Awareness of how experts can engage with GBIF and/or its publishers to constantly improve the quality of digital data freely and openly available through GBIF*
* *Assurance of the value of such engagement in terms of advancing their own professional interests, the biological sciences and biodiversity conservation*

This audience represents a core group of individual scientists and expert communities whose support for and active engagement with GBIF is critical for the long-term success of the network. Confidence in the usefulness of data mobilized through GBIF depends crucially on constant improvement in data quality, and this requires expertise that can only realistically come from willing voluntary curation from existing knowledge networks. Some of the strongest criticisms of GBIF have come within this group, as experts are most acutely aware of shortcomings in data quality that have arisen from the relatively open system of publishing data through GBIF. Effective engagement with their ongoing work is critical for expanding and improving the pool of high-quality globally consistent biodiversity data for all other users.

Among the key communication needs relating to this group is to ensure that their view of GBIF is based on accurate, up to date information about the current state of the network and the data it serves, rather than impressions arising from outdated experiences or misunderstandings. From this, biological knowledge holders need to believe that they themselves have an interest in contributing their expertise to assist in curating and improving the data published through GBIF. This in turn requires communication that GBIF can provide a platform for a ‘virtual natural history collection’, enabling curation of biodiversity knowledge in the digital space, thus supporting evidence that furthers biological sciences and conservation policies.

A major communication task in relation to this audience is to turn critics into collaborators. Within this group lies the knowledge that can best identify both the gaps in the data currently accessible through GBIF, and the shortcomings of the data that are accessible. Targeted communication will help tap that knowledge to develop priorities for data mobilization, and to improve the accuracy and fitness for use of data already served by GBIF’s publishers. This strategy seeks to end false divisions between ‘GBIF data’ and ‘expert knowledge’: they can and should be integrated and mutually reinforcing.

#### Key messages

GBIF is of particular value to members of this audience because it:

* Enables discovery of millions of specimens and observation records, increasingly accompanied by images or audio recordings, with links enabling further study
* Provides a platform for collaborative collection management and taxonomy, potentially serving as a ‘virtual natural history collection’ for the planet.
* Enables biodiversity specialists to pool their expertise in order to improve the quality of freely-available digital data, to the benefit of all
* Provides the means for long-term persistence of biodiversity collections data as insurance against potential loss of original data sources
* Complements the work of expert groups by integrating evidence that may inform judgements on species ranges and/or conservation priorities; while providing the means for publication and curation of occurrence data arising from expert assessments.

### AUDIENCE 4. Species occurrence data users

*Constituent segments*

* Ecologists, including macroecologists and biogeographers
* Species distribution modellers (includes analysts of climate change impacts, invasive species risk, human disease vectors)
* Conservation practitioners, including protected area planners
* Environmental impact analysts and strategic spatial planning authorities
* Genetic resources experts (for crop diversity, medicinal compounds etc.)
* Ecosystem assessment community

*Primary communication needs*

* *Promoting wide knowledge of GBIF’s ability to provide significant volumes of data fit for many of the uses these groups require*
* *Fostering appreciation of the value of having data from many different sources available from a single point of access*
* *Information resources on how to discover and use data through GBIF to best advantage, including recommendations on data filtering and cleaning*
* *Communicating the importance of good citation practices and providing the means to implement them simply*

Users of the species occurrence records available through GBIF encompass a wide range of specialists interested for a variety of reasons in the recorded distribution of species over space and time. These uses may be to further scientific understanding of evolutionary processes and the development of traits and ecological patterns over millions of years; they may involve modeling of species range shifts and future risks of pest and disease outbreaks based on climate change projections; they may also inform current decisions on the design of parks and the sensitive siting of industrial or residential developments. An emerging group of users are the practitioners of ecosystem assessments that evaluate the services provided by biodiversity to human societies and advise on the consequences of different policy scenarios.

Despite the diversity of these users, the disciplines and the sectors from which they emerge, they share a number of communication needs. Broadly speaking, their interest is in the availability of sufficient volumes of biodiversity data of sufficient quality and coverage to address their research or policy questions. This audience must first be aware of the potential for GBIF to provide for those needs, and this requires GBIF to communicate its services effectively in the information channels used by these groups. They must have access to appropriate information and guidance to enable them to use GBIF’s data resources to best effect.

If such users succeed in making effective use of GBIF as a data source, they can then become important communicators on GBIF’s behalf. They value the efficiency of a one-stop shop for biodiversity data, and they can argue persuasively that investment in the GBIF infrastructure creates cost savings by avoiding the need for time-consuming searches through multiple data sources. Bidirectional communication through engaging such users has proven to be an effective communication tool by the Secretariat for demonstrating GBIF’s value.

A final important communication requirement for occurrence data users is to convey the importance of proper citation of original data sources in research or policy publications. While the primary interest of this audience is the accessibility and reliability of the data through GBIF rather than its source publisher, strong messaging must emphasize that these data will only remain available if data holders have a incentive to share it – and due attribution through citation is a critical part of that. This messaging will become much more effective once mechanisms are introduced for assigning DOIs for datasets and automated generation of data citations.

