

Regional Pan-Asia / Pacific Consultation on Building Advanced National and Regional Capacities in Integrated Fire Management based on Participatory Involvement of Local Communities
20-22 November 2012, Lalitpur, Nepal

The Paradigm of Community-based Fire Management – From a Narrow Concept to a Broader Epistemic Application

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Referring to his Opening Statement to the Fifth International Wildland Fire Conference (2011)



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“The year 2011 has already seen a number of terrifying wildland fires in Western Australia, in the high mountain ecosystems of Nepal, in Mexico, the United States, Russia and, most recently, in Europe. Other disasters have made clear how vulnerable our cities and communities are and how much more effort is required to reduce our vulnerability.”


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“Wildland fires destabilize ecosystems and the global atmosphere, and have clear implications for human health and security.

Unlike other natural hazards, wildland fires are primarily caused by human activities. Measures to prevent them – such as education, awareness-raising and capacity-building – are well known and within reach.

Community-Based Fire Management is particularly important.”

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“The transboundary effects of wildland fires associated with long-range smoke transport and emissions are prompting the international community to strengthen cooperation in fire management.


International organizations and civil society groups are working to build capacity, develop advanced technologies and promote sustainable land-use practices.

The UN system is strongly committed to this effort. Our work encompasses many aspects of fire management.

We welcome the efforts to build a culture of prevention and to develop a spirit of global cooperation.

The Underlying Causes of Increasing Severity and Destructivity of Fires in Europe (I)

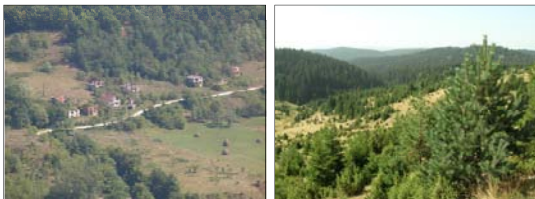
- Traditional land cultivation and villages are abandoned
- Large areas of abandoned agricultural areas are now becoming more vulnerable to wildfire
- In many regions weekend / summer houses and tourism increasingly replace traditional village structures



Spain: Masia Can Tardà, Castellolí (Anoia) – 1950 and 2001

The Underlying Causes of Increasing Severity and Destructivity of Fires in Europe (II)

- Young work force urbanizing
- Tourism sector does not replace land cultivation



Abandoned villages and overgrowing pasture lands: Increasing trend all over Europe

The Underlying Causes of Increasing Severity and Destructivity of Fires in Europe (III)

- Decrease of utilization of biomass
- "Unused energy" is now available to be burned by wildfires, fuelling fire severity all over Europe



The Underlying Causes of Increasing Severity and Destructivity of Fires in Europe (IV)

- Tourism sector does not replace land cultivation
- Fires entering the "Green Lungs" of cities, towns and villages



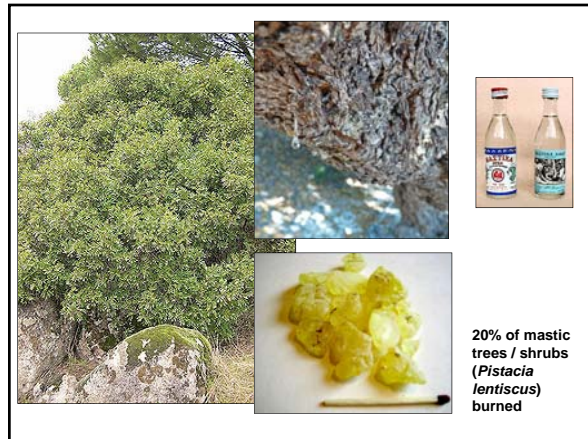
Press photos: Courtesy Dr. Gavriil Xanthopoulos, Hellenic Agricultural Organization "Demeter"



Chios: 18 August 2012



Nea Moni Monastery:
August 2012



20% of mastic trees / shrubs (*Pistacia lentiscus*) burned



Forest fires and other vegetation fires (I)

- The majority of vegetation fires that are burning uncontrolled (« wildfires ») and causing ecological, environmental and economic damages, and constituting a threat to human security as well, are set or otherwise caused by humans
- Thus, many wildfires can be
 - **prevented** (prevention of ignition)
 - **mitigated** (increase of resilience of ecosystems, landscapes and communities to uncontrolled fire)
 - **properly managed** (safe use of land-use fires where ecologically sound and desired > prescribed burning)

