ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
Timber Committee

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
European Forestry Commission

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

JOINT FAO/ECE/ILO COMMITTEE ON FOREST TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

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

**Antalya, Turkey
15-19 April 2003**

First announcement

Preliminary programme and registration

PARTICIPATION

Countries are invited to fill in the **National Forest Fire Reports (Country Profiles)** and the **Questionnaire on Fire Management Resources** in Annexes I and II and submit them by 1 December 2002 to the address indicated. The Profiles will be compiled in a CD-Rom and will be made available at the conference.

Participants intending to attend the Conference are invited to fill in the preliminary registration form set out in annex III.

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Further information on the Conference will be made available shortly in a second announcement. This information will also be posted at the Committee's website:

http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/joint-committee

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

Antalya, Turkey, 15-19 April 2003

Introduction

The Eastern Mediterranean Region, including the Balkan countries, the ECE member states of the Near East and Central Asia, and other neighbouring countries of Central Asia, e.g. Mongolia and China, have recently suffered major forest and other wildland fire problems.

The causes of an increasing occurrence of wildfires in forests and other wildlands, including the underlying reasons for increasing human-caused fires, vary within the region and are due to:

*   transition from centrally planned to market economies
*   national to regional conflicts, creation of new nations, involving political tensions and war
*   increasing population growth and land-use pressure
*   regional climate change towards increase of extreme droughts

It has been recognized that no regional activity is underway to establish cooperation in wildland fire management, including wildland fire science.

Rationale

Several reasons support the idea for holding a regional conference. First, the Balkan countries, some of them being in a post-war situation and under reconstruction, as well as the South Eastern European countries which are still in economic and political transition, have not participated in recent activities of the ECE/FAO Fire Team and other international wildland fire research and development projects. Second, the neighbouring countries of Turkey, such as the Caucasus states, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, have been quite isolated from recent scientific and technological developments in fire management. Third, the fire problems in Mongolia and northern China, and to a limited extent in Afghanistan, call for cooperation with the ECE region.

From the point of view of the ECE/FAO/ILO Team Specialists on Forest Fire and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), which coordinates the work of the team in the ECE region and keeps close contacts with non-ECE countries, the countries listed above deserve full attention and support to bring them into the family of the international community of forest fire scientists, managers and policy makers.

Turkey's experience on fire management and its strategically important geographical situation, presenting similar problems to other Mediterranean countries, is very suitable for bringing together the fire science and management community of the region. This is why the ECE/FAO/ILO Team Specialists on Forest Fire welcomes the generous hospitality of Turkey to host the conference.

Objectives of the Conference

The regional conference will be conducted jointly with a regional exercise on forest fire management entitled: "Eastern European, Near East and Central Asian States Exercise on Wildland Fire Information and Resources Exchange - EASTEX FIRE 2003".

The objectives of the conference are to:

1.   Provide (a) a forum in the Eastern Mediterranean, Balkan and adjoining Regions of the Near East and Central Asia, (b) prepare mechanisms for information and resources exchange in forest and other wildland fire management within the region, including the establishment of partnerships for joint activities in fire research, training and policy development, and (c) prepare proposals to governments and international organizations of the region to establish mechanisms for sharing resources in large fire emergencies in accordance with existing international procedures.

In addition to the regional focus on the Eastern Mediterranean, Balkan and adjoining regions of the Near East and Central Asia the conference will:

2.   Compile an ECE-wide database on fire management capabilities in order to support the overall objectives of the conference and to facilitate international cooperation in management of fire emergencies;

3.   Conduct EASTEX FIRE 2003 - a bi-lateral or multinational fire-fighting exercise in which cooperation of ground and aerial fire fighting forces of two or more countries (to be determined) of the Eastern Mediterranean, Balkan and adjoining regions of the Near East and Central Asia, including participation of commercial wildland fire suppression operators, will be exercised.

