



UNITED NATIONS



**UN-ISDR
Wildland Fire Advisory Group**

and

Global Wildland Fire Network

Coordinator and Secretariat:

Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), Freiburg, Germany

Minutes of the First Meeting

4 December 2004, GFMC, Freiburg, Germany
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UN-ISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group / Global Wildland Fire Network
First Meeting, GFMC, Freiburg, Germany, 3-4 December 2004

Minutes of the Meeting

Introductory Remarks

On 3-4 December 2004 the Wildland Fire Advisory Group / Global Wildland Fire Network of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) met at the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), Freiburg, Germany. The objective of the conference was to evaluate the current status of wildland fires globally, to evaluate the consultations of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks held in 2004 and prepare a recommendation for the development of an International Wildland Fire Accord (International Accord on Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management), directed to the FAO Ministerial Meetings of FAO (Rome, March 2004) and the UNFF (New York, May 2005).

In addition to these minutes the following documents are available:

- Final agenda
- List of participants
- Final draft list of members of the Wildland Fire Advisory Group
- Background materials (hard copy, ca. 100 pages)
- Recommendations of the Wildland Fire Advisory Group to the FAO and UNFF ministerial meetings in 2005

Meeting Objectives

The first meeting of the UN-ISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group (WFAG) and the Global Wildland Fire Network (GWFN) had the following priority objectives:

- Constitutional: reflect on the outcomes of the work of the former ISDR-IATF Working Group on Wildland Fire (WG-4) related to global wildland fire issues; define WG-4 transition to and *modus operandi* of WFAG, including membership with regional representation of the Global Wildland Fire Network
- Global situation assessment: Attendees to report on key issues on wildland fire in the regions of the Global Wildland Fire Network, notably the results of the consultations of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks; key scientific and other thematic issues, including civil society affected by fire and involved in solutions
- Technical: Thematic presentations and discussions on
 - Participation of Regional Wildland Fire Networks and GOFC / GOLD in the Global Forest Fire Assessment
 - Review of a proposed international standard for statistical reporting of wildland fires, including the FAO Forest Resources Assessment 2005 (FRA 2005)
 - The role of the United Nations University in capacity building in advanced wildland fire management
 - Innovative technologies for remote sensing of wildland fires and fire impacts
- Roadmap for 2005-2007
 - Evaluation of the regional consultations in 2004 and the GFMC/ISDR/FAO "Framework for the Development of the International Wildland Fire Accord" (May 2004)
 - Formulation of a recommendation of the WFAG / Global Wildland Fire Network for the Development of the International Wildland Fire Accord, directed to the FAO International Ministerial Meeting (March 2005) and the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR), Japan, January 2005
 - Initial discussion about the role of wildland fire and fire management in the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol
 - Discussion on the participation of the Global Wildland Fire Network at the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference (Madrid, 2007)

1. Constitutional

Mr. Johann Goldammer, the former convener of the ISDR-IATF Working Group on Wildland Fire (2001-2003) and coordinator of the WFAG reported on the transition of the former ISDR-IATF Working Group on Wildland Fire to the WFAG. The WFAG is serving as an advisory body to the UN system through the UN-ISDR. With the participation of representatives of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks, UN agencies and programmes, international organizations, including non-government organizations, and representatives of civil society the WFAG is available to address sectoral as well as cross-cutting issues related to wildland fire.

One of the core tasks of the Advisory Group is to link the international wildland fire community through its Global Wildland Fire Network with the UN and international organizations in order to promote the development and implementation of policies aiming at reducing the negative effects of wildland fire on the environment and human security; and to promote management of natural fires in the frame of natural resources management and the use of prescribed fire in sustainable land-use systems.

The WFAG membership was discussed at the meeting. Through the representation of all Regional Wildland Fire Networks there is a strong participation of professionals including those representing civil society.

An updated list of membership is circulated. According to the discussion it was agreed that the ITTO and the World Bank would be invited to be member of WFAG.

In addition it was agreed to develop regional rosters of experts who would be available for national, regional and international consultations or advisory missions in issues related to wildland fire management.

