

Chair, colleagues

Switzerland thanks FAO for its leadership on integrated fire management and welcomes the progress made through the Global Fire Management Hub. As wildfires increase in frequency and severity worldwide, we need a shift from a focus on suppression towards prevention, preparedness and resilience.

Switzerland strongly supports **Integrated Fire Management** as a holistic approach encompassing prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and restoration. In our view, the Global Fire Management Hub should focus on helping countries implement these approaches on the ground while strengthening cooperation with existing initiatives and avoiding duplication.

Communities are key to success. Switzerland therefore wishes to highlight the importance of community-based fire management and local capacity building. Through the Swiss Development Cooperation, Switzerland supports the Landscape Fire Management Program in the Western Balkans, working with partners such as the Global Fire Monitoring Center and regional fire monitoring centers to strengthen regional cooperation, institutional capacities and policy frameworks in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. A second phase is planned to further support implementation and community resilience.

Finally, cooperation between institutions is essential. At the regional level, Switzerland and our partner countries in the Pan-European region are also working with **FoRISK**, an implementation mechanism of **FOREST EUROPE** working on forest risk. FoRISK strengthens international cooperation on **integrated wildfire management** by promoting prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and the exchange of knowledge and good practices to build more fire-resilient forests. The priority now is to move from knowledge sharing to country-level implementation.