

2nd Announcement

FRIENDS OF SOCOTRA
20th International Socotra Conference and FoS
Annual General Meeting
2nd World Dragon Tree Conference



Ghent University, Belgium

Friends of Socotra AGM September **24–26th** 2021

Dragon Tree Conference September **27th** 2021



The Friends of Socotra Conference Aim

The “Friends of Socotra” (or Friends of Soqotra, both spellings are possible) meet **every year** gathering naturalists, botanists, marine biologists, geographers, sociologists, linguists, archaeologists, explorers, writers, travellers interested in Socotra from all over the world. Presentations and discussions occur for ongoing projects and **scientific research** about Socotra. Attendees actively promote awareness for the conservation of the unique culture and nature of the Archipelago and its sustainable development. The aim is to create an event that brings together all people with a heart for the Socotra Archipelago, its protection, its biodiversity, its myths and traditions, its history and future. The vision of FoS can be found at www.friendsofsoqotra.org

Theme FoS Conference

Resilience of the ecosystems and indigenous communities in the Socotra Archipelago.

The Dragon Tree Conference

The FoS AGM will be linked directly to the 2nd Dragon Tree Consortium Meeting which will be held at the same venue in Ghent University (Ghent), the only Consortium in the world to promote research, awareness and conservation of all Dragon Tree species on the planet. For more info on this, contact Dr Petr Maděra at MENDELU and Dr Kay Van Damme at Ghent University. Attendees of the FoS meeting are welcome to join both conferences but please take into consideration the limited capacity if you attend in person.

Theme Dragon Tree Conference

New knowledge in Dragon Tree Research.

Conference Venue

The conference will be held from September 24th to 26th (FoS AGM) and the Dragon Tree Conference on September 27th, 2021, at Ghent University Botanical Garden, K.L. Ledeganckstr. 35, 9000 Ghent, Belgium.



COVID-19 Info

Please take into account covid-19 regulations for travel and in Belgium – regular update and national info can be found here <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/faq/>

For regional information (municipalities – Ghent has its own rules) please check here <https://visit.gent.be/en>

All visitors to Belgium are required to fill in the Passenger Locator Form online before traveling <https://travel.info-coronavirus.be/public-health-passenger-locator-form>

Attendants from UK, South Africa and South America must remain 10 days in quarantine upon arrival (status May 2021), however by September this may change – please check the above links.

As the regulations may change rapidly, the meeting will be mixed attendance (real and virtual). The largest attendance will be expected **virtual** through **Zoom**, streamed from the venue. Attendants from Yemen/Socotra will be also invited to join this way (depending on internet connection). **A Zoom link will only be shared by email with registered attendees, so please register.** However, there will also be a physical meeting in Ghent, adhering to covid-19 regulations. In September 2021, the majority of the adult population (more than 70%) is expected to be vaccinated in Belgium. In August 2021, 83% of the population of Ghent city are registered as vaccinated fully (two shots). All attendees in person will present a negative covid-19 PCR test taken within 48hr before registration on Friday morning, and may be requested to have an additional antigen test taken at the registration as well.

Travel Grants

The Friends of Socotra is a Charity with limited funds. It unfortunately does not have the funds to cover any travel expenses for visitors. Invitation letters can be provided and should be requested from the organisers (email below).

Call for Presentations and Abstracts

Participants are kindly invited to submit **abstracts** of papers and posters related to the themes of either conference. Each submitted abstract will be subject to peer-review and the conference organizers reserve the right to allocate the appropriate means of presentation to submitted contributions, depending on the number of time slots. The organisers also reserve the right to refuse a contribution if not deemed suitable. A presentation should be aimed at 15 minutes (+ 5 minutes questions), with or without powerpoint slides. Please take into consideration that the powerpoints can be asked to be shared online.

Preliminary Programme

FoS Conference and AGM

Friday 24th September 2021	Informal Welcome & Early Registration at Ghent University Botanical Garden
Saturday 25th September 2021	Registration, Welcome, Conference, Open Discussion Forum at Ghent University Botanical Garden and Conference dinner
Sunday 26th September 2021	FoS AGM (Committee Meeting, open to all members), Excursion (tbd) Registration Dragon Tree Conference

Dragon Tree Conference

Monday 27th September 2021	Dragon Tree Conference at Ghent University Botanical Garden
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Timeframe

May 2021	1st Announcement
30 th June 2021	deadline for early registration, paper and poster abstracts submission
25 th August 2021	2nd Announcement (with preliminary conference programme)
10 th September 2021	deadline for regular registration, paper and poster abstracts submission
15 th September 2021	notification of paper and poster acceptance, 3rd Announcement

Preliminary List of Contributions (Confirmed Speakers, more tbd)

Friends of Socotra (FoS) Conference

Kay Van Damme

20 years of Friends of Socotra

Martin Rejžek

Boulders and plant biodiversity

Petr Maděra, Kay Van Damme, Fabio Attorre

Conservation of the endangered endemic Boswellia trees on Socotra Island (Yemen) – Franklinia project

Jana Tulková, Lucie Vaničková, Petr Maděra

Do frankincense tree resins (Boswellia elongate) differ according to the environment?

