

**Major fire issues and networking in Central Asia 2006-2008**

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Central Asia consists of a part of Russia and its neighbour countries: [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Tajikistan](#), [Turkmenistan](#), and [Uzbekistan](#). The nations of [Afghanistan](#) and [Mongolia](#) are also included in Central Asian network, in addition to the western Chinese provinces of [Inner Mongolia](#), [Xingjian](#), [Qinghai](#) and [Tibet](#).

CENTRAL ASIA							
Parameters	Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan	Kyrgyzstan	Turkmenistan	Tajikistan	Russia	Mongolia
Geographic coordinates	48 00 N 68 00 E	41 00 N 64 00 E	41 00 N 75 00 E	40 00 N 60 00 E	39 00 N 71 00 E	60 00 N 100 00 E	46 00 N 105 00 E
Area, km <sup>2</sup>	2 717300	447400	198500	488100	143100	17075200	1564116
Climate	Continental, cold winters and hot summers, arid and semiarid	Mostly mid-latitude desert. Long hot summers, mild winters, semiarid grassland in east	Dry continental to high Tien Shan; subtropical in southwest (Fergana Valley); temperate in northern foothill zone	Subtropical desert	Mid-latitude continental, hot summers, mild winters; semiarid to polar in Pamir Mountains	From steppes in south through humid continental in much of European Russia; subarctic in Siberia to tundra climate in polar north; winters vary from cool along Black Sea coast to frigid in Siberia; summers vary from warm in the steppes to cool along Arctic coast	Desert; continental (large daily and seasonal temperature ranges)

CENTRAL ASIA							
Parameters	Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan	Kyrgyzstan	Turkmenistan	Tajikistan	Russia	Mongolia
Population	15340533	28268440	5356869	5179571	7211884	140702094	2996081
GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$167.6 billion	\$64.15 billion	\$10.5 billion	\$26.73 billion	\$11.82 billion	\$2.088 trillion	\$8.42 billion
GDP (per capita)	\$11100	\$2300	\$2000	\$5200	\$1800	\$14700	\$3200
Industrial production growth rate	4.5%	12.1%	7.3%	10.3%	9%	7.4%	3%
Area burned (2000) (ha)	8165200	51100	108300	26600	42900	22384100	2628700
Forest and other wooded land (x 1000 ha)	18959	4199	1182	4127	552	882975	12640
Forest growing stock (million m <sup>3</sup> )	364	24	30	14	5	82000	3
Average annual area affected by fire in 2000 (<4000 ha)	180	n/a	n/a	-	1	1268	418

**Central Asia:**

- low forest cover and low productivity
- planted forest mostly established to fulfill protective functions
- available information need to be treated carefully
- land degradation and desertification remain the most critical problems
- demographic changes to have major impact
- continued economic growth although uneven and dependent on fossil fuel production, processing and trade
- uneven progress in policy and institutional reforms
- conflicts and instability undermining economic and institutional development

Over the past decade, Central Asia has witnessed a growing trend of wildfires of extreme severities in forest and non-forest lands. These large fire situations in forest and steppe ecosystems have resulted in considerable ecological and economic damages

Central Asia has recently suffered major forest and other wildland fire problems.

According to estimations of 2005, Central Asia burned area accounted for 42 million hectares which is 12.19% of the total world burned area

The causes of an increasing occurrence of wildfires in forests and other wildlands, including the underlying reasons for increasing human-caused fires, vary within the region and are due to:

- transition from centrally planned to market economies
- national to regional conflicts, creation of new nations, involving political tensions and war
- increasing population growth and land-use pressure
- regional climate change towards increase of extreme droughts

### Main Regional Central Asia Wildland Fire Network actors:

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Mongolia, Russia

During the First Central Asian Forest Congress in Bishkek, the above mentioned countries decided to join the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR), Global Wildland Fire Network, and support the development of an international accord on cooperation in wildland fire management.

The countries share the goals of Regional Central Asia WF Network but also have their own specificities

### Participating organizations of Central Asia:

- State forestry and environmental agencies and ministries
- Research organizations
- NGOs
- Individuals

### GENERAL FIRE RESPONSE SITUATION IN CENTRAL ASIA:

- In spite of efforts taken, the readiness to wildland fires remains inadequate in the major part of the region.
- On the national level there is the need in renewing (even initiation) of legislation on wildland fires, strengthening of national central agency and interagency and intergovernmental (national-regional-local) coordination.
- There is necessity in improving of the fire risks mapping, preparedness planning, improving protecting infrastructure and awareness and readiness of population.
- Raise of abilities lies in the basis of future effective activities in fire management.
- More intensive regional cooperation is necessary.

### Main Causes of Central Asia vulnerability:

1. Constant poverty
2. Environment degradation due to bad management of natural resources
3. Ineffective state policy
4. Lag in investments and wrong directions of their dissemination

### MEETINGS:

Representatives from Central Asia already have participated in international and regional conferences such as the 3rd and 4<sup>th</sup> International Wildland Fire Conferences (Australia, 2003; Spain, 2007) and the "ECE/FAO conference on Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management in the Eastern Mediterranean, Near East, Balkans, Central Asia (Turkey, 30 March – 2 April 2004)". In Antalya the establishment of a Regional Central Asia Wildland Fire Network was tied to the Global Wildland Fire Network

### IRKUTSK, 2005:



KHABAROVSK, 2006



HARBIN, 2007



ULAN-BATOR, 2008



GOALS AND OUTCOMES OF THE MEETINGS

The general objective: overview forest fire situation in Central Asia, support and develop bilateral and multilateral cooperation in forest fire management in Central Asia and adjoining countries, elaborate recommendations, participate in field trips to burned areas, implement fire experiment.