2. Global Update on Wildland Fire

Attendees of the meeting reported on key issues on wildland fire in the regions of the Global Wildland Fire Network, notably the results of the consultations of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks in 2004. The UN agencies and institutions reported about their ongoing work as related to wildland fire. The following presentations were made in this regard:

2.1 From the United Nations

FAO-Forestry Department

Mr. Mike Jurvélius reported about the activities 2004-2005: Participation in regional consultations (NE Asia, Baltic, South America, Pan-American Wildland Fire Conference), outreach activities (e.g., Joint FAO/GFMC Course for Instructors in Community-Based Fire Management, Africa), preparation of follow-up courses for the Caribbean (Belize) in 2005. Update on Technical Cooperation Projects (TCPs) in Fire Management in Syria, Bulgaria, Guatemala, Latin America & Caribbean.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

Ms. Liisa Jalkanen provided information on the work related to wildland fires, including traditional activities related to meteorological monitoring and forecasting, monitoring and surveillance functions (e.g., smoke trajectory and dispersion modelling, compilation of monthly and seasonal climate prediction information, activities related to air quality monitoring), and dissemination of information to environmental and other agencies.

United Nations Conventions: UN CCD, CBD and FCCC

Mr. Douglas Pattie (UNCCD) represented the secretariats of the three Rio Conventions. He provided an update on synergies developed by the three conventions in addressing forest issues and wildland fire (results and follow up of joint Viterbo meeting, April 2004)

Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

Mr. Mahendra Joshi presented a statement on behalf of the UNFF process and suggested a coordinated approach of the follow-up of the WFAG meeting between the ministerial meeting at the FAO (March 2005) and the ministerial segment at UNFF-5 (May 2005).

UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

Mr. Reid Basher, Director of the ISDR Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning (established in 2004 in Bonn, Germany) briefed the meeting participants on the upcoming UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) (Japan, January 2005) and discussed the potential for cooperation between the wildland fire community and the early warning platform. The Global Wildland Fire Network through the GFMC will contribute to a special session on early warning at the WCDR.

United Nations University, Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS)

Mr. Juan Carlos Villagran explained the mandate of the UNU and UNU-EHS (established in Bonn, Germany, 2004) and its cooperation with the wildland fire community in 2004 (Joint UN Inter-Agency Course on Advanced Fire Management in Sub Sahara Africa and Joint FAO/GFMC Course for Instructors in Community-Based Fire Management for Africa). Mr. Steve J. Pyne, Arizona State University, presented a proposal on the possible role of UNU-EHS in Training in capacity-building and policy development for fire officers, policy-makers, and senior administrators (Advanced Fire Management).

2.2 From the Regional Wildland Fire Networks

Australasia

Mr. Murray Dudfield, National Rural Fire Officer, New Zealand, represented the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC). He provided an update on the 2004 activities, including 11th Annual AFAC Conference and the Inaugural Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) Conference (7-9 October 2004, Perth, Australia). At the 11th AFAC meeting a formal decision has been made that AFAC becomes member of the Global Wildland Fire Network, representing the Australasian Region.

Subsahara Africa

Mr. Kolethi Gumbo, Zimbabwe Forestry Commission, supported by Mr. Alexander C. Held (GFMC) represented the regional network (the network coordinator, Mr. C. De Ronde, apologized not being able to attend the meeting). An update on 2004 activities were given on: (a) the Joint UN Inter-Agency Course on Advanced Fire Management in Subsahara Africa (June 2004) and the Joint FAO/GFMC Course for Instructors in Community-Based Fire Management (November 2004), production of the "Wildland Fire Management Handbook for Subsahara Africa" (edited by J.G. Goldammer and C. De Ronde; financed by the German Foreign Office), and (c) the Nelspruit Declaration on Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management in the SADC Region and adjoining Countries of Sub-Sahara Africa (5 June 2004).

North East Asia

Mr. Myung-Bo, Lee, and Mr. Si-Young, Lee, Korea Forest Research Institute, reported on the foundation meeting of the network (6 March 2004, Seoul, South Korea) and the follow up (regional analyses, preparation of the 2nd regional network meeting with a thematic focus on remote sensing of wildland fires, 16-17 January 2005, Sendai, Japan).