The conference objectives are in line with the scope of work and recommendations of various international organizations including:

*   the ECE/FAO/ILO Team of Specialists on Forest Fire;

*   the Interagency Task Force for Disaster Reduction of the United Nations Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and its Working Group on Wildland Fire (WG-4 under the ISDR Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction);

*   the FAO, in accordance with the recommendations of the fire expert consultations on "Public Policies affecting Forest Fires" (1998) and "International Cooperation in Fire Management" (2001);

*   the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) and its joint UNEP Environment Unit;

*   the United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG);

*   the European Commission in the frame of the Mediterranean Disaster Information Network (MEDIN) and the overall scope of the Global Disaster Information Network (GDIN) International;

*   the European Council in the frame of the European Open Partial Agreement (EUR-OPA);

*   the International Institute for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and the World Bank Disaster Management Facility (DMF) with its ProVention Consortium on Technological and Natural Disasters; and

*   the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

Date and Venue of the Conference

The Conference will be held in April 2003 in Antalya. The exact time and venue of the conference will be announced in the 2nd announcement by the General Directorate of Forestry, Turkey.

Conference Organization

The conference is being organized under the auspices of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Team of Specialist on Forest Fire and in co-operation with the Turkish Government.

Mr. Vefa Altinçekic, Assistant Director General of Forestry of Turkey, General Directorate of Forestry (Beºtepe, Ankara), is chair the Conference Organizing Committee. The Organizing Committee will be assisted by a Scientific Advisory Board. The final programme will be announced in the second conference announcement.

Participation

International invitations will be distributed by the ECE. National participants from Turkey will be invited by the Organizing Committee.

Programme overview

Monday, 14 April 2003		Arrival of participants	
Tuesday, 15 April 2003	08:00-09:30	Inaugural session	Registration
	09:30-10:00		Opening of the conference
	10:00-10:15		General presentation
		Session II Forest fire management, general overviews by participating countries	
	10:15-15:00		
		Session III Forest fire prevention and control	
	15:00-18:30		
	20:00	Official dinner	
Wednesday, 16 April 2003		Session IV Environmental and social impacts of forest fires	
	09:00-12:30		
		Session V Public Policies affecting forest fires	
	13:30-18:00		
Thursday, 17 April 2003		Session VI Forest fire statistics and related database establishment	
	09:00-12:30		
		Session VII Technology support to forest fire management	
	13:30-16:00		
		Session VIII Conclusions and recommendations of the Conference	
	16:00-18:00		
	18:00		Closing ceremony
Friday, 18 April 2003	All day	EASTEX FIRE 2003, Antalya	
Saturday, 19 April 2003	All day (optional)	Study visits to Serik, Manavgat and Alanya Forest Districts and cultural programme	

Study visits and cultural programme

The study visit and cultural programme will take place on the last day of the conference. Details will be announced in the Second Conference Announcement.

Languages

The Conference will be held in the three official languages of the UNECE, English, French and Russian. Interpretation into the above languages will be available at the working sessions. For the Opening Session interpretation into Turkish will also be provided.

Registration and participation fee

Participants intending to attend the Conference are invited to fill in the preliminary registration form set out in Annex III by 1 November 2002. The registration form must be submitted to the host country (Turkey) and the ECE .

A participation fee of US$ 150 will be charged per participant. This includes organizational costs and fees for entrances for cultural visit.

The participation fee should be paid when registering at the hotel, in advance for the conference.

Preparation of country reports and papers

Two questionnaires for the establishment of national fire reports (country profiles) and a database on forest fire management capabilities are set out in Annexes I and II. The countries listed in Annex I are requested to submit a national fire report (country profile). The questionnaire on the fire management database (Annex II) should be filled by all ECE member states and other countries participating in the conference. Countries are urged to deliver the reports to the ECE by 1 December 2002.

Invited and voluntary oral presentations will address the problems highlighted in the country profiles **or** cover the aspects listed in the draft conference programme (see above). Oral presentations will be given only by the target group of countries, i.e., the Eastern Mediterranean countries, the Balkan countries, the Near East and Central Asian countries (ECE member states and additionally Mongolia and People's Republic of China).

Abstracts of invited and voluntary papers must be transmitted digitally to the ECE secretariat, with a copy to the GFMC and the host country.

Adresses for submission of abstracts:

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e-mail: egt@ogm.gov.tr

Presentation of papers

Computer power point presentations, films, videos, slides and transparencies

The following audio-visual aids will be available: computer for power point, video system (VHS), slide projector and overhead projector.

Participants wishing to show videos or films, are requested to give the necessary information on their registration form (title, length of projection time, format, etc.).

