

Final

Joint Statement of Asia Regional Group

28th Session of Committee on Forestry

Item -6 Strengthening actions to address wildfires through the Global Fire Management Hub and FAO's work on integrated fire management (COFO/2026/4)

Tuesday, 29 September 2026 Morning (09.30-12.00 hours)

Thank you Chair.

India delivers this joint statement on behalf of the Asia Regional Group.

The Asia Regional Group thanks FAO for the comprehensive document and welcomes the progress achieved under the Global Fire Management Hub in advancing integrated fire management and strengthening global cooperation on wildfire.

We recognize that wildfires are posing increasing risks in many regions due to the combined impacts of climate change, land-use change and environmental degradation, with significant consequences for forests, biodiversity, livelihoods, food security, public health and sustainable development.

We stress on the need to shift from predominantly reactive fire suppression towards integrated fire management that emphasizes Review and Analysis, Risk Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery.

We welcome the role of the Global Fire Management Hub as a platform for knowledge sharing, capacity development, data exchange and international cooperation.

We acknowledge the importance of integrating traditional knowledge and practices into wildfire management strategies.

We highlight the need to address the transboundary dimensions of wildfires as appropriate, including air pollution, ecosystem degradation and impacts on human health. We therefore call for strengthened regional cooperation, information sharing, mutual learning and coordinated responses among countries facing wildfire risks in accordance with the prevailing national laws and regulations.

We encourage FAO to continue strengthening support on wildfire management through the Global Fire Management Hub by expanding technical assistance, facilitating access to financing opportunities, promoting South-South and triangular cooperation, supporting countries, upon request, in strengthening national integrated fire management frameworks, and ensuring that the specific needs and circumstances of developing countries are adequately reflected in global wildfire initiatives.

At the same time, we underscore that successful implementation of integrated fire management requires predictable means of implementation, including enhanced access to finance, affordable technologies, capacity-building, scientific cooperation and knowledge transfer on mutually agreed terms. Efforts to strengthen fire monitoring systems, improve early warning capabilities, develop national fire data systems and enhance institutional capacities at national and local levels are need of the hour.

The Asia Regional Group remains committed to collaborative efforts to reduce wildfire risks, enhance resilience, protect forests and ecosystems, and support sustainable livelihoods for present and future generations.

Thank you.