

Biodiversity Conservation and the Strategy to Enhance International Cooperation in Fire Management



Ayn Shlisky
4th International Wildland Fire Conference
Sevilla, Spain 2007



Objectives

- Global context
- The Nature Conservancy's fire work
- Global threats to fire's ecological role
- The Strategy and biodiversity conservation

- **Global nonprofit**
- **Dedicated to biodiversity conservation and sustained human well-being**
- **Science- and community-based**
- **On-the-ground in 32 countries**
- **~1 million members**

- Enable fire role in ecosystems and society
- Keep fire out of places where it is destructive
- Employ over 100 fire-trained staff
- Practice on-the-ground fire management (since 1961)
- Facilitate networks of over 100 community-based fire projects with over 600 partners in 15 countries
- Annually train hundreds of partner and TNC fire staff
- Partner with governments and non-governmental organizations to enable policies and leverage expertise
- Scientific assessments



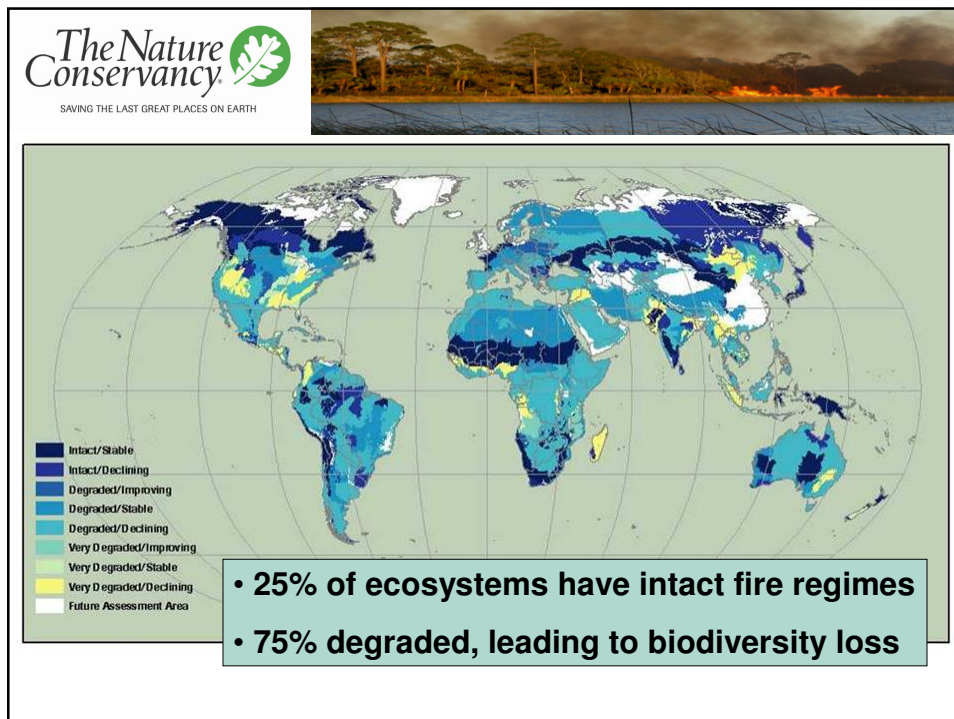
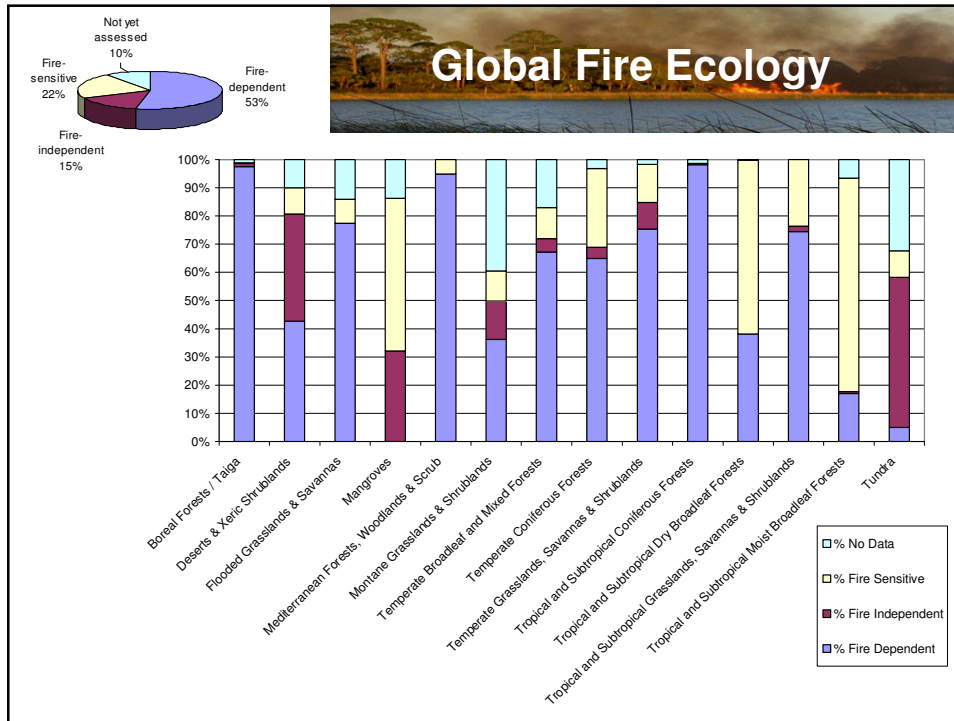
The Global Context

