NATO-Russia Partnership

Forest Fire Disasters: Early Warning, Monitoring, and Management

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Potential Collaborative Research Activities between the Russian Federation and NATO Member States to reduce Environmental, Social, and Economic Disasters Caused by Destruction of Forests and Release of Carbon by Fire
A presentation on behalf of the

Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

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International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

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ECE / FAO / ILO

Team of Specialists on Forest Fire
Forest Fires in Central-Northern Europe / Baltic Region:

Causes, severity and consequences of forest fires are closely linked to modern human activities, e.g.

* socio-economics (change of forest use)
* industrialization (forest decline)
* radioactive contamination
* military installations and activities
* problems arising at the forest / residential interfaces
* tourism
Situation in the Russian Federation where >1 billion ha of forest land represent

* the largest single forest resource on Earth

* the highest risk to be affected by climate change

* the most challenging opportunities to solve current and future problems by new approaches in fire management
Large Forest Fires in Russia 1999
Details of Forest Fires in Russia
In 1996 the

UN ECE / FAO / ILO

*Team of Specialists on Forest Fire*

initiated the creation of a Forest Fire Forum in the Central-Northern European (Baltic) Region
Overall goal of the initiative: Sharing of
* research expertise
* information
* experience
* resources
* responsibility
in regional Baltic forest fire management
Activities between 1996-2000

1996: The UN Fire Team proposed a regional \textit{Baltic Action Plan Concerning Collaboration in Forest Fire Protection} and to convene a first regional conference

1998: \textit{First Baltic Conference on Forest Fires}  
Radom - Katowice (Poland)

2000: Baltic Exercise in Fire Information and Resources Exchange - BALTEX FIRE 2000  
(Finland)
At the conference the establishment of pan-Baltic programs and exchange mechanisms was proposed in the fields of

* fire research

* fire management training

* use of prescribed fire (in forestry, nature conservation, and landscape management)

* mutual fire emergency assistance
The Baltic 21 Action Programme:

* Development of a concerted regional Baltic Forest Fire Action Plan

* The Baltic Exercise in Fire Information and Resources Exchange - BALTEX FIRE 2000 (Finland, June 2000)

* Creation of a Baltic Task Force on Forest Fire
Current Task Force Members:

Estonia, Finland (chair), Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, and Sweden

Observer Countries:

Belarus, the Netherlands, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom
Key activity of the UN system in the field of disaster prevention - including forest fires:

* International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) 1990-1999

and its successor arrangement

* International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)
In 1998 the German Foreign Office Office for Humanitarian Assistance financed the establishment of the *Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)* as a contribution to the IDNDR / ISDR.
The Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) is a public facility for global fire

* monitoring, interpretation, synthesis
* archiving and distribution of data
* decision-support

Availability and transfer of fire information via

<http://www.uni-freiburg.de/fireglobe>
Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)

The GFMC is an Activity of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)