

# Side event summary: The science and policy of wildfires in the boreal biome

13 October 2021





2021 IBFRA Conference Side Event

## The science and policy of wildfires in the boreal biome

Friday, 20 August 2021 – Day 5, 15:00-17:00 CET (ENG | RUS – Zoom)



### Opening



**Ms. Olga Algayerova**  
UNECE



**Mr. Florian Kraxner**  
IBFRA

### Moderator



**Ms. Maria Sokolenko**  
FFA Russian Federation

### Speakers



**Mr. Denys Yemshanov**  
Canadian Forest Service



**Mr. Frank Koch**  
U.S. Forest Service



**Mr. Henrik Lindberg**  
Häme University



**Mr. Roman Kotelnikov**  
Russian Research Institute



**Mr. Andrey Eritsov**  
AFPS Russian Federation



**Ms. Lynn Johnston**  
Canadian Forest Service



**Mr. Anatoly Shvidenko**  
RUS Academy of Sciences



**Mr. Alexander Kryshen**  
Russian Academy of Sciences



**Mr. Johann Goldammer**  
GFMC



**Mr. Vladimir Dmitriev**  
FFA Russian Federation



**Mr. Edward Struzik**  
Island Press and  
Queen's University



# Topics discussed

---

1. Current drivers and trends of wildfires in North America, Europe, and Russia
  2. Dealing with the increasing risks of wildfires and managing its drivers
  3. Enhance the resilience of boreal forests to the increasing wildfire risk through forest landscape
  4. Socio-economic and socio-ecological implications of wildfires in the boreal region
  5. Integrating local stakeholders into fire management strategies
  6. Improving communication around wildfires
-

# 1. Current drivers and trends of wildfires in North America, Europe, and Russia

- North America/Russia: large fires are getting larger, and fire season has gotten longer. More fires in the North.
  - Europe: climatic fire risk is predicted to increase, yet since the current fire regimes are mostly controlled by fire prevention and forest management, the climatic fire risk does not necessarily directly correlate with the occurrence of fire.
  - Occurrences of fires caused by lightning have increased. The main cause of wildfire ignition is still human activity.
  - the larger fire is the more challenging, costs for firefighting are getting higher.
-

## 2. Dealing with the increasing risks of wildfires and managing its drivers.

- Understand the effects of fire on ecological processes.
  - No single solution to addressing risks of wildfire - different approaches needed at different levels of governance.
  - No single solution for dealing with fires – much depends on landscape, remoteness, etc
  - Importance of modelling the relationship between climate and fire dynamics.
  - Fire-smart forestry can be a solution for decreasing risks of destructive wildfires spreading to communities.
  - consider indigenous expertise
-

### 3. Enhance the resilience of boreal forests to the increasing wildfire risk through forest landscape

- Understand how fire spreads from wildland to urban settings;
  - Forest landscape restoration can be an effective tool to increase forests' resilience and lower the negative impacts of wildfires. Holistic landscapes perspective.
  - Links between wildfire emissions and climate-related goals (decrease in GHG emissions) should be considered. Assessing. Modelling.
-

## 4. Socio-economic and socio-ecological implications of wildfires in the boreal region

- Wildfires do not just occur in forests but also on other types of landscapes and ecosystems.
  - Wildfire dynamics can be impacted by demographic trends
  - Awareness-raising and Environmental upbringing are necessary.
  - Clouds of wildfire smoke can drift across borders, making long-range pollution a transboundary issue.
  - Cross-sectoral and inter-agency cooperation is of high importance for efficient forest fire protection.
-

## 5. Integrating local stakeholders into fire management strategies

---

- Any landscape measures, e.g. controlled burning, fire proofing, fire-smart forestry, landscape restoration, need to be rooted in local contexts and participation,
  - They may make good use of indigenous and traditional knowledge.
  - Interagency cooperation and education of citizens on fire prevention is key to successful fire management.
-



---

## Forest restoration is key to prevent the multiplication of wildfires and strengthen climate action

[Circular Economy](#) ▷ [Climate Change](#) ▷ [Forestry](#) ▷ [General UNECE](#) ▷  
[Sustainable Development](#) ▷ [SDGs](#) ▷ [Executive Secretary Blog](#) ▷

27 August 2021

August is wildfire season in many parts of the Northern Hemisphere. Many areas in the UNECE region, including North America, Siberia, and Mediterranean countries have experienced unusually hot and dry weather this year, and with that some of the biggest wildfires on record. Areas burned in Turkey and Greece were approximately 8 and 12 times larger than average, respectively. Clouds of



---

*Noticias > Mundo*

# ONU insta a la restauración forestal para evitar los incendios



Especialistas de la ONU prevén que, para los próximos años, haya un aumento de incendios forestales y sus repercusiones en el ambiente. | Foto: La Jornada



## 6. Improving communication around wildfires

- Media stories tend to focus largely on fire crisis, victims, disasters,
  - not enough on natural side of fire,
  - not enough on huge efforts from firefighters, researchers, all those involved.
  - Media can be a good tool for education and increasing community resilience.
  - International Exchange of experience in addressing forest fire issues. Management, new technologies, trainings, funding.
-

# Follow-up reflections

- What are the options for dealing with increasing wildfire risk across the boreal region and for living with the new reality of wildfires in a changing climate?
  - How do we include wildfire risk in management practices, landscape planning, afforestation and reforestation efforts to reduce the risk of fire and avoid possible trade-offs between wildfire emission increases and the goals to achieve climate change mitigation?
  - What are efficient ways to prevent mega-fires?
  - What role could international cooperation play?
-

# Follow-up actions?

---



WEBINAR?



POLICY BRIEF?



YOUR IDEAS...?

---

# THANK YOU

Maria Sokolenko  
Federal Forestry Agency  
Russian Federation  
13 October 2021

