

**UNISDR Global Wildland Fire Network / Wildland Fire Advisory Group  
2012 Meeting**

Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), 30 June – 1 July 2012

**Regional Eurasia Wildland Fire Network**



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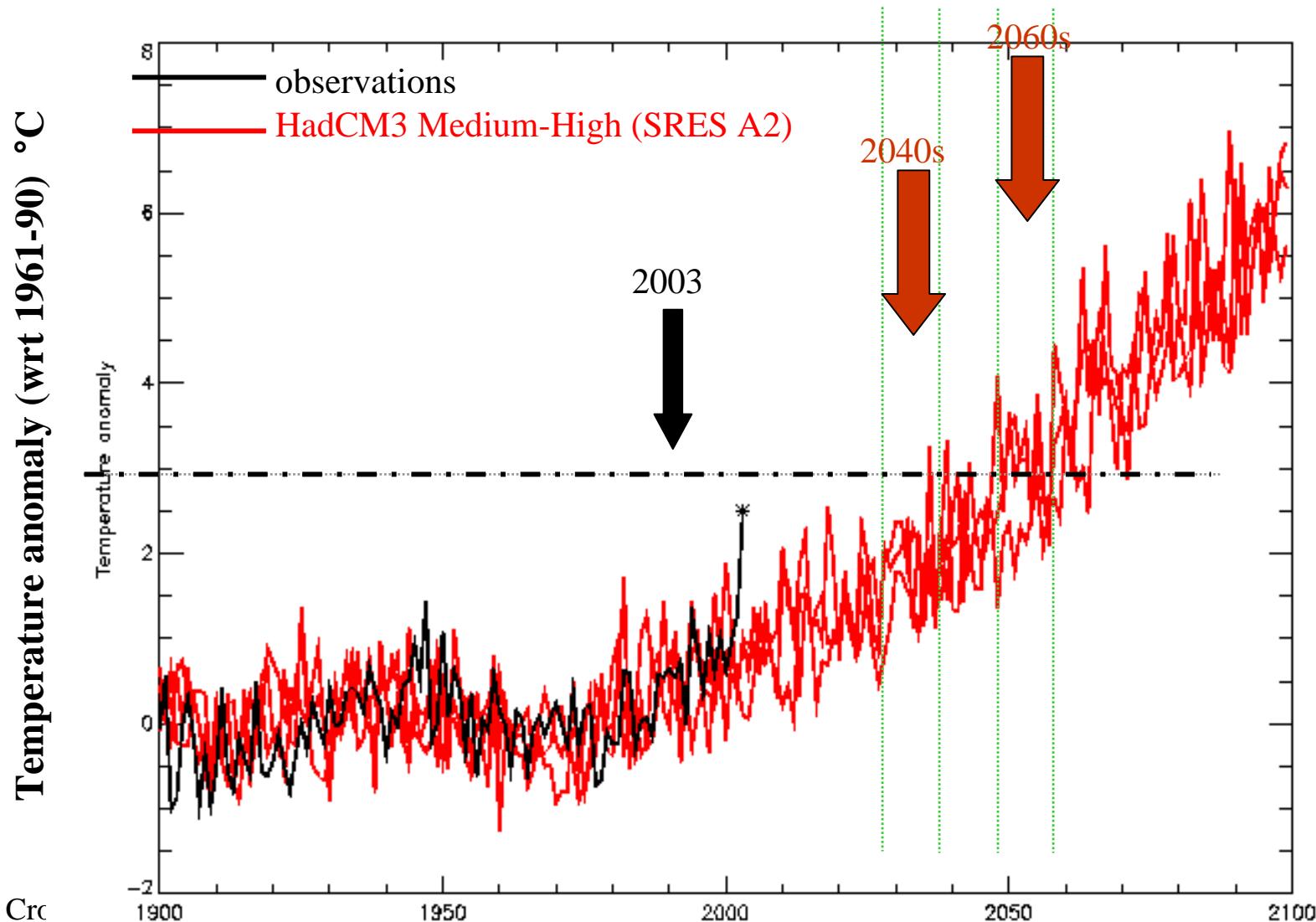
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# Wildfires in the UK – A changing story

- Between April 2009 to March 2011 England's Fire and Rescue Services attended:  
Just under 100,000 wildfire incidents with 11,400 hectares burnt in England
- Forest fires accounted for:  
11% of all wildfires or over 10,900 incidents  
12% of the area burnt or approx. 1,400 hectares

# European 2003 summer temperatures: normal by 2040s, cool by 2060s



# **UK Drought 2011-12**

- Hosepipe bans enacted across Southern England in April 2012 – for many places the first time in history



# Fire Statistics Scotland, 2010-11

## Primary Fires

Year	Forests / woodland	Grassland/ Crops
2009 -2010	336	143
2010 -2011	321	140

## Secondary Fires

Year	Grassland/ Stubble
2009 -2010	7168
2010 - 2011	8705



# Is the growing number of wildfires a problem for firefighters?

- We have to consider the context in which the changes are occurring:
  - Cut to public services
  - Damage to unique and irreplaceable environments
  - Distraction from core role



## What is the real impact?

- “Wildfire represents the single largest disturbance to the ecohydrological function of northern peatlands. Alteration of peatland thermal behaviour as a result of wildfire will modify the carbon balance of these important long-term carbon stores and regulate post-fire recovery”

Kettridge, Thomson and Waddington 2012



## How big is the impact?

- Russian Fires of 2011 – global impacts – human health and the environment
- Scotland's peat stores are much smaller than those in Indonesia and Russia but the landscape, heritage and culture all contribute to the tourist industry



# **“UK Peatlands in degraded state, UN and Wetlands International warn” BBC News May 2012**

- Drainage and Fires are the main threats
- Grazing also contributing
- EU grants may be available to private landowners
- Aim is to keep them wet!



## Fire on Peat lands

- Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service dealt with 395 wildfires of varying sizes in the 3 month period from 1<sup>st</sup> March
- Water conservation



## Root causation

- Climate change
- Land management changes
- EU Common Agricultural Policy Grant system – must burn heather in order to qualify for “Single Farm Payment”
- No burning skills and less manpower than in previous times



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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# Swinley Forest Fire, June 2011