South America

Mr. Patricio Sanhueza, CONAF, Chile, Co-chair of the regional network, reported on the network foundation meeting (Curitiba, Brazil, 17 June 2004) and the follow-up meeting *in tandem* with Pan-American Wildland Fire Conference (San José, Costa Rica, 23 October 2004)

Mesoamerica

Mr. Lucky Medina, AFE-COHDEFOR, Honduras. Coordinator of the Mesoamerica network reported on the network consolidation process and the meeting *in tandem* with Pan-American Wildland Fire Conference (San José, Costa Rica, 23 October 2004)

North America / Pan-American Region

Mr. Denny Truesdale, U.S. Forest Service and representative of the Fire Management Working Group (North American Forestry Commission) reported on the history and *modus operandi* of the working group as well as on the results of the Pan-American Wildland Fire Conference (23 October 2004) in which Canada and the U.S. endorsed the participation in the Global Wildland Fire Network.

Mediterranean

Mr. Mike Jurvélius and Mr. Petteri Vuorinen presented the apologies of the coordinator of the wildland fire working group of FAO *Silva Mediterranea*, Mr. Ricardo Vélez, and outlined the outcomes of the Zaragoza meetings in 2003 and 2004 on international cooperation in wildland fire management in the Mediterranean Basin. Agreements on cooperation in wildland fire assistance have been signed between

several countries and provided the framework for successful border-crossing assistance during large fires in 2003 and 2004.

Baltic

Mr. Timo Heikkilä, Ministry of Interior, Finland, reported on the Baltic Conference on Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management (10 May 2004, Helsinki, Finland) and the "Helsinki Declaration on Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management in the Baltic Region".

Central Asia

Mr. Eduard P. Davidenko, National Aerial Forest Fire Center of Russia (*Avialesookhrana*), and J.G. Goldammer (GFMC) participated at the Central Asia Forestry Congress (25-26 November, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic) and presented the proposal of strengthening cooperation in wildland fire management in Central Asia. The resolution released by the heads of the forest services and the participants of the congress include the endorsement to cooperate with the global network. For 2005 a fire management study tour for Central Asia is planned.

Southeast Asia

Mr. Johann G. Goldammer (GFMC) reported briefly on behalf of the ASEAN Secretariat (apologies due to a ministerial meeting on disaster management taking place at the same time). He briefed the participants on the Meetings of the ASEAN Haze Technical Task Force (HTTF), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Haze and First Meeting of COP to the Haze Agreement, 8-11 November 2004; Hanoi, Viet Nam.

Near East / Balkans

Mr. Johann G. Goldammer (GFMC) reported briefly on behalf of the General Directorate of Forestry, Turkey (apologies due to change of personnel). Turkey hosted the "Conference on Forest Fire Management and International Cooperation in Fire Emergencies in The Eastern Mediterranean, Balkans and Adjoining Regions of the Near East and Central Asia" in Antalya, 30 March - 3 April 2004. Based on the "Antalya Declaration on Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management in the Balkans, Eastern Mediterranean, Near East and Central Asia" (released on 1 April 2004), the countries in the region initiated cooperative efforts. Turkey assisted Georgia and Syria with firefighters, helicopters and airplanes to suppress large fires in 2004. Israel had indicated its availability to assist if the situation would have escalated. A regional meeting with scientists and fire managers will be held in 2005 in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

3. Technical

3.1 Remote Sensing and Wildland Fire

Global Observation of Forest Cover/Global Observation of Landcover Dynamics (GOFC / GOLD)

GOFC / GOLD is a panel of the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS) - developed under the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) as a pilot to test the concept of an Integrated Global Observing System. The Co-Chairs of the GOFC / GOLD Fire Implementation Team, Mr. Chris Justice (University of Maryland, apologies) and Mr. Johann G. Goldammer (GFMC) reported about the global and regional fire remote sensing networks. Synergies have been developed with the Global Wildland Fire Network and its regional networks.

Recent Developments and Prospects for Innovative Remote Sensing of High-Temperature Events and Vegetation Fire Impacts

The ad-hoc invited expert, Mr. Dieter Oertel, German Aerospace Center (DLR) informed the meeting about the proof of concept of new technically feasible solutions on higher resolution active fire recognition (by the BIRD micro-satellite demonstrator mission, used in the ESA Earth Watch initiative /FUEGOSAT/ in 2003), and an operational *Fire detection and monitoring IR sensor* foreseen as an auxiliary payload of ESA's prospective Earth Observation Component Sentinel satellites for Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES). The WFAG expressed appreciation about the plans of the European Space Agency (ESA) to deploy new dedicated *Fire detecting and monitoring IR sensors* on prospective GMES Sentinel satellites as auxiliary payloads. Such a satellite sensor system would be an important European contribution for innovative detection, monitoring and impact assessment of wild land fires. The WFAG also recommended joint UN-ISDR and ESA actions to deploy new dedicated active fire satellite sensors in a gradual manner as auxiliary payloads on operational Sentinel satellites, and/or dedicated micro-satellites. The creation of a Thermal Disaster Management Confederation on an agreed deployment plan with the aim to provide new higher

resolution information products on active fires on an operational basis is recommended to be negotiated between space agencies and UN-ISDR and UN-OOSA, respectively. The WFAG decided that the GFMC will transmit these recommendations to ESA.

