The Global Wildland Fire Network
United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)

UNISDR Regional South Asia Wildland Fire Network

Fire Situation, Fire Regimes and Impacts

- Almost all fires are human-induced.
- Increasing settlement-wildland interface problems.
- Low fire management capabilities at local and national levels.
- General perception of people in the region: Fire is the main cause of forest destruction and degradation.
- High expectations from sustainable vegetation cover for livelihoods.
- Large-scale land-use change involving burning of native vegetation in the tropics.
- Almost all forests are threatened by fires during the fire season.
- Increasing occurrence of uncontrolled fires as a consequence of climate change and altered natural fire regimes.
- Increasing occurrence of extreme weather (droughts and precipitation) and fire severity.
- Increasing vulnerability to human populations, negative impacts in social, ecological systems and secondary disasters.
- Deterioration of watersheds in the Hindu Kush – Himalaya region and land-use patterns.
- Diverse ecosystems, socio-economic and cultural settings and forest types.
- Diverse fire regimes and vulnerabilities due to its geographical and climatic variability.

International / Regional Initiatives / Needs

- Foundation of the UNISDR Regional South Asia Wildland Fire Network under the auspices of the Global Wildland Fire Network (GWFN), UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), the UNISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group (WFAG) and its Secretariat, the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC).
- Objectives of the Network:
  - Enhance and strengthen cooperative resource mobilization in fire management for creating synergies and enabling environments, and sharing knowledge within a guiding framework by action on the ground and mobilization of international awareness.
  - Enhance existing national / regional capability in fire management, including early detection, monitoring, early warning, fire response and impact assessment with these partners:
    - UNISDR Global Wildland Fire Network, GFMC, FAO, ITTO, SAARC, ICIMOD, WWF, UNDP/UNEP, Global Observation of Forest and Land Cover Dynamics (GOFC-GOLD) and AFiCoS.
  - Enhance cooperation among countries within the region and at inter-regional levels, aimed at sharing technology, expertise and data exchange in fire management: Activation of the International Wildfire Preparedness Mechanism (IWPM)

Key Issues:

- Human resource development
- Funding for fire management activities
- Awareness raising
- Fire and climate change interaction
- Fire and REDD+ Mechanism
- Fire management and livelihoods of local communities

Integrate fire as a component of land use and forest management tool by giving emphasis on:

- Improvement of participatory / community-based fire management approaches and institutional and technological capabilities at all levels
- Building capacity to ‘Wise Use of Fires’ for habitat management and biodiversity conservation; and fuel management
- Promotion of education and awareness-raising programmes on wildland fires
- Support of countries to conduct national fire and fire management assessments, formulate legal frameworks and strategies, build sustainable fire management capabilities and institutions, develop fire management plans and human resources
- Development of policies, strategies and action plans aimed at building capacities in local, national and transboundary forest fire management

Network Website and Link to the Global Wildland Fire Network: [http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/globalNet.html](http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/globalNet.html)