



National University of Life
and Environmental
Sciences of Ukraine
(NULESU)



Global Fire Monitoring
Center (GFMC)



State Forest
Resources Agency
of Ukraine



State Emergency
Service of Ukraine



Regional Seminar and Consultations

**“Wildfires in the Eastern European Region: Science,
Policies and Management”**

and

**Inauguration of the Regional Eastern European Fire
Monitoring Center (REEFMC)**

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine
Institute of Forestry and Landscape-Park Management
Kyiv, Ukraine
4 March 2013

Introduction

During the past decade significant changes of occurrence and impacts of fires affecting forests and other vegetation in the Eurasian Region have resulted in severe environmental damages, high economic losses and considerable humanitarian problems. Several key issues affecting wildland fire in the cultural and natural landscapes of temperate-boreal Eurasia have been identified:

- Increasing rural exodus and urbanization, resulting in abandonment of traditional land cultivation (agriculture, pastoralism, forestry) and thus an increasing wildfire hazard;
- Urbanization resulting in a reduced rural work force, including availability of rural firefighters
- Re-privatization of formerly nationalized forests resulting in vacuums of forest and fire management in smallholder forest estates
- Increasing occurrence of wildfires affecting the perimeters of metropolitan areas, settlements and developments dispersedly located in wildlands
- Secondary problems associated with wildfires, e.g., those burning on territories contaminated by radioactivity and remnants from armed conflicts (e.g., unexploded ordnance, land mines, uranium-depleted
- Wildfires affecting agricultural lands treated with pesticides; landfills, other industrial waste and structures containing hazardous materials, especially at the urban / residential perimeters
- Consequences of climate change on cultural fire regimes and ecosystem vulnerability, e.g., transformation of former fire-excluded or -protected natural ecosystems or land-use systems such as peat bogs, or high-altitude mountain ecosystems.

Besides the direct fire damages of agricultural crops and forests, there are additional secondary and transboundary impacts of fires, e.g.:

- Effects of gas and particle emissions from human health
- Emissions from vegetation fires affecting the atmosphere and contributing to climate change
- Transboundary impacts of fire emissions on ecosystems, e.g. the consequences of deposition of fire-emitted black carbon to the arctic environment

The Seminar is co-sponsored by the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) of the Council of Europe (CoE), the UNISDR Wildland Fire Advisory Group, the UNECE / FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Fire and the United Nations University (UNU)



Within countries there are different state agencies concerned with the prevention, control and mitigation of fire and fire effects and include Forestry Agencies, Emergency or Civil Protection Agencies, Public Health Agencies, Meteorological Services, and National Space or Remote Sensing institutions. Scientific institutions active in the research of the reason for fire use and the causes wildfires, the impacts of fire on ecosystems, environment and society, are calling for a more interactive and synergistic fire management approach at landscape level, involving strong inter-agency cooperation. The involvement of civil society to take more responsibility in fire prevention and self-defense of villages and other rural assets is needed.

The transboundary impacts of fire emissions, and sometimes border-crossing fires, are calling for enhanced cross-border cooperation in fire management.

Inauguration of the Regional Eastern European Fire Monitoring Center (REEFMC)

In 2012 the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, Institute of Forestry and Park Management, in cooperation with the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) and the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Fire, financially supported by the Council of Europe, decided to establish the Regional Eastern European Fire Monitoring Center (REEFMC) as a center of excellence in wildland fire research and for regional fire information management and exchange. The REEFMC will work at the interface of science and the user communities, particularly by serving national agencies in Ukraine and neighboring Eastern European countries with data and information, capacity building (training) and advisory services for developing fire management policies, and enhancing local and national fire management capabilities. The cooperation between Eastern European countries in fire management is necessary in order to share experience and – in case of fire emergencies – human and technical resources. The REEFMC, in conjunction with the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Fire and the UNISDR Regional Eurasia Wildland Fire Network, will cooperate with state agencies, the scientific community and civil society groups on a voluntary basis and through official agreements.