#### Key messages

GBIF is of particular value to members of this audience because it:

* Provides a one-stop shop for large volumes of relevant, well-organized data on the occurrence of species over space and time
* Reduces costs of research by preventing the need to discover and obtain data from multiple sources
* Enables modelling of species distributions to inform a wide range of research and policy goals
* Provides a data layer that can be combined and integrated with other geospatial layers to create compelling visualisations for many applications
* Integrates evidence of species occurrence that can supplement other sources to create inventories and checklists for any geographical area, including changes over time

### 5. Funders and executive decision-makers

*Constituent segments*

* National government ministry and agency officials
* Research funding agencies
* Intergovernmental convention officials and national delegates
* Global foundations

*Primary communication needs*

* *Convincing leaders that GBIF’s mission coincides with high-priority policy objectives and global commitments*
* *Demonstrating that investment in GBIF (globally and in-country) represents a cost-effective means of supporting those objectives and commitments*
* *Persuasion that GBIF is not in competition with other biodiversity-related initiatives but rather supports and complements them.*

GBIF’s future depends on decisions from a relatively small number of decision-makers in key policymaking and funding positions. If these funders and executive decision makers are not convinced of GBIF’s value, it will not survive even if all other aspects of its communication strategy are successful. The communication needs of this audience group are characterized by the need for succinct and powerful messages conveyed strategically and often needing to be deployed at short notice to take advantage of chance opportunities. In short, they are the primary consumers of the ‘elevator pitch’ – the 30-second explanation of GBIF’s value that could influence participation or withdrawal of support from governments and agencies.

For this group, one of the key conclusions they must reach from such communications is that GBIF is relevant to objectives and obligations that are already on their list of priorities. This may be in the form of a country’s treaty obligations through, for example, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); or indeed a national commitment to open scientific data policies. It may also relate to objectives well removed from issues immediately connected to conservation or biological research: for example, goals relating to human development such as on food security, economic livelihoods and human health.

Accompanying this message of relevance, communication to this audience must clearly articulate how GBIF represents cost-effective investment, through funding both of the global infrastructure and national node activities, in data-driven evidence to support such objectives.

Finally, communication to this audience needs to pre-empt inevitable questions about perceived duplication between GBIF and other biodiversity-related information initiatives, stressing its complementarity with and indeed direct involvement in institutions such as the CBD, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON).

#### Key messages

GBIF is of particular value to members of this audience because it:

* Supports the information requirements for meeting national and global commitments, including biodiversity-related conventions and sustainable development goals
* Leverages national, regional and global investment in scientific research by enabling cost-effective discovery and re-use of existing biodiversity data
* Complements other biodiversity-related initiatives by providing data foundations for a wide range of studies, projects and applications
* Helps to fulfil commitments to improve transparency and open access to scientific data
* Supports applied research relevant to policy decisions across a range of issues of primary economic and social importance, including food security, agricultural livelihoods, disease risk and the impacts of climate change.

### AUDIENCE 6. Secondary audiences

*Constituent segments*

* Educators (professors and teachers)
* Students (tertiary, secondary, primary)
* Wildlife enthusiasts
* Environmentally engaged individuals
* The non-scientific software developer community

The audiences listed in the earlier part of this strategy each have distinct communication requirements that are critical to the mission of GBIF. Beyond these audiences are a wider group for which communication may be less essential, but nevertheless merit attention in this strategy because of indirect benefits such as coverage in mainstream media that raises GBIF’s profile with its key audiences. Some parts of the GBIF ’family’ may also have an interest in direct engagement with these groups in order to consolidate support for their national activities.

Included in this audience are the environmentally-engaged public, wildlife enthusiasts, students and teachers. For these groups, awareness of GBIF.org as a freely-available source of global data on biodiversity may be of interest, although their contact is more likely be with those sites aimed directly at the public, some of which are also contributors of data through GBIF. Some national portals developed by GBIF Participants also serve the function of informing the public about the species occurring in their countries, regions and localities.

Engagement with these groups is often most effective in the context of citizen science (see also Audience Group 2 – Data holders). Several GBIF nodes have initiated highly successful campaigns to engage the public both in data generation, for example through ’bioblitz’ events, and in curation through crowd-sourcing of specimen data digitization. A communication function through such activities is to demonstrate to individuals that their enthusiasm for wildlife can produce valuable scientific evidence of benefit to the whole community, with recognition attached to indvidual observers or collectors; this can widen the constituency of support for GBIF globally and at national level.

A final secondary audience is the wider group of software developers that shows interest and appreciation of the technical solutions developed by the GBIF community to meet the challenges of biodiversity informatics. It is important to stay engaged with this specialist community even if it is not directly relevant to the GBIF mission – both to bring recognition and attention to GBIF’s activities among a wider group, and to ensure that GBIF’s work reflects trends and developments taking place in other domains.

#### Key messages

GBIF is of particular value to members of these audiences because it:

* Establishes a foundation for greater knowledge about biodiversity worldwide
* Offers opportunities to explore the global body of evidence about life on earth
* Promotes a culture of transparency, open access and evidence-based decision-making with benefits to all
* Offers an example of innovative informatics solutions and that may be of value to other domains and communities

## PRIORITY DOCUMENTS

What materials are needed to implement this strategy? Secretariat staff have conducted a concurrent review of documentation related to several key audience segments. An analysis of this document review has also produced a list of gaps in documentation for specific segments, noting where materials are either out of date or absent.

