



International Wildland Fire Summit Paper #4

Strategy for Future Development of

International Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management

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Introduction

The attendees of the Sydney Summit are searching for pragmatic and sustainable responses to the human health, environmental, and economic damage caused by unwanted wildland fires. Each country has valuable experience that will provide a contribution to developing synergistic solutions. Many countries and international agencies, especially those with well-developed wildland fire management systems or with resources to share, are in a position to assist others.

Theme

The theme of the summit is: *Fire Management and Sustainable Development: Strengthening international cooperation to reduce the negative impacts of wildland fires on humanity and the global environment.*

Objectives

The Summit participants will review, discuss, and recommend strategies to improve communication and coordination between agencies and organizations to build a coherent response in reducing the negative impacts of wildland fires on humanity and the global environment. The objectives of the Summit are:

1. Based on the international conventions, the state-of-the-art knowledge generated by the international science community and the recommendations of prior conferences on wildland fires as well as the outcomes of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD), participants will develop strategies and organize resources to support and enhance the networks and information sharing between agencies and organizations.
2. Agree to develop and support implementation of appropriate mechanisms to improve global and regional communication and knowledge sharing on wildland fire management issues and solutions.
3. Agree to work regionally to implement key Summit outputs intended to facilitate the interagency cooperation and implementation of ecologically sound, community based wildland fire management programs.

Intended Outputs

The Summit participants will discuss, recommend, and adopt as appropriate a series of strategies that will build on the work of many groups, conferences and regional summits and produce a series of actions building towards enhanced international cooperation in wildland fire management. These processes will pave the way towards a Global Wildland Fire Summit and the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference.

The proposed Summit outputs are position papers. The papers will be discussed and finalized during the Summit with participants agreeing either in principle or in substance to the paper and to implementation within their agencies. The level of agreement will depend on the participants' ability to commit their agencies to policy. An agreement in principle will mean that the participants agree that the strategies have merit and will begin to discuss and implement the strategies either within their agency or work with local partners to implement the strategy in the region.

1. An agreement on the **principles** that would apply to international wildland fire management projects and exchanges. The principles would be used and applied to projects with participation or funding from international or interagency partners.

Specific actions for Summit participants:

- ♦ Agreement in principle with the concept of adopting wildland fire management principles;
 - ♦ Agreement to work individually and collectively to adapt and apply the principles to local and regional activities.
2. An agreement on an **international agreement template** that can be used by agencies wishing to form a cooperative or mutual aid arrangement with one or more other countries for mutual assistance and technology exchange on wildfire management. The template will build on the FAO report of May 2002, *Legal Framework for Forest Fire Management International Agreements and National Legislation*.

Specific actions for Summit participants:

- ♦ Agreement on the concept that a common template for international wildland fire agreements is useful;
- ♦ Agreement to adapt the template to specific local and regional conditions when instituting new agreements.

3. An statement of support from Summit participants to adopt an ***Incident Command System (ICS)*** as the international standard for wildfire incident management for all agencies participating in international or interagency agreements and exchanges. The statement will include examples of agencies currently using ICS, and sources of technology, training, and technical assistance.

Specific actions for Summit participants:

- ♦ Statement of support for adopting ICS as the international standard;
 - ♦ Agreement to introduce ICS to their agencies and organizations and begin discussions with cooperating agencies for implementation.
4. An agreement to a ***strategy for future development*** of the issues and international responses to wildland fires, including commitments to a series of regional conferences, an international wildland fire congress, and the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference in 2007.

Specific actions for Summit participants:

- ♦ Agreement with the concept that a series of regional conferences, summits, or roundtables will lead to a Global Wildland Fire Summit (date to be determined);
- ♦ Agreement that the International Liaison Committee (ILC) of the 3rd International Wildland Fire Conference work with a local steering committee to prepare the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference by active support through regional meetings and conferences;
- ♦ Agreement to work individually and collectively to secure resources and funding for hosting the regional sessions and implementing other Summit outputs.

Operational Procedures

Global Wildland Fire Network

The Regional Wildland Fire Networks will be consolidated, developed and promoted through active networking in information sharing, capacity building, preparation of bilateral and multilateral agreements, etc. This process will be facilitated through regional Wildland Fire Conferences and Summits in cooperation with the International Liaison Committee and the UN-ISDR Working Group on Wildland Fire.

