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Policy Brief

Multi-stakeholders' recommendations for integrated wildfire risk management

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Highlights

- European policy makers should promote a set of options to enhance wildfire risk management.
- Stakeholders representing the thematic working groups – Environment, Societal, Infrastructure, Insurance and Civil Protection – have converged towards cross-sectoral key solutions.
- Priorities include:
 - Nature-based and cultural land management,
 - Community engagement and inclusivity,
 - Simultaneously addressing the risk of infrastructure-induced fires and the vulnerability of infrastructure to fire

Background

This policy brief provides actionable options for enhancing wildfire risk management in Europe, addressing the increasing frequency and severity of wildfires due to climate change, the expansion of urban interfaces, low and inadequate forest management, land use change, and the abandonment of agricultural land. It identifies potential gaps in current management, operational practices, and scientific knowledge, and offers options for addressing these gaps tailored to the **needs of policymakers, practitioners, scientists, and the general public**.

This policy brief summarises the key insights derived from the results of two workshop cycles across five working groups (environment, societal, infrastructure, insurance, and civil protection) organised by the Firelogue project over the course of 2023 and 2024. More detailed recommendations for all stakeholder groups, including policymakers, academia, practitioners and civil society, are contained in D5.3 Contextualised multi-stakeholder recommendations II, available on the Firelogue website [[D5_3 Contextualised multi-stakeholder recommendations.pdf](#)].

Key findings

Environment: The integration of sustainable forest management and agricultural practices is a key tool for wildfire prevention, based on cultural practices and additional Nature-based Solutions (NbS). The expansion of fuel management in high-risk and economically marginal areas, e.g. in many EU Mediterranean landscapes, is specifically challenging. It is also advocated to take advantage of protected areas as pilot areas for incorporating fire ecology, to restore fire-adapted ecosystems while escalating wildfire prevention measures into the Natura 2000 network. The ultimate goal is to achieve landscape patterns aimed at limiting the capability of wildfire to spread beyond the emergency management capacity, avoiding critical losses in ecosystem functioning and critical ecosystem provisions (biodiversity, water and soil, carbon sink, etc.).

Societal: Citizens are both beneficiaries and active agents of wildfire risk management. Current strategies often rely on technical jargon and top-down communication, which fail to reach or engage diverse communities. The working group called for a shift toward plain, accessible language and two-way engagement, where communities co-design solutions and contribute their knowledge. This inclusivity is especially important for vulnerable groups – such as the elderly, migrant workers, or those without digital access – who are often overlooked in wildfire preparedness strategies. It is also recommended to combine high-tech tools (apps, social media, real-time alerts) with traditional communication methods (radio, community meetings, schools) to reach all demographics. Storytelling and cultural framing were identified as powerful means to change behaviours and embed wildfire awareness into daily life.

Infrastructure: On the one hand, it is necessary to address infrastructure as a fire ignition source, which requires identification and mitigation measures. On the other hand, it is also necessary to enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure to minimise damage from wildfires and ensure continuous operation prior, during, and post wildfire events. Therefore, integrated risk assessments should simultaneously address the risk of infrastructure-induced wildfires and the vulnerability of infrastructure to wildfires. This includes implementing preventative measures for existing or new infrastructure, such as fire-resistant technology and vegetation and fuel management around assets. It is key to align policies, regulations, and standards to ensure that wildfire resilience is incorporated into building codes, land-use planning, and emergency preparedness strategies across infrastructure sectors and across European countries.

Insurance: It is key to engage the insurance sector in enabling nature-based and disaster risk reduction solutions for wildfire risk management. There are two main policies to promote. On one hand, the pricing of parametric and other insurance products should be transparent and differentiated to incentivise the adoption of nature-based and disaster risk reduction solutions. Community insurance models that provide client discounts for collective NbS could be enhanced as an example. On the other hand, it is key to introduce compulsory disclosures to ensure transparency on insurers' and financial institutions' impacts on nature and biodiversity and encourage them to add nature-positive projects to their investment portfolio.

Civil protection: As a responding actor, civil protection relates to all other working group topics and benefits from all the integrated wildfire risk management solutions developed. For increased interoperability and progressive harmonisation across all international civil protection operations, three main needs were identified: a) European-level management of research and development for civil protection (identification of the needs, specifications, experimentation, and pre procurement); b) operational knowledge and procedure sharing through exchanges and trainings; c) harmonisation on key aspects of the response phase: occupational safety, aerial regulations, use of fire, volunteers' statute in responding agencies, etc.



Policy recommendations

Despite covering different themes, the recommendations to enhance wildfire risk management in Europe are cross-linked. Central are the needs for sustainable cultural practices and additional NbS, and the need for community engagement, which is connected with inclusivity and co-design. Land use and vegetation management around infrastructure, jointly with fire-proof materials and technology should be developed to limit vulnerability and increase the resilience of communities, which would support and ease response. Civil protection, in addition to the benefits taken from all the options developed above, also needs European-level management of research and knowledge exchanges.

European policymakers should initiate the processes and guide the Member States. This includes European insurance regulators that have a key role in driving funding mechanism and insurance products towards Disaster Risk Reduction, Nature-based Solutions and safety nets for low-income households.

Related work

This brief is one of the final products of the [Firelogue](#) project. Firelogue is the coordination and support action funded under the Horizon 2020 Green Deal Call to liaise the innovation actions working on integrated wildfire management. The project has organised a dialogue between the innovation projects, comparing and synthesising their recommendations for each thematic area, ensuring that different approaches are integrated and aligned to create a cohesive and comprehensive wildfire management strategy.

References

D5.4 Contextualised multi-stakeholder recommendations II, available on the Firelogue website [[D5 3 Contextualised multi-stakeholder recommendations.pdf](#)].

Many results of the European Green Deal Wildfire Risk Management Projects can be found here: [Lessons on Fire – Powered by Firelogue](#)