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Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2007
Agenda Item 5 concerning progress in the thematic area of work - Wildland Fire -
related to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework.

Statement of the
UN-ISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group / Global Wildland Fire Network
Coordinator and Secretariat: Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), Freiburg, Germany

1. Brief information on the Hyogo Framework Priorities for Action combined with a brief report of progress of the work of the Global Wildland Fire Network in addressing all 5 Priorities for Action:

(1) Priority 1: ***Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national priority...***

(1.1) Focus: Capacity building of decision makers at national level in (a) the development of national fire management plans and strategies, and (b) Community-based Fire Management.

(1.2) Trends: Increasing demand for support of capacity building of resource persons / trainers through Advanced Wildland Fire Management Training Courses.

(1.3) Progress in implementation: Implementation underway by various partners: GFMC, ITTO, FAO, Fire Management Actions Alliance to support the implementation of the Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines (founded 2007), development agencies such as GTZ, USAID.

(2) Priority 2: ***Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning...***

(2.1) Focus: Development of the "Global Early Warning System for Wildland Fire" with a people-centred outreach component.

(2.2) Trends: Increasing demand for reliable and user-friendly fire early warning, detection and monitoring systems at all levels (global, regional, national, local).

(2.3) Progress in implementation: An international consortium of agencies and institutes has developed a science plan for the design of the global fire early warning system (GEO Task, close cooperation with WMO). User requirements will be defined and a continental wildland fire early warning prototype will be developed for Sub-Saharan Africa in 2007.

(3) Priority 3: ***...build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels***

(3.1) Focus: Providing a mechanism for knowledge and technology transfer at the interface between the fire science and the user communities

(3.2) Trends: Increasing demand for capacity building of human resources for science and education.

The GFMC is serving as Secretariat of the UN-ISDR Global Wildland Fire Network and the UN-ISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group – an advisory body to the United Nations affiliated to the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) and Member of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.
The GFMC is an Associated Institute of the United Nations University (UNU).



United Nations University

"advancing knowledge for human security and development"

(3.3) Progress in implementation: Examples - the Global Fire Monitoring Center - through its association with the United Nations University (UNU) - and a large number of institutions worldwide are providing the necessary linkages and offer training programmes.

(4) Priorities 4: **Reduce the underlying risk factors**

(4.1) Focus: Since the occurrence, size and impacts of wildland fire is largely determined by humans and especially by land use, integrated wildland fire management planning is part of land-use planning and community development.

(4.2) Trends: Increasing demand for supporting local communities in capacity building in fire management (Community Based Fire Management - CBFiM)

(4.3) Progress in implementation: Implementation through CBFiM courses underway by various partners: GFMC, FAO, TNC.

(5) Priorities 5: **Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response**

(5.1) Focus: Fire disaster preparedness and efficiency for fire response to be addressed at community level.

(5.2) Trends: Jointly with Priority 4 actions: Increasing demand for supporting local communities in capacity building in fire management. In addition: Enhance international cooperation in wildland fire management in order to share human and technical resources in training, preparedness and management of large disasters.

(5.3) Progress in implementation: For wildland fire emergencies the introduction of standardized fire emergency response procedures is promoted, notably the Incident Command System (ICS), to be used as standard in incidents where international cooperation / assistance is required. GFMC cooperates with the UNEP-OCHA Joint Environment Unit in the frame of the Advisory Group on Environmental Emergencies (AGEE) and the Environmental Emergencies Partnership (EES) – both promoting the prioritisation of proactive action in prevention and preparedness.

2. Recommendations for specific actions required related to the thematic area for the coming biennium

The ISDR Secretariat as well as members and supporters of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction are requested to support the UNISDR Global Wildland Fire Network to obtain financial resources to:

- 1) Support capacity-building programmes and projects in wildland fire management at national and regional levels, aimed at implementation of the Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines.
- 2) Develop the Global Wildland Fire Early Warning System as a multi-user oriented, particularly people-centred and user-friendly fire early warning, detection and monitoring systems at all levels (global, regional, national, local).

Furthermore it is suggested that in accordance with the recommendations of the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference (Annex) the 2nd International Wildland Fire Summit be held under the auspices of the UNISDR and the Global Platform respectively, jointly with the FAO and other partners.

On behalf of the members of the Global Wildland Fire Network the GFMC is acknowledging the continuing support of the UNISDR Secretariat in the facilitation of the outreach work of the Global Wildland Fire Network and UN-interagency cooperation, and the Federal Foreign Office, Germany, Task Force Humanitarian Aid, for providing financial support to the GFMC and the Global Wildland Fire Network.

Geneva, 7 June 2007



Johann G. Goldammer
Coordinator, UNISDR Global Wildland Fire Network and Wildland Fire Advisory Group

ANNEX



Sevilla, ESPAÑA, 13 -17 mayo 2007
4ª CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL SOBRE INCENDIOS FORESTALES

4th International Wildland Fire Conference

Sevilla, 17 May 2007

Conference Statement As agreed by the Representatives of 13 Regional Wildland Fire Networks and Participants of the Joint Regional Sessions

The 4th International Wildland Fire Conference was held in Sevilla, Spain, 14-17 May 2007. The conference was held under the auspices of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Commission and hosted by the Government of Spain and the Regional Government of Andalusia. The conference brought together 1531 participants from 88 countries from throughout the world, representing government organizations and civil society from all regions of the world, the United Nations and other international organizations.