Communication

An Internet Café will be set up at the conference site.

Accommodation and other information (visas, weather, etc.)

Participants will be accommodated at the hotel in which the conference will be held. The hotel name will be announced by the General Directorate of Forestry (2nd Announcement). The hotel price is around US $ 90 (including breakfast, lunch and dinner) per night for single room and US $ 100 for double room with two beds. Participants should indicate on the registration form if they are travelling alone or accompanied.

Participants are expected to arrive on 14 April 2002 at the international Airport of Antalya. Transfer will be provided from the Airport to the Hotel.

Passports and visas

All participants should have a valid passport and, if required, an entry visa, which can be obtained from the Turkish Embassy or Consulate in their own country. Visa applications should be made as early as possible.

Weather

Daytime temperature in April normally varies between 15° to 22° C, the weather is generally rainy.

Money exchange

Money can be exchanged at banks and money exchange offices. Preferred currencies are US dollar and euro.

ANNEX I

Format of National Forest Fire Reports (Country Profiles)

A. Introduction

In the years 2000-2001 the FAO conducted a global survey on forest fires. The "Forest Fire Assessment 1990-2000" was an element of the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2000. The global forest fire survey which includes a large number of fire reports by country has been published by the FAO in 2001. The full report is available on the internet at the following address:

http://www.fao.org:80/forestry/fo/fra/docs/Wp55_eng.pdf

The country fire reports of the FAO Regions Europe, Africa and Asia have been compiled by the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC). The GFMC was not able to receive reports from all the countries that are ECE member states.

In order to obtain a comprehensive global picture the collection of country fire reports is a continuously ongoing process. All country reports received after the publication of the "Forest Fire Assessment 1990-2000" will be included in the databases and websites of the FAO, the GFMC and International Forest Fire News (IFFN):

http://www.fao.org/forestry/fo/country/nav_world.jsp

http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de

http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/iffn/country/country.htm

Administrations and/or other representatives of the countries of the target region of this conference that have not been able to contribute a national fire report are kindly requested to support the GFMC and the FAO to make the database with country reports as complete as possible. The following list provides the countries that still need to be includes in the country profile database:

Albania, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldavia, Iraq, Syria, Bulgaria, Rumania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

B. Outline of a Country Report

A national (country) report on the fire situation should address the following:

1. Fire environment, fire regimes, ecological role of fire common to country (or the vegetation and fire characteristics of the region in which the country is located)

Brief description of the main forest and non-forest vegetation types and the role of fire in these systems.

2.   Narrative summary of major wildfire impacts on people, property, and natural resources during the 1990s (to include effects on public health)

Narrative, if possible with figures, on ecological damages, economic losses, fatalities, etc. for large fire events.

3.   Fire database: Wildfire statistics of fire numbers, area burned and fire causes for the period of 1980-2002; or a narrative report if data are absent.

If possible, produce a simple table for the two decades (1980s and 1990s, together with the most recent data). The format of a standardized table is given at the end of this Annex. If statistics are not available, please explain why statistical data are not available.

4.   Operational fire management system(s) and organization(s) present in the country or region

Describe the main organizational settings in place, particularly mentioning the responsibilities of

- state/government agencies
- the private sector (e.g., in privately owned or industrial forests)

in the fields of:

- fire prevention
- early warning, detection and monitoring, and
- suppression

Explain the responsibilities at different levels.

- central level (often "federal" or national)
- state (often "provinces")
- municipal
- role of voluntary fire fighters/brigades

Explain the community involvement in fire management activities

Please highlight briefly the main forest fire research issues

5.   Use of prescribed fire in the region to achieve management objectives (purposes, extent, results)

Describe the use and objectives of prescribed burning in

- forestry
- other vegetation management (grasslands, bushlands)
- agricultural maintenance burning
- "let burn" (or integration) of natural (lightning) and human-caused wildfires

6.   **Sustainable land-use practices employed in the country of region to reduce wildfire hazards and wildfire risks**

These are basically systems of Integrated Forest Fire Management (IFFM) in which land-use systems are embedded in fire-prone areas in such a manner that they are likely to reduce the spread or intensity of wildfires, e.g. by fuelbreaks maintained by agricultural, pastoral or recreational activities; or mention alternatives to replace traditional use of fire for land clearing or maintenance.