Salem Hamdiah & Lukáš Karas

Germination of endemic Boswellia species from Socotra Island versus Boswellia sacra

Abduljameel Mohammed

Perspectives of sustainable development on Socotra Island – PhD Thesis introduction

Petr Vahalík, Rostislav Nėtek

Boswellia drone inventory

Kay Van Damme

Water management issues on Socotra

Julian Jansen van Rensburg

Mitigating climate change effects through traditional land management practices in Socotra

Hana Habrová

Specifics of endangered endemic species conservation on Socotra

Raquel Vasconcelos

Revisiting the genetic diversity of the Socotri people

Dragon Tree (DT) Conference

Linnea Hesse

Dragon trees inspire - Biomimetics and modern imaging techniques shed a new light on DTs

Mirela Tulik

Trade-offs between hydraulic and mechanical functions in the xylem of Dracaena draco trunk

Joanna Jura-Morawiec

How does dragon tree trunk increase in girth?

Martin Rejžek

How do dragon blood trees uprooted by cyclones affect biodiversity?

Petr Vahalík

Drone analysis of Firmihin dragon blood tree forest

Lucie Bauerová, Petr Maděra, Hana Habrová

Radial increment of dragon blood trees

Joe Krawczynszyn

Floral biology and resin of Dracaena draco

Klára Lengálová & Hana Habrová

The population structure of Dracaena draco subsp. caboverdeana

Hana Kalivodová, Petr Maděra

Horizontal precipitation captured by Socotra Dragon's Blood Trees

Marcelo Rezende et al.

Identifying suitable restoration and conservation areas for Dracaena cinnabari in Socotra, Yemen

Conference Proceedings

Registered participants are requested to send their detailed affiliations, co-authors and abstracts to the organisers (KVD, HH, PM) by **10th of September 2021** (emails below). All accepted abstracts will be part of the programme booklet when at least one of the authors is registered. The programme booklet and abstract will be provided to the participants in printed form as well as online, through the conference webpages.

Special Issues

Following the conferences, authors can submit their papers to two **special issues** in peer-reviewed Academic Journals:

1. **FoS Conference/Socotra:** A special issue dedicated to **Socotra** of the Nature Springer journal **Rendiconti Lincei** with Impact Factor 1,627 (FoS conference, edited by K. Van Damme and F. Attorre, deadline 10 May 2022, <https://www.springer.com/journal/12210>)
2. **Dragon Tree Conference:** A special issue of the MDPI journal **Forests** dedicated to **Dragon's Blood Trees**, with Impact Factor 2,63 (Dragon Tree Conference, edited by P. Madera, K. Van Damme and F. Attorre, deadline September 2022, <https://www.mdpi.com/journal/forests>)

Fees and registration

Registration via the conference web site (<https://fraxinus.mendelu.cz/tropicalforestry/friends-of-soqotra-dragon-tree-conference-ghent/>)

Conference fees (**only for participants in person**):

	FoS Conference fee	Conference dinner	Dragon Tree Conference Fee
Normal	120* EUR	30* EUR	50 EUR
FoS members	70* EUR	30* EUR	30 EUR
Accompanying person	30* EUR	30* EUR	30 EUR
Student or retired	20* EUR	30* EUR	20 EUR

* The price can still change depending on the number of attendants

The conference fee includes:

- Conference organisational costs
- One or more covid-19 rapid antigen tests
- Basic lunches and coffee breaks during the conference and AGM
- Participation in all plenary sessions
- Conference materials and conference proceedings

As this is the celebration of **20 years** of Friends of Socotra, there may be additional material available for purchase (e.g., t-shirt) (tbd)

Payment:

All fees will be paid at the registration desk (in cash)

Steering and Organizing committee (incl. AGM Subcommittee and committee volunteers)

The Socotra Conference and FoS AGM (and adjoining Dragon Tree Conference) will be organised by Ghent University Botanical Garden (host) in collaboration with the Friends of Socotra and Mendel University. **Steering/Organizing Committee FoS Conference and AGM 2021:** Kay Van Damme, Chantal Dugardin, Francesca Pella, Petr Maděra, Hana Habrová, Klára Lengálová, Jana Tulková, Fabio Attorre, Haifaa Abdulhalim, Luca Malatesta et al.

Accommodation

For those visiting in person, accommodation should be sought personally. Please take into consideration that this will be a busy period for accommodation as events are planned to open again around the period. Ghent University itself does not have guest Accomodation. However, a wide range of hotels and Airbnbs are available directly near the Uni and in the City Centre. The main train station of Ghent (St Pieters), which can be reached by direct connection from Brussels, is at five minutes walking distance from the venue. Everything is easily accessible in Ghent by walking, tram, bicycle or bus.

Ghent info for new visitors here <https://visit.gent.be/en/good-know>

Practical info can be found here <https://visit.gent.be/en/overnight-stay> and here <https://visit.gent.be/en/good-know/practical-information/getting-around>

Train info can be found here <https://www.belgiantrain.be/en> and bus info here <https://www.delijn.be/en/>

Digital map here <https://visit.gent.be/en/good-know/practical-information/getting-around/digital-street-map-ghent>

Renting a bicycle in Ghent is recommended, as it is a very bicycle-friendly city. You can rent one here <https://visit.gent.be/en/cycling-ghent>

What is there to visit?

Ghent is amazing. <https://visit.gent.be/en> - the university also has a brand new science museum, see <https://www.gum.gent/en/news>

Contacts

More information concerning the FoS & DT conferences and the registration will be available on the conference website – <https://fraxinus.mendelu.cz/tropicalforestry/friends-of-soqotra-dragon-tree-conference-ghent/> and <https://fraxinus.mendelu.cz/tropicalforestry> (News section)

If you need more information, please contact the organizers through the conference website or this e-mail: kay.vandamme@ugent.be + hana.habrova@centrum.cz (FoS conference) or petr.madera@mendelu.cz + kay.vandamme@ugent.be (DT conference)