



## Regional Consultative Workshop on Cross-Boundary Cooperation in Fire Management in South Asia

Lalitpur, Nepal, 2-4 October 2016

**Background, Objectives and Agenda**  
Final Draft (28 September 2016)

### 1. Background

The year 2016 witnessed another wildfire disaster year in South Asia. Much of the high altitude Himalayan region and the adjoining lowlands have been in the grip of a long and intense dry season, which was more extreme than regular annual dry season revealing the overall underlying moisture deficit in the region and the vulnerability of South Asia with regards to climate variability and the role of wildfire occurring during the droughts, many of them having a potential to cause major damages, e.g., fatalities of and injuries to humans and loss of properties, serious degradation of forests, changes of ecosystem properties, and deterioration of social and economic conditions in some land-use systems and natural vegetation types. The increase of climate extremes meanwhile is clearly attributed to the consequences of regional and global climate change.

Faced with increasing fire occurrence and decreasing public budgets, government departments, local organizations, and forest users must consider a range of fire management options and experiences from around the world. The increasing fire problems and their persistence are demanding to review and identify new solutions for fire management.

There are big gaps in awareness levels and fire management capabilities in countries at global level and throughout the Asia region as well. These gaps may be filled by sharing knowledge, skills and technologies among countries in the Asian region.

The majority of wildfires are started by human activities in many regions, notably in the context of agricultural and pastoral land use. In the Asia-Pacific region several expert consultations on the future need of forest fire management have been held among the UNISDR Regional Wildland Fire Networks of South Asia, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and Central Asia. Key stakeholders directly and indirectly responsible in forest and land management, fire protection and emergency response, as well as representatives of local communities and civil society organizations, with support by international experts, were involved in these consultations.<sup>1</sup>

Altogether the problems of forest fires in the region are complex and should not be addressed on a sectoral level. In order to overcome the limited capacity in fire management there is a need to strengthen human and technical resources of agencies and local communities that deal with fire prevention and response. In addition, transboundary cooperation in fire management is needed to share the best appropriate knowledge in advanced approaches in fire management. For this reason a mechanism of exchange of expertise in fire management between countries globally has been set up in the frame of the International Wildfire Preparedness Mechanism (IWPM).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See activities of the Pan-Asia Wildland Fire Network Cluster <http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/Northeast-Asia/Panasia.html>, NE Asia: [http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/Northeast-Asia/Northeastasia\\_7.html](http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/Northeast-Asia/Northeastasia_7.html) South Asia: [http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/South\\_Asia/Meetings\\_activities/Southasia-PanAsia\\_Consultation.html](http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/South_Asia/Meetings_activities/Southasia-PanAsia_Consultation.html) and Central Asia: <http://rcafmrc.num.edu.mn/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/iwpm/index.htm>

## 2. Participants and Objectives

The objectives include:

- **Exchange of information on wildfires occurrence, fire management and fire emergency response of the participating countries / institutions:** Representatives of each country will present the situation in their home country, including experiences in cooperation with neighboring countries in training and responding to wildfire emergencies.
- **Briefing of participating countries / Institutions about international initiatives in cooperation in fire management:** The work of the Global Wildland Fire Network operating under the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and the voluntary International Wildfire Preparedness Mechanism (IWPM) will be introduced by the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC).
- **Briefing of participating countries about PAN-Asia initiatives in cooperation in fire management in the Asia region:** The work of the cluster of networks operating under the Global Wildland Fire Network / the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) will be introduced by the Pan-Asia Wildland Fire Network
- **Introduction of training materials for capacity building in cross-boundary fire management:** The EuroFire Competency Standards and Training Materials will be presented in English for future in national training, with emphasis for enhancing inter-operability between participating Pan-Asian countries.
- **Review the recommendations and conclusions from the past regional and global consultations/ meetings:** To develop a draft concept of building a pilot regional activity including establishment of Fire Management Resource Center in South Asia Region (FMRC-SA).<sup>3</sup>

The regional consultation will be attended by representatives of the forest services and fire services of Nepal, India, Bhutan and Korea, with participation of the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), the Fire Management Resource Center for the Central Asia Region (FMRC-CAR) and observers from other agencies of Nepal.

