

Statement of Poland
Item 8.4. FAO's work on integrated wildfires management
Thursday, 25 July, 9:30-12:30

Mr Chair,

Poland aligns itself with the EU statement [sent during written procedure].

Today we experience forest fires as one of the most harmful result of climate change, driving also biodiversity loss. Therefore Poland continuously increases its efforts and integrates fire risk assessment and monitoring into sustainable forest management practices. Please allow me to share a successful example of the efforts undertaken by Poland's State Forests in the realm of wildfire prevention and management.

Facing the climate change requires constant maintaining, adjusting and modernization of the fire protection system. The State Forests maintain and constantly modernize the forest fire protection system. The aim of the system is to detect smoke as quickly as possible, precisely determine the location of the fire and enable reaction to be taken as quickly as possible.

One notable initiative lead by Poland is the project titled "*Comprehensive project for the adaptation of forests and forestry to climate change – prevention, counteraction, and mitigation of the effects of forest fire hazards.*" Within the project several elements of the forest fire system has been developed to increase effectiveness of forest fire protection, such as:

- Procurement of 67 skid units for patrol and firefighting objectives.
- Construction of 70 new fire lookout towers and modernization of 68 existing ones.
- Purchase of 183 pieces of equipment for fire detection and location.
- Upgrading of 42 alarm - dispatch points.
- Construction of 12 meteorological stations.

Thanks to forest fire protection system in Poland, most fires can be extinguished in the initial phase, preventing the development of catastrophic large-area fires. Currently, the average area of a single fire in the State Forests is **only 0.25 ha**. However forest fires are highly unpredictable and there is always high uncertainty and risk. Therefore building on the success of forest fire prevention, Polish State Forests will continue "Comprehensive project for the adaptation of forests and forestry to climate change – prevention, counteraction, and mitigation of the effects of forest fire hazards", as well as many other actions to prevent forests and their biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to current climate challenges.

We believe that through collaborative efforts and sharing best practices, we can significantly enhance our resilience to wildfires and protect forests - our very precious natural resources - for us and for the future generations.

Thank you for your attention.