



Global Fire Monitoring Center
(GFMC)



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Statement by

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The Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

***Current and Future Consequences of Fires Affecting the Landscapes of Asia:
Call for Regional and Global Action to Reduce the Adverse Impacts of Fire on the
Environment and Society***

Background and Rationale

The Asian region, which is bearing a high diversity of natural and cultural landscapes between the equatorial tropics and the Northern boreal latitudes, is experiencing rapid environmental and socio-economic changes. These are leading to an increasing vulnerability of ecosystems and society to landscape fires. The delegates of the 6th International Wildland Fire Conference, which was held in Republic of Korea in 2015 under the co-sponsorship of the UNISDR, highlighted the following concerns that are common to the Asian region and globally:¹

- Increasing impacts of climate change on climate variability and fire regimes, the size in area burned, and the extremity and frequency of wildfires
- Insufficient political commitment and support for development of fire management policies in some countries
- Impacts of landscape fire emissions on human health and air quality, notably from land-use fires and land clearing
- Increasing impacts of wildfires at the interface with rural settlements and urban fringes
- Impacts of socio-economic and demographic changes, including consequences of human migration, on fire regimes

Challenges in Implementing the Sendai Framework

The concerns identified by the international community need to be addressed in the frame of implementation action of the Sendai Framework in Asia, notably the increasing occurrence of fire in ecologically and especially carbon-rich environments such as in tropical rainforests, peatlands, and in the arctic tundra, and the lack of sufficient fire management capacities in some regions resulting in high risks and vulnerability.



¹ <http://gfmc.online/iwfc/korea-2015.html>

Progress and Achievements since the Adoption of the Sendai Framework

In following up the recommendations of the last International Wildland Fire Conference, three *Regional Fire Management Resource Centers* have been established in Asia as regional branches of the *Global Fire Monitoring Center* (GFMC). These Centers are working under the auspices of the *UNISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group* (WFAG) and are engaged in the implementation of the *Sendai Framework* in Asia to develop of fire management policies, and implement these by science and technology transfer at the Science-Policy-Practitioners Interface (SPPI):

- The *Fire Management Resource Center – Central Asia Region* (FMRC-CAR) was established in 2015 by GFMC with the support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), based in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
- The *Regional Fire Management Resource Center – South East Asia* (RFMRC-SEA) was established in 2017 by GFMC with the support of the Government of Germany, based in Bogor, Indonesia.
- The *Regional Central Eurasian Fire Monitoring Center* will be formally opened in August 2018, with the support of the Council of Europe through its EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, based in Krasnoyarsk, Russia.

Commitments in Achieving the Target E

In Asia examples for successfully furthering inter-agency cooperation in fire management include Mongolia and Indonesia. In Mongolia the *National Coordination Committee on Forest and Steppe Fire Protection* (NCCFSFP) is implementing the *Law on Disaster Protection of Mongolia*. In Indonesia the Ministry of Economic Affairs coordinates action required by a number of national policies, notably the *Grand Design* enacted by the President of the Republic. This action is implemented by the Ministry for Environment and Forestry. In other countries of the Asian region similar processes to develop National Fire Management Policies are underway. National Round Tables on Fire Management are important instruments in the portfolio of the GFMC and the Regional Centers and will serve reaching Target E of the Sendai Framework by 2020 and beyond.

The Way Ahead

In order to revisit the accomplishments of the international cooperation efforts in enhancing fire management capacities through sharing of expertise and human resources over the last years in the Asian region and globally it is proposed that the ***First Global Landscape Fire Forum*** be convened at the United Nations in Geneva either as a side event of the Sixth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (May 2019), in the context of the activities of the ***UN Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction*** (PEDRR), or independently, with the aim to:

- Review the inputs of the Global Wildland Fire Network, the UNISDR WFAG and the GFMC to the UNISDR Science and Technology Advisory Group (STAG) through thematic and regional participation in the *UNISDR Science and Technology Partnership*
- Review the progress in enhancing fire management capabilities through international exchange
- Define capability and financial gaps and needs for action
- Determine the responsibilities and *modus operandi* of the existing mechanisms for strengthening future exchange and resources sharing in fire management at global level