



**BEING A FIRE RESEARCHER ISN'T ALWAYS GOOD
EVIDENCE TO BACK UP BEST PRACTICES.**

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As a researcher of drought management and water governance these are my reflections and lessons learned during the "Fire on Society" event, on fire scenarios in Europe, organized by Wageningen Disaster Network (WIDEN) at the ORION building of Wageningen University (16-01-2024). First of all, I must acknowledge the conceptual but interesting differences and experiences that each participant brought to the meeting. It is clear that the consequences that fires bring to a country can be directly or indirectly related to political decisions, the level of preparedness or individual and cultural behavior that affect at different levels the probability of these events occurring.

1) Fires can have different meanings depending on what the fire drivers are, safety level intentions, anthropogenic roots, climate change, agricultural innovation, and urban expansion versus rural contraction, as a result undeveloped peri urban areas.

(2) The harmonization of concepts, information, data and terminology shall be linked to the extent that the appropriate regulatory framework is understood to be in the appropriate place of information accessible to the institutes and organizations involved in these responses.

3) From a regional perspective. Europe does not have a census of historical data, nor are these data placed in a more national compartment with objectives indistinct from the creation of security plans in case this warrants. Creating a map to collect this information could be useful in determining better scenarios and strategies by country, by region or sector.

4) From a global perspective, there is no clear plan for buffer zones by the United Nations to determine the boundaries of approach and protection of nature reserves or protected areas. It creates vulnerability in urban and rural areas, and limits adequate access to fire response services facilities, e.g., wildland/wildfires.

5) Regarding the challenges, these are based on the activities, the sector and the central environmental agenda of the country. They are similar in all of them; However, it is indistinguishable from the number of fires that occurred during the year, how they originated, and how the response was handled.

6) Water was not central during most of the presentations; however, it remains the critical element in minimizing these scenarios. The availability of water is something that should be on the table for discussion, especially with (extreme drought scenarios) in some regions of Europe, where every year they occur with more duration and intensity.

In my opinion, fires are never spontaneous, so a thousand reasons to start a new one will depend on the conditions in which it occurs, when or by whom. How much and how severely it affects an area, and the region's response and recovery time, as well as sufficient services, preparedness, and resources to address this issue at the optimal time.