- Maintaining human livelihoods
 - Isolated decision-making with global impacts
- Maintaining ecosystems
 - Human demands often exceed ecosystem capacity
- Goals exceed available resources
 - Need to strategically leverage efforts



The Fire Context

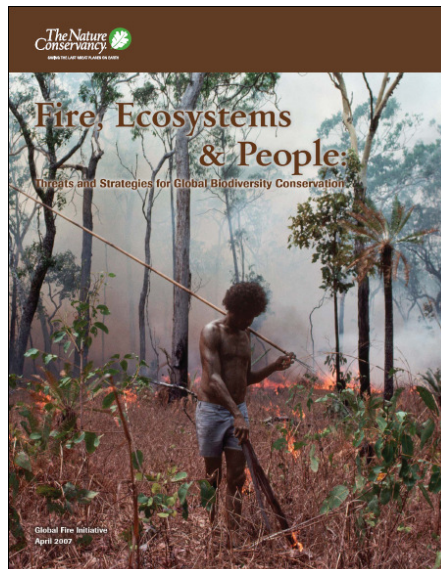
- Fire is a threat *and* an essential force of nature
- Fire behavior is changing due to human actions
- Scientific understanding is incomplete



Top sources of altered fire regimes

- urban/exurban development
- livestock farming and ranching
- agriculture
- fire/fire suppression
- resource extraction
- climate change

For more information

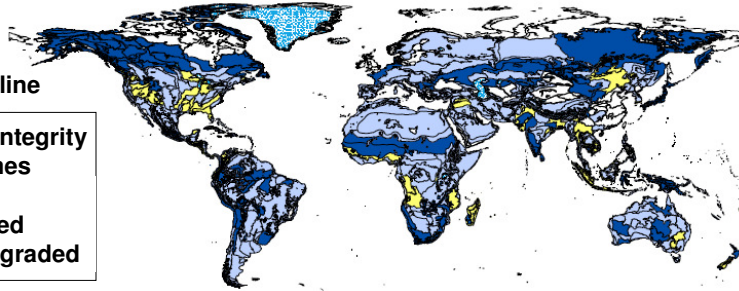


Global Fire Partnership Fire Assessment

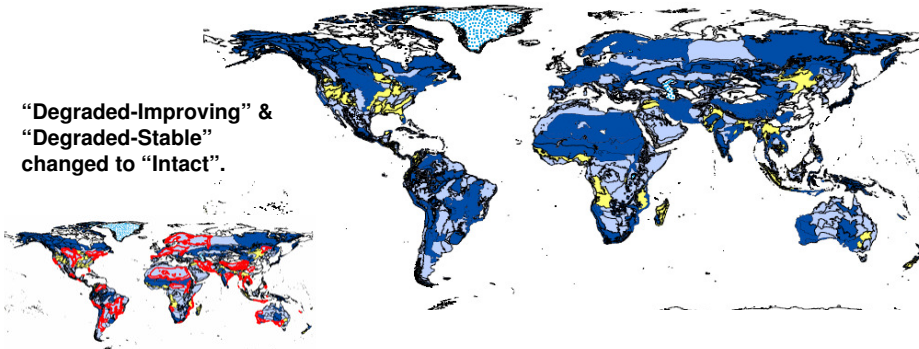
2006 Baseline

Ecological integrity
of fire regimes

- Intact
- Degraded
- Very degraded



“Degraded-Improving” &
“Degraded-Stable”
changed to “Intact”.