7. Public policies concerning fire

What are the policies (including legislation in place) which address the fire and fire impacts (reduction of negative impacts; possibly promotion of beneficial effects of fire).

What are the needs of fire management? Please describe what is in place and what needs to be done (official statements, programmatic statements.

If you provide your opinion or assessment (or the opinion of the academia or science community), please explain the mandate or role of the (fire) science community in the national setting.

8. Tables

Wildfire Database

Wildfire database 1980-1989

Year	Total No. of Fires on Forest, Other Wooded Land, & Other Land No.	Total Area Burned on Forest, Other Wooded Land, & Other Land ha	Area of Forest Burned ha	Area of Other Wooded Land and Other Land Burned ha	Human Causes No.	Natural Causes No.	Unknown Causes No.
1980							
1981							
1982							
1983							
1984							
1985							
1986							
1987							
1988							
1989							
Average							

Record data for all wildfires, or any fire occurring on wildland except a fire under prescription.

Wildfire database 1990-2002

Year	Total No. of Fires on Forest, Other Wooded Land, & Other Land No.	Total Area Burned on Forest, Other Wooded Land, & Other Land ha	Area of Forest Burned ha	Area of Other Wooded Land and Other Land Burned ha	Human Causes No.	Natural Causes No.	Unknown Causes No.
1990							
1991							
1992							
1993							
1994							
1995							
1996							
1997							
1998							
1999							
2000							
2001							
2002							
Average							

Record data for all wildfires, or any fire occurring on wildland except a fire under prescription.

Note: This table needs to be completed only by those countries which do not report annual data on fires using the UN-ECE/FAO/Commission of European Communities questionnaire on forest fires.

Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Definitions:

Forest: Land with tree crown cover of more than 10 percent and area of more than 0.5 hectares. The trees should be able to reach a minimum height of 5 meters at maturity.

Other wooded land: Land either with a crown cover of 5-10 percent of trees able to reach a height of 5 meters at maturity; or a crown cover of more than 10 percent of trees not able to reach a height of 5 meters at maturity; or with shrub or bush cover of more than 10 percent.

Other land: Land with less crown cover, tree height, or shrub cover than defined under "Other wooded land". Indicate under Comments section if recurring wildfires affect "Other land" by inhibiting regeneration to the "Forest" and "Other wooded land" categories.

Date: _____
Source of information: _____
Country correspondent: _____
E-mail address of correspondent: _____

Is fire database management by computer or by paper records: _____.
Address of website to access the fire database, if available:

ANNEX II

Survey and Questionnaire for the Establishment of a Database with Country Profiles on Forest Fire Management Capabilities

Rationale and Introduction

This survey with its draft questionnaire is a follow-up activity of the Baltic Exercise on Fire Information and Resources Exchange (BALTEX FIRE 2000, Kuopio, Finland, June 2000) and the recommendations of the 5th INSARAG Regional Europe-Africa Conference (Hammamet, Tunisia, November 2000) during which the establishment of the *Fire Response Group* with its wildland fire element has been decided formally. The survey is also in line with the overall scope of the newly established Working Group on Wildland Fire under the Inter-Agency Task Force of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and with the recommendation of the FAO/ITTO International Expert Meeting on Forest Fire Management, (FAO Rome, March 2001).

In the context of the "Conference on Forest Fires in the Eastern Mediterranean, Balkans and adjoining Regions of the Near East and Central Asia" and the regional exercise on forest fire management "Eastern European, Near East and Central Asian States Exercise on Wildland Fire Information and Resources Exchange - EASTEX FIRE 2003" the survey intends to collect information to be used for a database. This database will contain regularly updated country profiles on forest fire management capabilities that will provide:

*   General information on national wildland fire management resources

*   A list of national resources available for providing assistance to other countries to respond to large fire emergencies on request

*   Information on national administrative structures, responsibilities and resources of the country to facilitate receiving response by other countries during large fire emergencies.

After completion the survey will be evaluated and published as a database on the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) Website.

