



Global Fire
Monitoring Center (GFMC)

Second Regional Symposium and Consultation on Regional Cooperation in Cross-boundary Fire Management in South America

Viña del Mar, Chile, 3-4 October 2017

Proposal by the GFMC for the Establishment of a Regional Fire Management Resource Center – South America Region (RFMRC – SAR)

Background and Rationale

One of the five objectives of the Second Regional Symposium and Consultation is to discuss the “*Establishment of a Regional Fire Management Resource Center with two main proposed branches to foster regional capacities in (a) vegetation fire science, education and training, and (b) operational coordination of cross-boundary fire management*”.

Following the models of the existing first four Regional Centers that have been established in

- Southeast Europe / South Caucasus (Skopje, Macedonia)
- Eastern Europe (Kiev, Ukraine)
- Central Asia (Ulan Bator, Mongolia)
- South East Asia (Bogor, Indonesia), and
- An agreement signed for a Center to be opened in 2018 in Central Eurasia (Krasnoyarsk, Russia)

the proposed Regional Fire Management Resource Center – South America Region (RFMRC-LAR) would serve the continent of South America.

The concept and objectives of the Regional Fire Management Resource Centers have been initially published in 2013.¹

¹ The concept and objectives of the Regional Fire Management Resource Centers have been published in 2013: <http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/Northeast-Asia/Int-Symposium-Pan-Asia-Wildland-Fire-Network-2013-Proceedings.pdf>

For South America or for Latin America the proposed RFMRC-SAR could be a “decentralized” model, composed by two specialized institutions, which would cooperate and interact:

(1) An institution specialized on research, education and capacity building in the fundamentals of fire science and fire management

The *Centro de Monitoramento Ambiental e Manejo do Fogo* (Center for Environmental Monitoring and Fire Management) in Gurupi, Tocantins (Brazil), which was opened in 2016, would serve as the scientific branch (fire ecology and fire management research) and educational branch of the proposed RFMRC-LAR, including academic education and fire management training.²

The focus in its role of would be: Integrated Fire Management – IFM. Apart of fire prevention and the appropriate use of prescribed fire in land use, conservation or wildfire hazard (fuel) reduction. The capacitation of actors in fire suppression would not necessarily address firefighting of large-scale wildfires or wildfire emergencies / crisis management. But training at community level and indigenous populations could be a task of this center.

In summary the tasks of the Center in Gurupí would include:

- Provision of science-based advisory service for sustainable fire management and development of relevant policies
- Creation of an interface and promotion of the dialogue between services of specialized governmental institutions and civil society organizations
- Development of an internet-based information portal, which will include the science of vegetation fires and related scientific disciplines and the application of scientific principles in developing Integrated Fire Management (IFM) capacities
- Training and education at academic level and training of local communities in fire management

(2) An institution specialized on institutional capacity building/ professional training in fire suppression, including wildfire crisis & emergencies management

The wildfire emergency of 2017 revealed the need of countries cooperating and assisting each other in fire crisis management in case of national capabilities and resources become exhausted or fires becoming too large and intense, such as in early 2017.

CONAF could become the operational arm of the RFMRC-SAR, focusing on cross-boundary cooperation in fire management and also capacity building (focus on fire

² Website of the Center: <http://www.cemaf.org/>

The GFMC has also a small page of the opening the Center in 2016:

http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/SouthAmerica/SouthAmerica_7.html

prevention and firefighting) in South America. CONAF could use its existing resources and relationships:

- The Department “Forest Fire Analysis and Prediction” Sección Análisis y Predicción – SAPIF) to take over the additional function of a *Wildfire Situation Center for South America* (or Latin America, if desired)
- The experience in fire management training at international level (e.g. the JICA-sponsored training courses in Chile)
- Excellent working relationships with the Chilean Fire Service (*Bomberos de Chile*) and experience in joint firefighting campaigns
- Experience in cross-border cooperation, like the successful cooperation between Argentina and Chile in 2016 (and other cases)
- Experience in working with and through responsible crisis management agencies, such as the Chilean *Oficina Nacional de Emergencia del Ministerio del Interior y Seguridad Pública* (ONEMI)
- International experience / involvement in developing international training materials aimed at creating inter-operability between actors / countries, e.g. the multi-lingual *EuroFire Competency Standards*
- International involvement in developing international guidelines aimed at creating inter-operability between actors / countries, e.g. the International Fire Aviation Guidelines or the Incident Command System (ICS).

CONAF could serve as a coordination center for cross-boundary cooperation in fire management in South America. Initially CONAF could serve Secretariat of the process of implementing the recommendations of the 2nd Symposium and Consultation, tentatively called the “*Viña del Mar Agenda for Regional Cooperation in Fire Management*”.

In summary the tasks of CONAF would include:

- Serve as Secretariat for the follow-up and implementation of the *Viña del Mar Agenda for Regional Cooperation in Fire Management*
- Focus on building and enhancement of interoperability in the preparedness of border-crossing cooperation during fire emergencies
- Training and continuing vocational training in fire management at regional level
- Promotion of regional cooperation through networks, notably within the UNISDR Regional South America Wildland Fire Network under the Global Wildland Fire Network