The Nature
Conservancy 
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

The Barriers

- Public policies often developed with incomplete information
- Incomplete scientific understanding
- Climate change challenges and uncertainty
- Inadequate capacity and partnerships
- Competition with other resource management needs and priorities
- Culture and language



Solutions

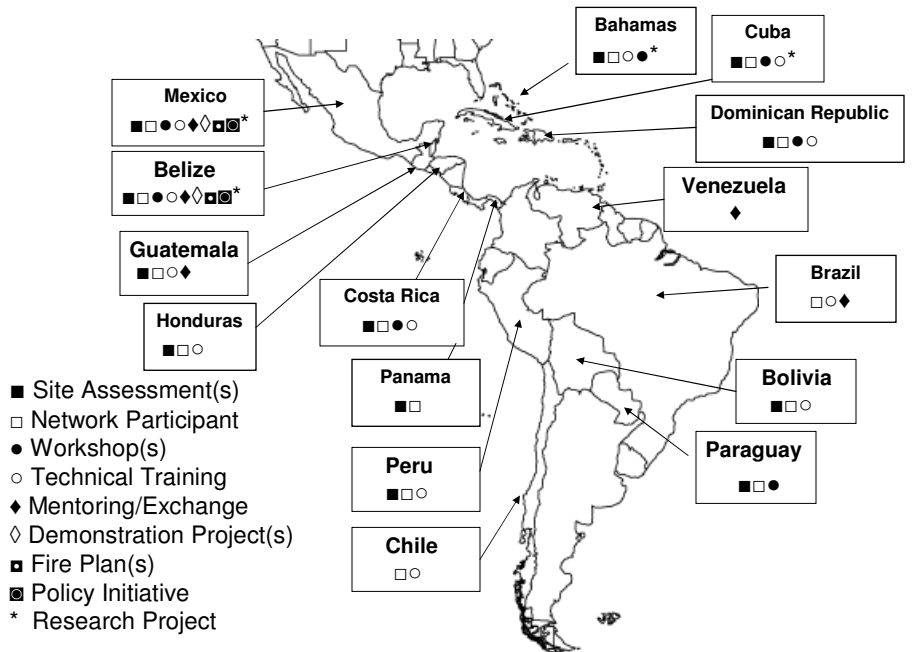
- Coalitions to build consensus
- Appropriate policies
- Taking action and achieving outcomes
- Getting more from individual investments
 - Prioritization
 - Strategic alliances (funding, implementation)
 - Networks



Voluntary Fire Management Guideline Objectives

- Establish principles (biological, technological, economic, social, cultural, environmental).
- Help establish policies and planning mechanisms.
- Facilitate mutual assistance and cooperation.
- Encourage community-based fire management for human livelihoods & biodiversity.
- Advocate sustainable land management that considers the ecologically appropriate use, management and/or suppression of fire.

Fire Learning Network in Latin America



Community fire management project, La Sepultura Biosphere Reserve Chiapas, Mexico.

The image shows three individuals engaged in a community fire management planning session. They are gathered around a table, examining a large map of the La Sepultura Biosphere Reserve. One person is pointing to a specific area on the map, while the others look on attentively. The map shows various geographical features and boundaries. In the background, there is a photograph of a lush forest with tall trees and a fallen log on the ground. To the right, a map of the state of Chiapas, Mexico, is shown, highlighting the location of the La Sepultura Biosphere Reserve in the southern part of the state. The map labels neighboring states: Tabasco, Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Guatemala, as well as the Gulf of Mexico (Océano Pacífico). A legend indicates the location of the 'Reserva de la Biosfera Sepultura Socioecológica y Paisajística' and the 'Polígono General'.

Strategy to enhance international cooperation in fire management

Global assessment 2006



Review of international cooperation 2006



Voluntary guidelines: principles and strategic actions



Action alliance to implement voluntary guidelines

Example TNC Fire Agreements:

- US Forest Service & Dept. of the Interior (1 @ 5yr; 1 @ 10year)
- UC Berkeley
- FAO



Strategy and Voluntary Guidelines

- Broad stakeholder buy-in
- Principles and actions consistent with conservation
- Supports unique partner roles
 - Science
 - Policy
 - Training & Capacity-building
 - Community-based implementation
 - Knowledge management
 - International cooperation



Conclusions

- **Biodiversity conservation challenges are enormous**
- **Achievement of biodiversity goals will be impossible without implementation of principles and strategic actions outlined in the Strategy.**
- **Partnerships built on common goals and priorities are essential.**

Thank You