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REPORT ON INDIVIDUAL EVENT

Date of event: Your name:

Event type (tick the box):	Event name (write the name below):
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-session	Global Change and Wildfire (SE 27)
<input type="checkbox"/> High-level panel	
<input type="checkbox"/> Round Table	
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Plenary	
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Event	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Number of participants - **Total: 16 + 2**
(Please count or estimate this, as not all will be recorded in the list.)

1) Key questions or issues raised, main challenges or constraints identified (say, max 5):

The Chair (J. Goldammer) presented the main issues discussion:

- The White Paper “Vegetation Fires and Global Change” is in its final stage of drafting. This global analysis on the role of vegetation fires in the Earth System is a collective endeavor of the world’s most renown scientists and research groups working in fire science, ecology, atmospheric chemistry, remote sensing and climate change modeling.
- Fire is the most important disturbance agent in global vegetation cover worldwide, affecting between 3 and 4 million square kilometers annually.
- While there is clear evidence of the historic role and timescale of fire in many ecosystems, along which many fire-dependent ecosystems evolved, the current trend provides evidence of increasing use of fire in land use and land-use change as well as an increase of destructive wildfires (uncontrolled and unwanted fires).
- Burning of forests and other vegetation is a major driver of transferring carbon from the terrestrial sphere to the atmosphere.
- Secondary effects of fire include sudden-onset disasters such as landslides, mudslides, rock falls and flash floods. Creeping disasters triggered by fire include post-fire soil erosion, ecosystem degradation, and reduced carrying capacity for human populations and their livelihood.
- Despite the efforts of governments and civil society the majority of countries does not have sufficient human and technical resources for sustainable fire management

Marisol Estrella (Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction- PEDRR)

- Is there any standard approach for fire risk analysis?
Chair: Unfortunately there are no standards, There are also no standards for fire impact assessments (economic, environmental, humanitarian). This is a priority issue to be addressed by the White Paper.

Eladio Fernandez-Galiano (Euro-Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement, Council of Europe)

- What are the impacts of climate change on Mediterranean vegetation and fire, and on Nordic peatlands?

Chair: Increasing fire severity as a consequence of rural exodus and thus increased fuel loads in the rural space are resulting in higher damage of burned sites with an increased risk of post-fire site degradation – this makes a difference to the fires burning traditionally under lower fuel loads. The peatland biomes in Eurasia, particularly in Western Russia and in the Western Siberian wetlands are threatened by climate warming and may become increasingly exposed to fire, resulting in the release of carbon currently stored in these ecosystems. Similarly, sites that are currently in a permafrost regime will alter by regional warming and release radiatively active trace gases such as methane.

2) Principal proposed solutions, messages or recommendations:

Juan Carlos Villagrán de León (UNOOSA / UN-SPIDER)

- The White Paper is recommending a full-scale global vegetation fire inventory. Will this be a centralized or decentralized effort? Recently the UNFCCC Secretariat has suggested UNOOSA to give priority towards developing global fire assessment capacity by satellite monitoring.
- Chair: The A full-scale satellite-supported global inventory of vegetation fires that would evaluate satellite and in situ data of the last decade, and to be continued in the coming years, is urgently needed for obtaining comprehensive information and data on the impact of fires in the global system, especially on vegetation degradation and fire emissions, and on change of fire regimes over time. It would be a project to be conducted in a coordinated way by the Global Observation of Forest and Land Cover Dynamics (GOFC-GOLD) Fire Implementation Team.

3) Conclusions by the Chair of the event:

- The suggestions by UNFCCC Secretariat and UNOOSA / UN-SPIDER to conduct an in-depth global fire inventory is in line with recommendations of the draft White Paper.
- The White Paper will be consolidated in the coming weeks and then submitted to the United Nations system, notably – as proposed – to the IPCC as a case study for the upcoming IPCC report “Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation”
- Policy makers at national and international levels should utilize the White Paper on “Vegetation Fires and Global Change” as a best science- and management experience-based reason, rationale and justification for enhancing capability in fire management from international / global to local levels, aiming at increasing the resilience of ecosystems and people to fire and mitigate the consequences of and adapt to the new equilibrium conditions between vegetation, fire and a changed climate.

4) Your additional thoughts on the event:

In general participants agreed that the role of fire as a threat to humans and the environment has been underestimated by international policy makers and that swift action is needed both in upgrading the scientific database of global fire and to enhance international cooperation and support to build fire management capacity throughout the world.

Chair: Johann G. Goldammer, Director of GFMC (johann.goldammer@fire.uni-freiburg.de)

Moderator: Juan Carlos Villagrán de León, UNOOSA / UN-SPIDER (Juan-Carlos.VILLAGRAN@unoosa.org)