Forest fires and other vegetation fires (II)

- The management of natural ecosystems, land-use systems and local communities may include a fire management component which will
 - **reduce uncontrolled ignition** by involvement of rural communities in wildfire prevention planning
 - **reduce the inherent wildfire hazard** (e.g., reduction of combustible materials by targeted use of biomass or by prescribed fire)
 - **organize / manage vegetation at landscape level** by spatial planning (e.g., fragmentation of burnable / fire sensitive landscape elements) or selection of species


Forest fires and other vegetation fires (III)

- Wildfire Prevention



Forest fires and other vegetation fires (III)

- Wildfire Prevention



Forest fires and other vegetation fires (IV)

- Fire Management



Forest fires and other vegetation fires (V)

- Wildfire Preparedness



Forest fires and other vegetation fires (VI)

- Wildfire Emergency Management



Forest fires and other vegetation fires (VI)

- Wildfire Emergency Management




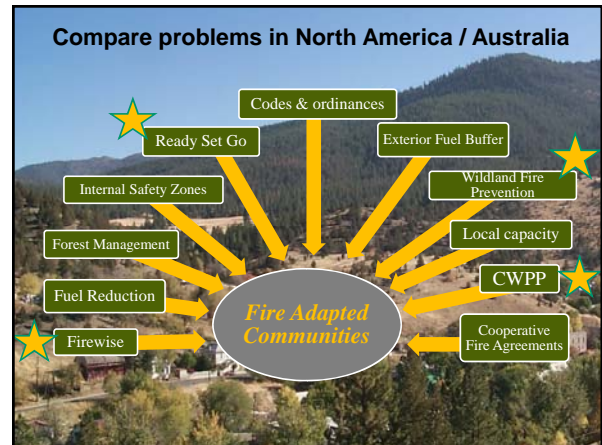
Accidental Fire




- Who does she report this fire to?
- How does she report this fire?
- What Fire fighting tools does she have?
- What training does she have?
- Has she been exposed to any fire awareness information?

Forest fires and other vegetation fires (XII)

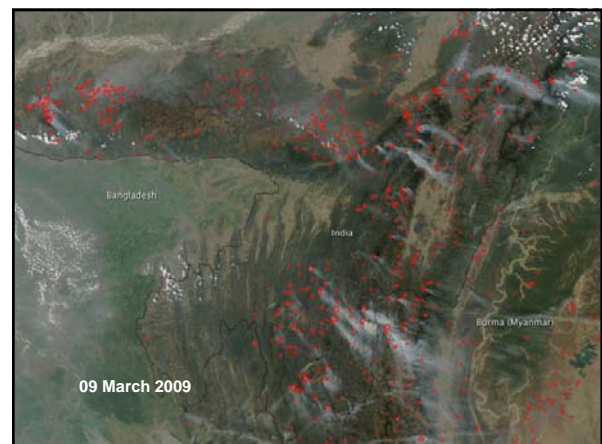
- Summary - Emphasis: Strengthening the role of local communities in fire management

Compare problems in North America / Australia:

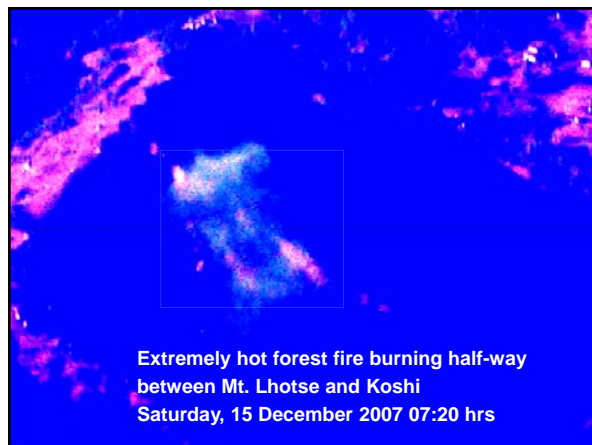


Common principles





Extremely hot forest fire burning half-way between Mt. Lhotse and Koshi
Saturday, 15 December 2007 07:20 hrs



Extremely hot forest fire burning half-way between Mt. Lhotse and Koshi
Saturday, 15 December 2007 07:20 hrs



10 March 2009: Sivapuri National Park