Format of Country Profiles of Fire Management Resources

1.   Name of Country:

2.   **Agencies responsible for Wildland Fire Prevention**

2.1   **Central / National**

Full address:

2.2   Provincial / State (all provinces to be listed)

Full address:

3.   **Agencies responsible for Wildland Fire Control**

3.1   Central / National

Full address:

Emergency contact / national focal point (Telephone, Fax, e-mail):

3.2   Provincial / State (all provinces to be listed)

Full address:

Emergency contact / provincial focal point (Telephone, Fax, e-mail):

4.   Agencies responsible for Disaster Management

4.1   Central / National

Full address:

Emergency contact / national focal point (Telephone, Fax, e-mail):

4.2   Provincial / State (all provinces to be listed)

Full address:

Emergency contact / provincial focal point (Telephone, Fax, e-mail):

5.   Focal point for Natural and Technological Disasters to the United Nations

5.1   Central / National

Full address:

Emergency contact / national focal point (Telephone, Fax, e-mail):

6.   Bilateral and multilateral emergency assistance agreements

6.1   Name of country / countries that have signed a mutual assistance agreement for general disaster assistance or specifically for forest fire / wildland fire emergencies

6.2   Name of country and text of agreement

Text of agreement (in English): To be provided in an Annex

6.3   In case of not having an agreement in place the following questions could become critical and should be addressed if possible:

a.   Which is the authorised organisation to request assistance?

b.   Who has to bear the costs of the Sending Party's firefighting resources?

c.   Do any general standards exist, serving as a common base of understanding, concerning vocabulary, standards of equipment and personnel?

d.   Who will have the responsibility for overall coordination?

e.   What is the best way to deal efficiently with customs' regulations?

f.   Who will provide medical assistance?

g.   Is one Party liable towards the other for loss, damage, personal injury, or death?

h.   Is the Receiving Party liable for damages or destruction of the firefighting equipment?

7.   National Fire Information System

List all relevant information sources, e.g.:

a.   Provider of real-time or near-real time fire situation reports

b.   Fire detection / reconnaissance systems (ground, aerial, spaceborne)

c.   Fire-weather or fire-danger forecasts

d.   Decision-support systems

e.   Relevant environmental and socio-economic conditions

8.   Wildland Fire Management Infrastructures and Equipment (for national use)

8.1   Central facilities including warehouses (list total available equipment)

8.2   Decentralised bases / warehouses (list total available equipment)

8.3   National standards relevant for wildland fire fighting

List safety and technological standards for international compatibility (e.g., hose couplings for hydrants and pumps, electricity supply, radio frequencies used for tactical communication)

9.   Human Resources (for national use)

9.1   Number of firefighters available for wildland fire suppression. List by Province.

10.   Equipment available for International Emergency Assistance

10.1   Availability and mobility of equipment (alert times, operating range, means of ground/aerial transport)

11.   Human Resources (for international use)

11.1   Number of firefighters (urban, rural/wildland) trained and available for international missions.

12.   Wildland Fire Management Training Facilities

a.   List of facilities for national and international training in wildland fire management.

b.   Training courses offered. Indicate possibility for participation of foreign fire specialists (teachers, students)

13.   Wildland Fire Research Institutions

14.   Other relevant Information

ANNEX III

PRELIMINARY REGISTRATION FORM

Joint FAO / ECE / ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training

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

If you wish to attend the above seminar, please complete this form and send one copy to <u>both</u> the host country Turkey (attn. Mr. Yuksel) <u>and</u> the ECE (Mr. J. Najera (see contact details on page …) <u>before</u> **1 November 2002**. (Please fill in using CAPITAL LETTERS)

First name   _____

Surname   _____

Organisation   _____

Address   _____

                 _____

                 _____

Telephone   _____

Fax   _____

E-mail   _____

Do you wish to participate in the seminar field excursion on Saturday, 15 April?   Yes   [   ]
(Please tick)   No   [   ]

Do you wish to present a voluntary paper or poster at the conference?
(Please tick)   Yes   [   ]
If yes, please specify the type of presentation (please tick)   No   [   ]

    a poster   [   ]
    a voluntary paper   [   ]
    a media exhibit (please specify)   [   ]

Preliminary title   _____
(Attach a summary (max. 300 words) on a separate sheet.)

Please provide below the names of any persons (partners, spouses, etc.) accompanying you to Antalya.

_____