After the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine decided to host and co-sponsor the REEFMC, initial investments by NULES / NULESU were made in 2012 and early 2013, cosponsored by the Council of Europe and the GFMC, so that the REEFMC will start its work in March 2013. National agencies responsible for fire management, regional partner institutions, academia and non-government organizations are invited to the official inauguration on 4 March 2013.

Scope of the Regional Seminar and Consultation

In order to support future cooperative work in fire science and fire management in the Eastern European region the Seminar and Consultation “Wildfires in the Eastern

European Region: Management, Science and Policies” will be held at opening of the REEFMC. The aim of the seminar is to bring together experts, politicians and professionals in fire management, as well as representatives of the non-governmental sector for wide discussion about current problems and challenges related with topic of the seminar. A Regional Eastern European Cooperation and Action Plan on Fire Management as base for the common vision will be discussed and formulated during the seminar.

The regional seminar and consultation will also constitute a contribution of Ukraine and the neighbor countries in the preparation of the “UNECE/FAO Forum on Crossboundary Fire Management”, which will be held at the United Nations in Geneva by end of 2013 (28-29 November 2013) and which aims at strengthening fire management capacity in the UNECE / CoE member states by international cooperation.¹

¹ <http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/intro/UNECE-Fire-Forum-2013-Draft-Outline.pdf>

Draft Agenda

- 09:00 Registration of participants of the seminar
(Generala Rodimtseva str., 19, education building №1 of NULESU)
- 10:00 Official opening of the Regional Eastern European Fire Monitoring Center
(education building №1, room 67 A, floor 2)

10:15-10:30 Welcome addresses:

Academician Dmytro Melnychuk, Rector of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

Prof. Dr. Johann G. Goldammer, Director of the Global Fire Monitoring Center, Germany

Jaroslav Makarchuk, First Deputy Head, State Forest Resources Agency of Ukraine

Petro Lakyda, Director of Education and Research Institute of Forestry and Park Gardening of National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

10:30-11:30 Keynote presentations

- Prof. Dr. Johann G. Goldammer (GFMC): Recent trends of fire in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) region
- Peter Sheldon (GFMC): Agricultural fires in Eastern Europe: Transboundary impacts of fire emissions
- Dr. Sergiy Zibtsev (NULESU): Scope and objectives of the Regional Eastern European Fire Monitoring Center: Regional and national perspectives
- Dr. Vasyl Skakun, State Space Agency of Ukraine: Experience of Regional Center for support “UN-SPIDER Ukraine” in the area of fires satellite monitoring

11:30-12:00 Coffee break

- Dr. Anatolii Polupan, Ukrainian Research Institute of Forestry and Forest Melioration: Decision support system for firefighting
- Maxim Svolynskii, Committee of Forestry and Hunting Management of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea: Fire prevention and firefighting in the mountain forests of Crimea

- Prof. Dr. Volodymyr Zahmatov, The Institute of Telecommunications and Global Information Space of National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine: Impulse technology of firefighting
- Dr. Viktor Shevchuk, The Steppe Branch of URIFFM: Fire problem in the steppe zone of Ukraine

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-14:30 Presentation

- Andrey Eritsov, Avialesookhrana: Lessons learned from the 2010 fire season
- Dr. Vladymyr Usenia: Fire management in the territories contaminated by radioactivity in Belarus
- Dr. Vyacheslav Levchenko, department of silviculture of Education and Research Institute of Forestry and Park Gardening (NULESU): Master program "Wildfire management" in the Institute of Forestry and Landscape-Park Management (NULESU)
- Oleksandr Borsuk, NULESU: Assessment of fire hazard of Chernobyl Exclusion Zone
- Vasyl Gumeniuk, NULESU: Postfire restoration of pine forests of central Polissya of Ukraine

14:30-16:00 Round table discussion on cross-sectoral and regional cooperation in fire management

Formulation of a Regional Eastern European Fire Management Cooperation and Action Plan to be directed to the UNECE Forum in Geneva (November 2013)

16:00-16:45 Press conference

17:00 Reception