## 3. Auspices, sponsorship and partners

Meeting Conveners

- Government of Nepal / Department of Forests (DoF) / Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MFSC) (tbd)
- National Institute of Forest Science (NIFoS), Republic of Korea
- Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions (APAFRI)
- Hariyo Ban Program, WWF Nepal
- UNISDR-Pan-Asia Wildland Fire Network
- UNISDR-Regional South Asia Wildland Fire Network (RSAWFN)
- Nepal Forest Fire Management Chapter (NFMC)
- Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), Germany

National Organizing Committee (NOC)

1. Coordinator: Mr. Hemlal Aryal, Deputy Director General, Department of Forests (DoF)
2. Member: Mr. Kishor Chandra Gautam, Under Secretary, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MFSC)
3. Member: Mr. Shree Prasad Baral, Under Secretary, Department of Forests (DoF)
4. Member: Mr. Sundar P. Sharma, Under Secretary, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management (DSCWM), and, Coordinator, UNISDR- Regional South Asia Wildland Fire Network (UNISDR-RSAWFN)
5. Member: Mr. Amir Maharjan, Planning Officer (Alternate: Mr. Kishor K. Mehta), Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC)

## 4. Venue and Date

The Meeting will be held in Lalitpur, Nepal, at Hotel View Bhrikuti, Godavari, 2-4 October 2016).

The tentative programme for the 3-days consultative workshop is provided in *Annex A*.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/Northeast-Asia/Panasia.html>

## 5. Target Audience / Participants

20 participants from Nepal, Bhutan and India and five international resource persons from Republic of Korea, APAFRI, U.S. Forest Service, Thailand and the GFMC will participate in the programme. Fire scientists, managers, professionals, policy makers, international institutions and representatives of civil society (local actors, NGOs) will be invited to contribute to the programme. A tentative list of participants is given in *Annex B*.

### **ANNEX A:** Draft Agenda

#### **Day 1 (Sunday 2 October 2016)**

Arrival of international participants in Kathmandu

#### **Day 2 (Monday 3 October 2016)**

**09.30 – 10.00 Registration**

**10.00 – 11.00 Opening Session**

**Chair:** DG, DoF

**Chief Guest:** Minister, MFSC

**Special Guest:** Secretary, MFSC

**Guest:** GFMC

**Guest:** NIFoS

**Guest:** APAFRI

**Guest:** USAID Nepal

- Welcome address: Head, National Organizing Committee (Mr. Hemlal Aryal)
- Opening of the session by lighting the *Panas*: Chief Guest, Honorable Minister, MFSC (Mr. Shankar Bhandari), Nepal
- Introduction of the agenda and programme of the meeting: Mr. Sundar P. Sharma
- Opening remarks: Executive Secretary, APAFRI (Dr. Gan Kee Seng)
- Opening remarks: Director, Forest Disaster Management Division, NIFoS (Dr. Hojoong Youn)
- Opening remarks: Senior Director (Policy and Outreach), WWF Nepal, (Mr. Santosh Mani Nepal)
- Opening Remark: USAID Nepal, Head- Environment and Energy (Mr. Karl Wurster)
- Keynote: Towards enhancing cross-boundary cooperation in fire management in the South Asia region, Director, Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) (Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Johann G. Goldammer)
- Key Remarks: The Secretary, MFSC (Dr. Krishna Chandra Paudel), Nepal
- Inaugural address: Chief Guest, Honorable Minister Mr. Shankar Bhandari, MFSC, Nepal
- Closing remarks: Chair, Director General, DoF (Mr. Krishna Prasad Acharya)