This review and analysis will provide the rationale behind near-term priorities in producing and updating information resources maintained by the Secretariat.

## PRIORITY LANGUAGES

GBIF’s global reach also requires a strategy for establishing priorities for translating information resources into languages other than English. This prioritization is critical for engaging Participants where English is not an official language, because the absence of translations for key documentation can limit the capacity of Participants and others to carry out the collective work of the GBIF network.

The impact of languages in GBIF operations has not been subject to any systematic assessment to date. As a result, the Secretariat will initiate a consultation in late 2014 on the network’s needs for multilingual documentation. This consultation will seek to answer questions such as: *‘Is GBIF’s message reaching all its potential audience? Is its focus only in English a barrier to global implementation of the GBIF mission? What impact has arisen from the limited multilingual support provided to date?*

A report on the consultation will describe current issues around multi-language use in GBIF. It may identify key documents or tools where the absence of translations limits the effectiveness of outreach to the audiences identified in this strategy. The report also expects to provide recommendations on data management activities. Current plans are for the report to reach completion ahead of GB22 in autumn 2015, where the Governing Board can review, assess and endorse any suitable recommendations.

## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

By describing GBIF’s audiences and providing a framework for thinking about them critically, the communication strategy positions the Secretariat to engage in timely reviews of GBIF’s progress and effectiveness in reaching different audiences and audience segments. At regular intervals, a review will prioritize specific audience segments for targeted outreach on the basis of strategic need and practical opportunity.

Once an audience segment is identified as a target, GBIF will outline specific materials, tactics and venues best suited for reaching them, such as key professional groups, publications, events, etc. A corresponding review and analysis of current documentation will then identify gaps in materials required for the new target segment, prioritizing them for development and/or translation.

In addition to audience-specific channels of communication, GBIF has several other more general-purpose channels to work with, briefly characterized below.

### GBIF.org

In 2013, GBIF took the major step of streamlining its production and distribution of communication materials with the integration of GBIF’s two primary websites, the old ‘data portal’ and ‘communication portal’, in the new GBIF.org. This unified web resource serves both as the main point of access for GBIF-mediated data and the primary platform for presenting news, documentation, and messaging about GBIF, its activities and its resources.

GBIF.org will remain central to serving the audiences described above. Beginning in late 2014, the Secretariat will review of the site’s overall navigation and information architecture, geared toward improving the organization and messaging of the site. Taking into account a large volume of feedback since the launch of the new GBIF.org, this review will pay particular attention to how GBIF.org presents key messages and documentation to priority audience segments, with the goal of making it easier for visitors to find information and materials fashioned to their needs and intended uses. And as mentioned above, the Secretariat will also consult with Participants and make recommendations on priorities for translating key resources and areas of the site into languages other than English.

### News

GBIF reports on the ongoing and emerging impact of its activities, producing updates on topics such as data publishing, use of data in peer-reviewed literature, and engagement with new Participants, partner organizations and other projects and initiatives. These news items are published on GBIF.org and (when warranted) as press releases through global news services. Main news items feature in the bi-monthly *GBits* newsletter.

Separately, the Secretariat monitors peer-reviewed literature and reports on both the volume of papers using GBIF-mediated data and significant uses of these data in research. Summaries of key research papers appear in GBIF’s annual *Science Review* accompanied by a complete thematically organized bibliography of references. Additionally, a complete archive of GBIF-relevant research, thematically tagged, is available through the Mendeley academic social networking platform.

In addition, GBIF works with journalists to answer questions and support their reporting. By cultivating existing relationships and building new ones, GBIF works to earn relevant placements in stories that appear in specialist and mainstream media. This strategy will help to focus such efforts in order to identify priorities for media coverage.

### Mailing lists and social media

GBIF manages several mailing lists to support both internal communications across much of the GBIF ‘family’, as well as a broader list of more than 2,000 subscribers for distributing the GBits newsletter.

GBIF also uses Twitter (2,045 followers), Facebook (1,152 fans) and LinkedIn (1,341 group members)[[1]](#footnote-1) to amplify efforts to circulate updates on news, events and achievements. These channels serve to increase traffic to GBIF.org, build awareness and understanding, and engage current and prospective constituents.

### Event participation

The Secretariat and other members of the GBIF ‘family’ represent their collective enterprise in many fora. Judgements on attending future events will closely consider how well key audience segments are likely to be represented and the impact that attendance can have towards the objectives articulated in this strategy.

### Please send this completed form to nodes@gbif.org by 31 October 2014.Name: Participant Node:

### General Comments

Please share general comments, concerns and suggestions on the GBIF communications strategy—including the audiences and audience segments, messaging, or communications channels—in the following field.

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### Specific Comments

Share specific comments here, citing the line number(s) along with your edits and suggestions. Please add more rows as needed.

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| Line number | Comment/suggested edit |
|  |  |

1. Social media statistics as at August 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)