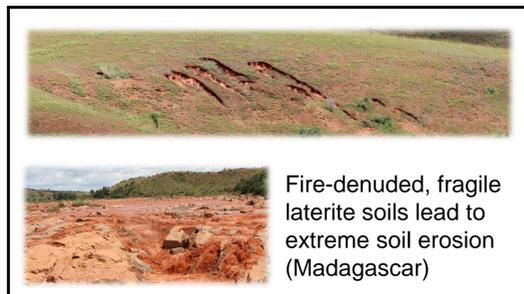
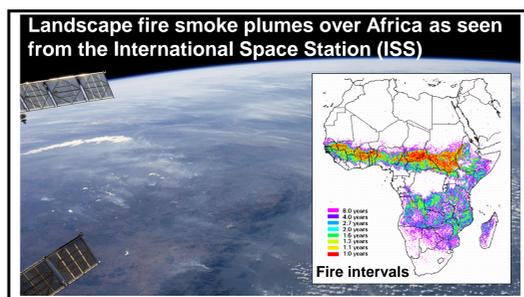
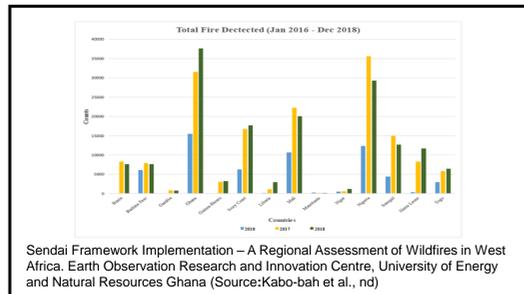




Regional Wildland Fire Networks:
North America – Mesoamerica – South America – Caribbean – Mediterranean – Southeast Europe / Caucasus – Euro-Alpine – Near East – Sub-Saharan Africa – South Asia – Southeast Asia – Australasia – Northeast Asia – Central Asia – Eurasia

Regional Sub-Sahara Africa Wildland Fire Network

Major Wildland Fire Issues in Sub-Sahara Africa



- Wildfires continue to occur annually in the landscape of Western and Southern Africa mainly due to livelihoods related activities.
- In 2018, Ghana, Nigeria, Mali and Ivory Coast recorded high fire occurrences compared to the rest of the countries in West Africa (Source: Kabo-bah et al. nd).

- Wildfire management in West and Southern Africa is largely a community effort in spite of involvement of state institutions.

Staff of Ghana National Fire Service educating a community in pre-suppression activities

- In many local villages volunteer groups and Committees lead the wildfire management effort.

Community members asking questions during a fire training session

- Whereas some countries have a fire policy and designated state ministries and departments (e.g. Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and South Africa) in charge of wildfire management, others countries (e.g. Madagascar) do not have a national policy or a formalized structure for managing wildfires.

The Sub-Sahara Regional Network

The Regional Sub-Sahara Wildland Fire Network is the first regional network that has been launched formally. In July 2002 the network was kicked-off at its first official meeting held in the frame of the Wood for Africa Conference (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa). Since then it evolved progressively and hosted in 5th International Wildland Fire Conference in South Africa. Currently the network is restructured.



Fire prevention messages: Namibia and Madagascar



Ghana: Demonstration of concepts of fire suppression

Regional Network Activities



Fire prevention education durbar

- Fire prevention education through community durbars



- Training in pre-suppression actions such as construction of fire belt at the onset of the dry season.



Construction of fire belt at the onset of dry season in Ghana



- Introduction of fire-resistant species to aid the restoration of fire degraded portions of forest in the Guinea and Sudan Savannah vegetation zones.

Organic farming is an important alternative to cleaning fields by fire: First experiences in Madagascar



Options for solving wildfire challenges

- Deployment of an effective early warning system
- Technology of early fire detection should be transferred to countries in sub-Sahara Africa
- Promotion of integrated wildfire management to include climate smart agriculture and viable alternatives to the use of fire
- Establishment of fire reporting system across the region to validate satellite data and aid wildfire management decisions.
- Establishment/expansion of long-term experimental plots in different ecosystems in order to determine the relationship of fire and biodiversity and soil properties, changes in fire regimes and its relationship with climate change.
- Partner private sector plantation developers to develop best practice fire management operations in established commercial tree plantations and restoration projects.
- Train and support communities to develop community wildfire management plans to guide their actions.
- Promote effectiveness of community involvement in wildfire management through the provision of incentives and basic firefighting tools.

Recommendations

- Establish a regional Forum on wildfire management to share lessons and challenges and facilitate transfer of technology.
- Promote the establishment/expansion of fire monitoring research plots for long-term research and for training of next generation of fire ecologists and scientists.
- Promote extension services to enhance good fire management practices in the landscape.
- Support the development of Regional or Sub-regional Fire Management Resource Centers – Centers of excellence to serve the Science-Policy-Practitioners Interface (SPPI)

Photo and image credit: Lucy Amissah, International Space Station (ISS) and Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

Network Website and Link to the Global Wildland Fire Network: <http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/globalNet.html>

