

Wildland Fires in Eurasia Region: The UNISDR Regional Eurasia Wildland Fire Network Activities 2011-2015 – Progress and Prospects

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Abstract

The UNISDR Regional Eurasia Wildland Fire Network is one of seven Regional / Subregional Wildland Fire Networks of the Global Wildland Fire Network, which include the Member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The Eurasia Wildland Fire Network emerged from the core region of engagement of the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Fire. Under the lead of the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) between 1993 and 2014, the Team and the Regional Network were primarily active in the temperate-boreal region of Central, Southeast and East Europe (including the Russian Federation), and the Caucasus and Central Asia. Main inter-regional cooperation has been accomplished between the Regional Networks of Eurasia, Southeast Europe / Caucasus, Central Asia and the Euro-Alpine Subregional Wildland Fire Network – the reason for forming the Euro-Siberian Cluster within the Global Wildland Fire Network.

In following up the recommendations of the 4th and the 5th International Wildland Fire Conferences (IWFC), the GFMC between 2010 and 2012, initiated the preparation of a project entitled "Safeguarding Sustainable Forest Management in the UNECE Region through International Cooperation in Fire Management". An administrative arrangement was signed in March 2013 between the UNECE and the financial sponsor, the Federal Republic of Germany, which entrusted the GFMC with the implementation of the project. The project was an unprecedented effort at the regional level of the UNECE, with participation of other regional organizations or representation outside the UNECE, including several UN agencies and secretariats, to highlight the current and future problems of wildfires affecting forests and other vegetation types or ecosystems, and to elaborate proposals for addressing the increasing threats of wildfires as a consequence of global change through international collaboration.

The region's core activity was the organization of the *UNECE/FAO Regional Forum on Cross-boundary Fire Management*. The recommendations of the Forum will be presented as well as the supporting activities of the Council of Europe through its European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (European Open Partial Agreement – EUR-OPA) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Key words: Wildfires, Regional Eurasia Wildland Fire Network, Regional Eastern European Fire Monitoring Center, Euro-Siberia Wildland Fire Network Cluster, Global Wildland Fire Network, Transboundary Fire Management Cooperation