The participants of the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference presented the state-of-the art in fire science, fire management and fire management training in all continents. A commercial exhibition provided insight in innovative fire management technologies, including fire detection, monitoring, suppression, and firefighters and public health and safety. A number of organizations and international associations involved in the wildland fire arena held side meetings and recommended enhancing the international dialogue.

The FAO and partners presented progress in the development of a Strategy to Enhance International Cooperation in Fire Management, requested by the Ministerial Meeting in 2005. The Strategy is being progressed through a multi-stakeholder process and includes a Global Assessment of Fire Management, a Review of International Cooperation and Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines. During the Conference, and as part of the Strategy, the Fire Management Actions Alliance was launched to promote, implement and update the Voluntary Guidelines. At the time of the launching event 35 partners – national agencies, universities and international organizations – had signed up to the Alliance.

Fire management specialists, many of them organized and cooperating in Regional Wildland Fire Networks, reported the state of the fire situation in their home countries and in the 13 regions. With reference to the global developments impacting on the fire situation in the regions of the world, the national and regional analyses of the fire situation and a self-assessment of fire management capabilities, the representatives of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks and the participants of the joint regional sessions recognized the global issues impacting on fire occurrence and the consequences of fire on the environment and humans in the regions of the world, notably the

- Demographic changes resulting in alterations of sustainable fire regimes, e.g. the consequences of rural exodus or – vice-versa – exurban migrations, coupled with a loss of traditional, sustainable land-use systems;
- Widespread poverty associated with unemployment, exurban migrations and land tenure conflicts and resulting in increasing human-caused fires;
- Land-use change involving increasing fire use for conversion of vegetation, notably in the tropics, and expansion of land use to fire-sensitive lands, e.g., peatlands, drained or otherwise desiccating wetlands, and other fire-sensitive vegetation;
- Increasing costs of fire suppression;

- Expansion of the wildland-urban interface in some countries and increasing vulnerabilities and greater exposure of rural settlements to increasing occurrence of severely damaging fires;
- Consequences of, and the contribution to, climate change, resulting in increasing occurrence of extreme droughts in most regions, desiccation of wetlands, thawing of permafrost sites, and a general trend of increasing area burned, fire intensity, fire severity, and longer fire seasons;
- Human health and security threatened by increasing wildfire activity and land-use fires causing release of a greater amount of pollutants and resulting in greater public exposure to hazardous emissions, including transboundary transport of fire smoke pollution at regional to global levels;
- Human security and peace threatened by fires burning on radioactively contaminated lands, by fires on areas with unresolved conflicts, and on territories with post-war hazards such as landmines and unexploded ordnance.

Being cognizant of the global issues, as listed above, the representatives of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks and the participants of the joint regional sessions agreed to the need to develop synergies through coordinated and collective action to address the most pressing problems related to fire management globally. Further the conference participants recommend that:

- The international wildland fire community pursue the development of a global-scale international resource sharing strategy to assist countries with fire management planning activities (including prescribed fire for ecological purposes and fuels management), and active support during periods of wildland fire;
- The FAO promote the global adoption of Incident Command System (ICS) including the publishing of an annual list of countries which have implemented ICS;
- Regional strategies for fire management be developed and designed to the specific needs of regions;
- An international framework for fire management standards be developed and regional wildland fire training be supported, especially to meet the needs for capacity building in developing countries;
- Scientific research programmes addressing the consequences of changes of climate, land use and land cover, and socio-economic changes on fire regimes, environment and society must be supported at all levels;
- The Strategy to Enhance International Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management and the implementation of the Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines be encouraged and endorsed;
- Agencies and groups be encouraged to participate in the Fire Management Actions Alliance in support of their adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines;
- The UNISDR Global Wildland Fire Network, the Regional Wildland Fire Networks and the Secretariat of the global network, the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), be supported by national agencies and international donors aimed at fostering international cooperation in fire management, including collecting and disseminating fire information, arranging and enhancing international policy dialogue, and supporting projects;
- A series of Regional Consultations tentatively addressing “Global Change and Wildland Fire: Regional Solutions for Fire Management” – be held globally, within the next 1-2 years, to progress the global issues that are impacting people, resources and livelihoods;
- The 2nd International Wildland Fire Summit – tentatively addressing “Global Change and Wildland Fire: Fire Management Solutions for Mitigation and Adaptation” – be held within the next 2 to 4 years under the auspices of the United Nations and partners.

The conference participants thanked the organizers and hosts of the conference for bringing together the international community responsible for wildland fire management. The participants welcomed the offer of South Africa to host the 5th International Wildland Fire Conference, tentatively in 2011.