

**2nd Technical Workshop
Global Fire Management Hub
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Dear director WU,
dear colleagues,

I thank FAO for convening this second Workshop.

I am delighted to see so many colleagues from so many organizations and countries present to further discuss the Global Fire Hub.

Germany as host of the GFMC in Freiburg since 1998 has been supporting global and regional efforts in fire risk prevention, firefighting, fire management and cross-border support over more than 20 years now.

Johann Goldammer stands with his well-known name for all this engagement.

And I will certainly not even try to provide an overview of how this engagement developed over the years.

Instead, with a view to FAO's objective and task to develop – with support of you all – a Global Fire Hub, let me as – a quick warm-up to this meeting from our side – briefly elaborate on two aspects:

First, our look at and approach to regional cooperation:

- As early as 2013, Germany supported the UNECE and FAO to organize jointly with GFMC the “**UNECE/FAO Regional Forum on Cross-boundary Cooperation in Fire Management**” held in Geneva. The outcomes of the Forum included the establishment of the “**International Wildfire Preparedness Mechanism**”.
- The Geneva Forum recognized the significance of the role of the **Regional Wildland Fire Networks** and the establishment of the **first Regional Centers in North Macedonia and in the Ukraine** in 2010 and 2013 through the GFMC, funded by the Council of Europe.
- In the following years, Germany supported various **activities** of the Regional Networks and Regional Centers, e.g.
 - In 2016, the establishment of the Regional Fire Management Resource Center – **South East Asia** in Indonesia.

- 2016 and 2017 a project on regional and cross-border cooperation in Integrated Fire Management in **Uruguay, Brazil and other Neighbouring Countries of South America with a first Regional Consultation in South America**, associated with regional capacity building in integrated fire management
- **A Second Regional Consultation** on Cross-boundary Cooperation in Fire Management in **South America** held in Viña del Mar, Chile 2017 which resulted in a **first informal agreement on principles of Regional Cross-boundary Cooperation in Fire Management in South America**.
- And between 2020 and 2022, a project on “Transformation of forests and increasing the resilience of pine stands **in the Ukraine**”, implemented by the Regional Eastern Europe Fire Monitoring Center, based at the **National University of Life and Environmental Sciences in Kiev**. Unfortunately, the war of aggression of the Russian Federation has resulted in a halt of activities on site. However, we are underlining the urgency for continuing support of the Regional Center after the end of the war.

Now my second issue:

In 2022, following FAO’s announcement on a Global Forest Management Hub, both Prof. Goldammer and myself, representing the federal ministry in lead in Germany, came to the conclusion and agreed that establishing such a Global Hub could be a wonderful and ideal next step to the decades of engagement of both the GFMC and so many institutions and colleagues also present here today.

There are many good reasons for this. But two are outstanding in my view:

First of all, the risk of landscape fire and fire impacts are increasing due to climate change – and other reasons.

Secondly, political awareness and support seem to have increased as well in the context of CC and DRR-related debates. Examples for this are the discussion on progress in implementing the Sendai Framework and the UN Resolution on DRR where Germany – supported by POR and others – pushed for a para on the evolving Global Fire Hub. Facing this new developments, Germany and Prof. Goldammer therefore agreed that transferring and integrating the accumulated knowledge and capacity of the GFMC into the new Hub was a good idea and logical step.

That’s why we are actively supporting this process.

To end, I would like to express both my hope and expectation that the integration of the Regional Networks and the experience of the Regional Fire Monitoring and Fire Management Resource Centers will be able to serve the Fire Hub and at the same time, benefit from the expected international support to the Hub.