3.2 Global Wildland Fire Assessment

Review of a proposed international standard for statistical reporting of wildland fires, including the FAO Forest Resources Assessment 2005 (FRA 2005)

Before the WFAG meeting participants had received a proposed outline of a country report developed by the GFMC to be used for a global wildland fires assessment. Mr. Mike Jurvélius and Mr. Petteri Vuorinen briefed the meeting participants about the thematic report on forest fire of the FAO Forest Resources Assessment 2005 (FRA 2005). The thematic report will be based on regional analyses which will be compiled / authored by representatives of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks. The representatives of FAO and UNFF explained the procedures of country reports to the FRA process and other forestry-related data collection. The reporting burden of countries is quite high and therefore should not be increased with another official enquiry.

GFMC explained the experience and procedures of national reporting and data collection on wildland fire issues through the ECE/FAO International Forest Fire News (IFFN) and GFMC. During the past 15 years the communication with a global network of professionals on data and information collection has not been restricted to government agencies. The country rapporteurs are often working as academics, independent consultants, or in NGOs. These reports, published in IFFN and on the GFMC website have been considered valuable contributions for national, regional and global analyses.

The meeting participants agreed to the proposal of the FAO to use the ISDR Regional Network Focal Points or Coordinators to compile the global thematic report and encourage country correspondents to deliver country reports to the GFMC which would become a separate publication of the respective authors either in IFFN and / or on the GFMC website.

4. Roadmap 2005-2007

4.1 Preparation of the Global Wildland Fire Accord

Based on the regional consultations in 2004 and the GFMC/ISDR/FAO "Framework for the Development of the International Wildland Fire Accord" (May 2004) the WFAG / Global Wildland Fire Network discussed the development of the International Wildland Fire Accord. A document with recommendations was compiled that will be directed to the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO), the FAO Ministerial Meeting on Forests, the UNFF Ministerial Segment and the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction. Besides a proposed action plan the Wildland Fire Advisory Group specifically requests the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO), the FAO Ministerial Meeting on Forests and the UNFF Ministerial Segment to

- Consider the recommendations emanating from the regional and global consultations that took place in 2004
- Support the Framework for the Development of the International Wildland Fire Accord developed by ISDR / FAO / GFMC
- Consider the recommendations concerning a coordinated effort in international cooperation in wildland fire management as basis for a resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations

For the full text see file: [WFAG-GWFN-Meeting-Dec-2004-Recommendations.doc](#)

4.2 Preparation of the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference

Mr. Denny Truesdale, coordinator of the International Liaison Committee (ILC) for the International Wildland Fire Conferences, reported about the preparation of the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference (Madrid 2007). As a follow-up of the 3rd conference held in Sydney, Australia, October 2003, in tandem with the International Wildland Fire Summit, the Madrid conference will be hosted by

the government of Spain. Focus of the conference will be on the regions. Thus, a strong participation of the Global Wildland Fire Network is expected. A planning meeting will take place in Madrid in early 2005. The ILC has suggested to prepare a first flyer on the conference to be made available to the FAO and UNFF ministerial meetings in early 2005. ILC and WFAG have a strong overlapping membership. The participants agreed to continue to work closely together as it was done in the preparation of the 3rd International Wildland Fire Conference and the International Wildland Fire Summit.

4.3 Implications of the Kyoto Protocol Entering into Force

An initial discussion was held about the possible future role of wildland fire and fire management in the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. The meeting recommended the international community to "Prioritise research on global carbon strategies and the implications of the Kyoto Protocol on wildland fire management".

5. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion of the discussions held at the first meeting of the UN-ISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group / Global Wildland Fire Network it is stated that progress has been made in 2004 in enhancing international cooperation in wildland fire management. The prospects for enhanced international cooperation on wildland fire management seems to be growing in the international community.