The specific objectives were to:

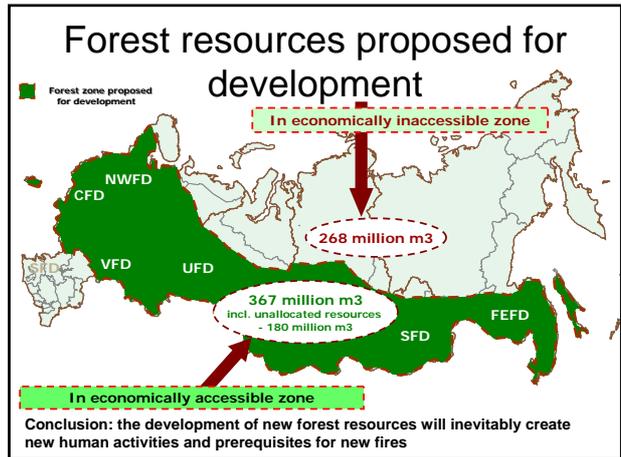
1. Invite experts on wildland fires from Central Asia to discuss forest fire problems and exchange experience
2. To identify among participants people and institutions interested in forest fire cooperation
3. Further discuss the significance of forest fires in nature and society
4. Discuss the process of monitoring fires and methods of their suppression
5. Suggest recommendations in the field of fire management
6. Identify sources of possible inside and outside technical and funding assistance and support to activities related to the introduction of fire management

Based on the general objective of the consultation meeting the expected results were:

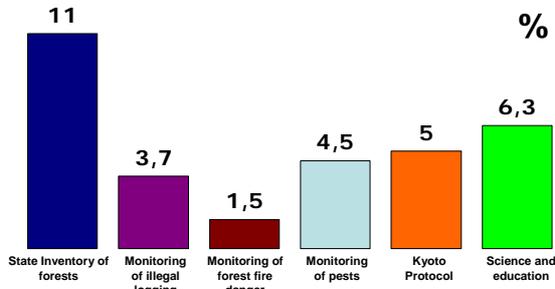
1. Analysis of forest fire situation in Central Asia and Northeast Asia countries
2. Joint field trips to burned areas and fire experiment in Mongolia
3. General guidelines to participants on how to go on implementing forest fire management
4. Identification of cooperation directions

RUSSIA

As a consequence of reorganization during the last years the integrated system of country's fire fighting system (AVIALESOOKHRANA) has been weakened and divided into isolated independent from the center local airbases. This immediately and negatively impacted on the preparation for the fire season



Financing of newly introduced authorities of Rosleskhoz in 2008



The least share is intended for Monitoring of forest fire danger

MONGOLIA

First International Central Asian Wildland Fire Joint Conference and Consultation

Wildland Fires in Natural Ecosystems of the Central Asian Region:

Ecology and Management Implications

Associated with the First Central Asian Forest Fire Experiment

2-6 June 2008, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia





### CENTRAL ASIA NETWORK FUTURE ACTIVITIES:

- Development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation including Information and specialists exchange;
- Active participation and support of international initiatives and close work with GFMC;
- Elaboration and introduction of joint programmes and projects to consider transboundary fire management issues;
- Introduction and implementation of the documents adopted by the International community;
- Activation of work in the field of fire management on the national and local level;
- Efforts to solve the financial problems in managing and developing activities of Regional Central Asia WF Network;
- Introduce initiatives to conduct International Central Asia fire conferences, symposia and consultation meetings
- Practical work on elaboration of wildland fire management policies for Central Asia countries
- Implementation of fire experiment in Russia

### PROBLEMS:

1. Financial
2. Cooperation development
3. Involvement of stakeholders in Network actions
4. Establishing international boards, working groups
5. Implementation of international projects
6. Development of information tools and management capabilities that recognize both the beneficial and traditional roles of fire, while reducing the incidence and extent of uncontrolled burning and its adverse impacts
7. Addressing the fire problem collaboratively to enable nations to develop sustainable fire management capabilities; to share human and technical resources in wildland fire management

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Regional Central Asia Wildland Fire Network fully supports:

- the actions directed to financial support of Global Wildland Fire Network, the Regional Wildland Fire Networks and the Secretariat of the global network, the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) by national agencies and international donors;
- A series of Regional Consultations tentatively addressing "Global Change and Wildland Fire: Regional Solutions for Fire Management";
- The 2nd International Wildland Fire Summit "Global Change and Wildland Fire: Fire Management Solutions for Mitigation and Adaptation" under the auspices of the United Nations and partners.
- the Regional Central Asia Consultations on "Global Change and Wildland Fire: Regional Solutions for Fire Management"
- Creation of a sub-regional network in the European Alpine region
- Closer work of Actions Alliance with the regional Networks
- Financing of the outreach activities of the Regional Wildland Fire Networks
- 5th International Wildland Fire Conference (South Africa, 2011)
- The further development of the Global Wildland Fire Early Warning System
- Practical steps to create the action plan to implement Global Wildland Fire Assessment 2010
- Closer international cooperation in the frames of The Rosersberg Initiative

- The development of a global-scale international resource sharing strategy to assist countries with fire management planning activities;
- The further introduction of Incident Command System (ICS);
- The development of Regional policies for fire management;
- A wider introduction of information and training dissemination;
- Research development in the field of fire management;
- Enhancing International Cooperation in Wildland Fire Management and the implementation of the Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines;
- Active participation of the Networks in the Fire Management Actions Alliance