International Liaison Committee

The ILC will meet annually in 2004 and 2005 and biannually in 2006 and 2007. A portion of the agenda for each meeting will include preparation for the 4th

Conference. In order to encourage the regional fire networks to actively work towards solutions to regional problems related to the Sydney Summit outcomes, the ILC will offer to hold meetings in the regions and devote a portion of the agenda to a Regional Summit with invited political, agency, and organizational representatives to discuss development of protocols and establishing networks for exchanging technical, scientific, and other information.

The regional summits will be hosted and supported financially by local agencies or organizations. The agenda and themes will be developed locally. The meetings can be held in conjunction with established conferences and meetings.

Background Information

Background information for the Summit is provided on the website of the GFMC / Global Wildland Fire Network at:

<http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/GlobalNetworks/RationaleandIntroduction.html>

and

<http://www.fire.uni-freiburg.de/summit-2003/introduction.htm>

Annex 1 (July 21, 2003 Draft)

The outcomes of the Conference and Summit and the work of the ILC are built on a series of actions and the sustained work of many groups, both formally and informally to promote and advance fire management activities throughout the world. Without an appreciation of the work that has gone on prior to this effort, the wildland fire community runs the risk of expending energy on redundant activities, or worse, missing opportunities to build and leverage the valuable work of others.

One of the actions envisioned for the Summit participants is an agreement to develop an **organizational structure** for international liaison in wildland fire issues. This Conference follows the 1st and 2nd conferences sponsored by the North American Forestry Commission (NAFC) – Fire Management Working Group (FMWG). NAFC is one of several forestry commissions established over 35 years ago by FAO. The work of the FMWG is a good example of how established organizations combined with the individual, or ad hoc, efforts have resulted in international agreements, bi-lateral programs among the member agencies, and, most notably, the three international conferences. With the success of the 3rd Conference and Summit as a benchmark, the ILC and the conference organizers envision an organizational structure that builds on the strengths of both the established organizations, and the creative energy of the ILC.

Examples of the established mechanisms include the United Nations programs and conventions, non-UN international organizations and programmes, the civil society, and the Global Fire Monitoring Centre (GFMC). Examples of individual or ad hoc efforts are the work of the ILC at international and regional levels and some of the individual and collective fire networks being established by the ISDR Global Wildland Fire Network.

Below is a summary of some of the major programs and activities that can be the building blocks for future activities within the wildland fire community. It is suggested that Summit participants become familiar with the work of these groups and use them to leverage ongoing and future activities.

- ♦ The Global Wildland Fire Network under the auspices of the UN-International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Inter-Agency Task Force, and the GFMC;
- ♦ The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), through the Emergency Services Branch, Environmental Emergencies Section (EES), in coordination of international assistance in case of wildland fire disasters;

- ♦ The Type II Partnership "Integrated Approach to Prevention for and Response to Environmental Emergencies in Support of Sustainable Development" coordinated by UN-OCHA;
- ♦ The Global Forest Fire Assessment 2005 within the frame of the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2005 supported by the FAO, the GFMC, and the Global Observation of Forest Cover/Global Observation of Landcover Dynamics (GOFC/GOLD) - a project of the Global Terrestrial Observing System [GTOS] programme, sponsored by the Integrated Global Observing Strategy [IGOS].

The ILC envisions several future activities that will lead up to the 4th International Wildland Fire Conference and Summit in 2007. These activities will build on the actions of the established groups and programs and will continue the work of the ILC, the FMWG, and the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) the organizers of the 3rd Conference and Summit in Sydney. The ILC, and its partners, will work to gain widespread support and involvement to build global support and participation in the 4th Conference. Some key activities include:

- ♦ A post-Summit activity to prepare an input paper to the UN General Assembly that seeks the support of countries to strengthen international cooperation in response to wildland fire disasters and post fire mitigation;
- ♦ Additional support for the ILC organizational structure from individual agencies and international organizations and programs;
- ♦ Participation with FAO, GFMC and GOFC-GOLD in support of the Global Forest Fire Assessment 2005;
- ♦ Recruit additional agencies and international organizations and programs to fund and staff the Global Wildland Fire Network and the ILC;
- ♦ Preparation for the follow-up Global Wildland Fire Summit.