



DEPARTMENT OF
**ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL AFFAIRS**



**SDG
Pavilion**



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

CONCEPT NOTE

Addressing the Risk of Wildfires

to Contribute to Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

UNFFS/DESA SDG Pavilion event at UNFCCC COP26

8 November 2021, 2:15 to 3:30 PM (UK Time)

Glasgow, UK/Virtual

BACKGROUND

1. Over the past several decades, climate change-induced concurrent hot and dry conditions amplified conditions that promote wildfires (IPCC, 2021). A surge in the incidence of large and uncontrolled wildfires was thus seen on all vegetated continents, affecting all biomes, from forests and savannahs to grasslands and tundra. Increased events of huge fires conduce greater greenhouse gases (GHGs) and further accelerate climate change and increase deforestation. In addition, the persistence of climate change and its adverse impacts on natural environment also create a highly prone conditions for extreme and more devastating forest fires.
2. The impact of wildfires savages across the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development. Countries are reporting significantly increased costs of wildfires. Countless natural habitats for wildlife were destroyed by wildfires. Death, health issues and economic loss caused by wildfires are posing particularly acute challenges for indigenous communities and people living in rural areas.
3. The recurring incidence of wildfire disasters and their broad impacts make addressing wildfires an urgent area for action in climate change mitigation and adaptation. It also raises questions on how the global community could prevent future wildfires, and their bearing on the achievement of the objectives of the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Forest Goals (GFGs)¹ and other development goals.

¹ More information about the Global Forest Goals of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests is available at:
<https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Global-Forest-Goals-booklet-Apr-2019.pdf>

4. To assist countries in their efforts to reduce the risks and impacts of wildfires, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) produced a background study² and a policy brief³ on wildfires, to provide an overview of the drivers, current trends and impacts of wildfires, as well as suggestions to reduce the risks and impacts of wildfires.

OBJECTIVES

5. This side event aims to present the key findings of the UN DESA's background study and policy brief on wildfires, and the multiplier impacts of climate change and forest fires on each other. The side event also provides an opportunity for the speakers and participants to share their experiences and suggestions to address the growing concerns of wildfires, and the means to further advance collaboration among countries and regions.

PARTICIPANTS

6. The event will be open to all participants from governments, UN system, international organizations, civil society, private sector, academia and general public.

MODALITIES

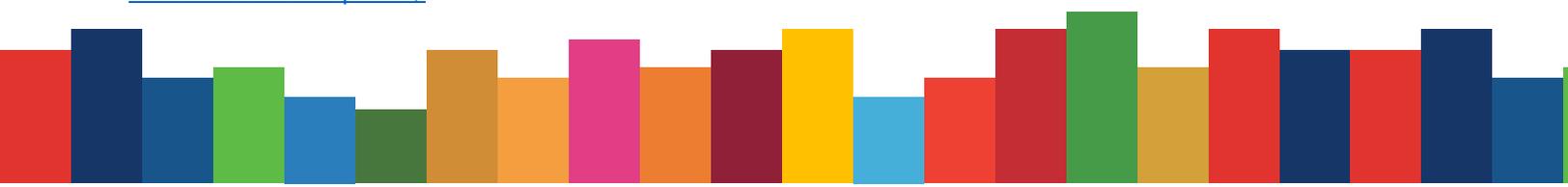
7. The event is part of the programme of events for the DESA SDG Pavilion at the UNFCCC COP 26. The event will take place from 2:15 to 3:30 pm (Glasgow time) on Monday, 8 November 2021. The event will be promoted on UN DESA's social media accounts and a brief summary of the event will be published on the UNFF website following the event.

LANGUAGE

The event will be held in English.

² Background study on the impacts of disasters on forests, in particular forest fires, at: https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/UNFF16-Bkgd-paper-disasters-forest-fires_052021.pdf

³ UN/DESA Policy Brief #111: Wildfires - a growing concern for sustainable development, at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desa-policy-brief-111-wildfires-a-growing-concern-for-sustainable-development/>





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PROGRAMME

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8 November 2021, 2:15 to 3:30 PM (UK Time)

Glasgow, UK/Virtual

MODERATOR: **Mr. Alexander Trepelkov**, Officer-in-Charge, UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, DESA

OPENING

REMARKS: **Mr. Liu Zhenmin**, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, DESA

SPEAKERS:

H.E. Ms. Miriam Mac Intosh, Chair of UNFF17, Permanent Secretary Foreign Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation of Suriname

Ms. Jaelith Hall-Rivera, Deputy Chief, State and Private Forestry, US Forest Service

Mr. Riaan van den Dool, Principal Engineer, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa

Ms. Sheam Satkuru, Director of Operations, International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

Dr. John Parrotta, President, International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)

JOIN AT:

<https://undesawebex.com/undesawebex/j.php?MTID=m367582968cee913f278e1df6b563095d>

Event password: Event1234



The **UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030** (UNSPF) provides a global framework for actions at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests, and to halt deforestation and forest degradation. The Plan features a set of six Global Forest Goals and 26 associated targets to be reached by 2030, which are voluntary and universal.