

# Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines



The Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines set out a framework of legally non-binding principles and internationally accepted strategic actions. The Guidelines address the cultural, social, environmental, and economic dimensions of fire management at all levels. Preparation of the Guidelines, at the request of member countries and coordinated by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, involved a core technical group and expert consultations with selected member countries, private-sector associations, and non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

## Why fire management guidelines?

It is anticipated that the Guidelines will be valuable in governance, education, guidance, benchmarking, cooperation, and advocacy related to all aspects of fire management. The principles and strategic actions will provide contexts for social, economic, cultural, environmental, and political discussions at sub-national, national, regional, and international levels. The principles and strategic actions can also serve as a checklist to strengthen policies, legal frameworks, plans, and procedures and, where these do not exist, will be a useful basis for their development and implementation.

Fire management is the discipline of using fire to achieve land management and traditional use objectives, together with the safeguarding of life, property, and resources through the prevention, detection, control, restriction, and suppression of fire in forest and other vegetation in rural areas. This involves planned as well as naturally occurring fires, and includes research and technology transfer.

## Objectives

The voluntary guidelines are intended to serve the following objectives:

- Establish principles in accordance with the relevant rules of international law for responsible fire management activities, taking into account all relevant biological, technological, economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects;
- Contribute to the establishment and implementation of national and sub-national policies and planning mechanisms for establishing or improving the legal, regulatory, and institutional framework required for responsible fire management activities;
- Provide guidance that may be used, where appropriate, in the formulation and implementation of international instruments, both binding and voluntary;
- Facilitate and promote mutual assistance and technical, financial, scientific or other forms of cooperation in fire management between agencies and donor organizations;
- Encourage and publicize the contribution of effective community-based fire management in providing food security and meeting people's livelihood needs; and
- Advocate sustainable land and resource management programmes that consider the ecologically appropriate use of management of fire, where permitted, and the suppression of unwanted, damaging fire.



## Where to find the guidelines?

You can find online versions in English, Spanish, French and Russian at:

[www.fao.org/forestry/firemanagement/](http://www.fao.org/forestry/firemanagement/)

or request a hard copy at:

[FMAA-Secretariat@fao.org](mailto:FMAA-Secretariat@fao.org)

## For whom?

The guidelines are applicable to:

- All elements of civil society and the private sector;
- Policy level and senior managers of subregional, regional, and global organizations, whether governmental or non-governmental;
- Owners and managers of forest, range, grass lands and other ecosystems; and
- All stakeholders concerned with the protection of lives, property, and resources from the effects of unwanted, damaging fires and with the use of fire to enhance ecosystems and economic benefits.

All entities with fire management responsibilities will benefit from collaboration when translating the principles and strategic actions into their policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks; fire management strategies, programmes, or plans; codes, standards, or guidelines for implementation; or for monitoring and reporting of compliance.

Governments, international bodies, and nongovernmental organizations are encouraged to promote understanding of the principles and strategic actions among those involved in resource management, forest resource protection, air and water quality, community protection, and ecological restoration and rehabilitation – including, where practicable, by the introduction of processes that would promote voluntary acceptance and effective application.

## Fire Management Actions Alliance:

The purpose of the Fire Management Actions Alliance is to stimulate improved fire management and reduce damage from fire worldwide. Members of the Alliance are committed to:

- Promote the Voluntary Fire Management Guidelines and their use;
- Share knowledge and information on their activities; and
- Strengthen international cooperation in fire management.

Any organization, agency, or group can apply for membership of the Alliance. More information on the Alliance at:

[www.fao.org/forestry/site/firealliance/](http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/firealliance/)

FAO hosts a secretariat of the alliance which provides information, communications, coordination, etc:

[FMAA-Secretariat@fao.org](mailto:FMAA-Secretariat@fao.org)