**12.30 – 13.30 Presentation and Discussion: Exchange of information at Regional Level**

- Wildfires occurrence, fire management and fire emergency response in Bhutan (Mr. Tandi Dorji and Mr. Kinley Tshering Toeb)
- Wildfires occurrence, fire management and fire emergency response in India (Dr. Lalit K. Sharma and Mr. Amit Kumar Verma)
- Wildfires occurrence, fire management and fire emergency response in Nepal (Mr. Shree Baral)

**14.00 – 15.30 Presentation and Discussion: Exchange of information at Regional Level**

- Forest fire detection and monitoring system in Korea (Dr. Sujung Ahn)
- Forest fire management initiatives by Hariyo Ban Program and fire management in different vegetation types (Hariyo Ban Program/ USAID/ WWF Nepal) (Mr. Keshav Prasad Khanal)
- Experiences with Fire Management in the USA and Nepal (Ms. Alissa Roeder, Wildfire Expert, USA)
- Climate change and its implication in forest fire management (Dr. Eric Wikramanayake, Expert, WWF)
- ICIMOD's experiences in forest fire management in Hindu-Kush Himalaya Region (Dr. Mir Matin)

**15.30 – 17.30 Presentation: Introduction to EuroFire Standards and Training Materials in English and Korean**

- History of the development of the EuroFire Standards and Training Materials (GFMC)
- EuroFire Training Standards and Materials
  - Fundamental Fire Behavior and Tactics (Dr. Sujung Ahn)
  - Hand Tools (Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Johann G. Goldammer)
  - Fire Safety (Dr. Sujung Ahn)
  - Ignition (Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Johann G. Goldammer)

**17.30 – 18.00 Ground Suppression Techniques**

- Ground suppression techniques used in Thailand (Mr. Siri Akakara)

**Day 3 (Tuesday 4 October 2016)**

**10.00 – 12.00 Wrapping up and developing recommendations for regional and international cooperation in fire management**

- International initiatives in cooperation in fire management in Bhutan (Dr. Kinley Tshering)
- International initiatives in cooperation in fire management in India (Dr. Lalit K. Sharma/ Mr. Amit Kumar Verma)
- International initiatives in cooperation in fire management in Nepal (Mr. Sundar P Sharma)
- PAN-Asia initiatives in cooperation in fire management in the Asia region (Dr. Hojoong Youn/ Dr. Sujung Ahn)
- Wildfire threats, fire management and international cooperation at global level (GFMC)
- Establishment of a Fire Management Resource Center for the South Asia Region (Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Johann G. Goldammer)

**12.00-13.00 Discussion and drafting recommendations for formalizing and further advancing regional and international cooperation in fire management**

**17.00 – 18.00 Closing Session**

**Chair:** DG, DoF

**Chief Guest:** Honorable Minister of MFSC

**Special Guest:** Secretary, MFSC

**Guest:** GFMC

**Guest:** NIFoS

**Guest:** APAFRI

**Guest:** USAID Nepal

- Remarks and Statement of the Training/ Workshop (Recommendations) by Mr. Sundar P. Sharma (UNISDR-RSAWFN)
- Remarks by Dr. Gan Kee Seng (APAFRI)
- Remarks by Dr. Hojoong Youn (NIFoS)
- Remarks: Senior Director (Policy and Outreach), WWF Nepal, (Mr. Santosh Mani Nepal)
- Remark: USAID Nepal, Head- Environment and Energy (Mr. Karl Wurster)
- Remarks by Mr. Hemlal Aryal, the Head of the National Organizing Committee (DoF)
- Key Remarks by Prof. Dr. Dr.h.c. Johann G. Goldammer (GFMC)
- Token of Love to International Participants by the Honorable Minister and the Secretary (MFSC)
- Key Remarks by Dr. Krishna Chandra Paudel, the Secretary (MFSC)
- Closing Statement by Chief Guest, Honorable Minister, MFSC
- Closing Remarks: Chair, Director General, DoF (Mr. Krishna Prasad Acharya)