

Regional Session II: South America and Mesoamerica

Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, 13 October 2015

Session Report

The regional session of South America and Mesoamerica provided an opportunity to discuss the work of the countries internally and in cooperation with others. Based on the discussions some conclusions were drawn and recommendations given for the future Regional Networks activities:

Conclusions

- Some countries of the Region do not have a national policy/program for fire management; existing regional and national fire management strategies need to be revised and updated.
- There is a lack of common standards for joint cross-boundary wildfire emergency response operations in the Region;
- At a regional level the budgets to further develop and strengthen fire management capabilities are scarce and financial support through international cooperation agencies insufficient;
- Reliable and compatible statistics and cartographic data are not available for all countries; there is not a database for the region;
- Wildfires produce greenhouse gas emissions and threaten food and water security. However, these issues are generally not considered in the fire management strategies;
- The lack of a more formalized approach for the Network (in the case of South America network) weakens its activities since the participation of the focal points is voluntary.

Recommendations

- Promote within the countries the application of principles of Integrated Fire Management process involving community participation to achieve the objectives;
- Incorporate the private sector along other actors in the financial mechanisms to strengthen fire management capabilities; approach international donors to co-finance development of fire management capacities in the region;
- Continue to strengthen the cooperation, knowledge and resource exchange between the countries with the participation of the national and local governments, NGOs, communities, civil society, cooperation agencies and academic institutions for effective and efficient fire management;
- Standardize protocols for all activities and develop common procedures and language to enhance interoperability, efficiency of cross-boundary wildfire emergency response operations, and cooperation in fire management between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Promote the development and application of mechanisms, protocols and proceedings between the countries of the region for mutual support and technical assistance in fire management;
- Promote the revision of the existing mechanisms of data collection and establish standard formats for transnational comparability;
- Ratify official / authorized fire management focal points in each country of the region;
- Consider the particular situation of operative management and coordination and integrate the current Mesoamerica Wildland Fire Network and the Caribbean Wildland Fire Network in one single joint Regional Network;
- Promote the visibility of the importance of fire management actions and include them in the agendas of the main international processes related to environmental issues, sustainable development, humanitarian and politically / legally binding issues;
- Establish a Regional Center for compilation, distribution and housing of information and data, for providing advisory services and facilitation of cross-boundary cooperation and capacity building of all the countries of the Regional South America Wildland Fire Network.