

**Position of the Russian Federal Forest Service at the
International Wildland Fire Summit
Sydney, 8 October 2003**

The Russian delegation suggests:

- Recalling the rationale and recommendations of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (Johannesburg – 2002) concerning the international endeavours to secure sustainable development of the global vegetation resources,
- Expressing concerns about the increase of destructive forest fires worldwide, recognizing that the reasons for this development are due to increasing population pressure in many countries, increasing socio-economic problems of rural populations, increasing vulnerability of humans and the occurrence of extreme fire seasons that can possibly be explained by climate change,
- Supporting the endeavours of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) since 1981 to address the fire problems in the Northern Hemisphere and actively participating in the work of the UN-FAO/ECE Team of Specialists on Forest Fire since 1993,
- Contributing to the Working Group on Wildland Fire of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), in support of the overall goal of the United Nations to harmonize and strengthen international efforts to reduce the negative impacts of wildland fires on the environment,
- Endorsing the overall goals of the International Wildland Fire Summit and expressing the acknowledgement to the host country Australia and the sponsors of the summit to realize this important event,
- Welcomes the proposed strategy for strengthening international cooperation in all matters related to the reduction of negative effects of wildland fires on the global environment and humanity,
- Proposes, in accordance with the recommendation of the second International Wildland Fire Conference of 1997 and the ongoing initiatives of the UN, notably through the work of the ISDR, the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), the FAO, the UN conventions and the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), the United Nations to lead the implementation of the strategy proposed by the summit.