

# Efficient fire risk communication for resilient societies (eFIRECOM)

*Project co-funded by ECHO -Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection*

## *Final Progress Report*

(Solsona, May 31<sup>th</sup> 2017)

## Table of contents

1. General reminder	2
2. General summary of project implementation process	3
3. Evaluation of project management/implementation process	3
4. Activities	4
5. Presentation of the technical results and deliverables	5
6. Evaluation of the technical results and deliverables	6
7. Follow-up	6
Annex	
1. Minutes of the partnership meetings	

## 1. General reminder

*Project title:* **Efficient fire risk communication for resilient societies (eFIRECOM)**

*Website and mail:* <http://efirecom.ctfc.cat/>, *Email:* [efirecom@ctfc.cat](mailto:efirecom@ctfc.cat)

*Calendar:* 1/01/2015 - 31/12/2016 (24 month) + 3 months extension accepted

*Partnership:*

(Coord.) **Forest Sciences Centre of Catalonia - CTFC (ES)**

(AB1) Fire Ecology and Management Foundation Pau Costa Alcubierre – PCF, Spain

(AB2) European Forest Institute. Mediterranean Office – EFIMED, Spain

(AB3) EEIG FORESPIR, France

(AB4) Direction Générale des Forêts de Tunisie, Tunisia

(AB5) Université Hadj Lakhdar Batna, Algeria

*Objective:*

eFIRECOM aims at enhancing the resilience of citizens to wildfires in interface areas from the Mediterranean region, through effectively promoting and increasing awareness and participation on the culture of risk with updated knowledge and best practices.

Specific objectives are:

- 1) To analyse the current level of risk communication in different Mediterranean countries for different target groups (citizens, local entities and municipalities, scholars and their teachers, and journalists);
- 2) To share experiences and lessons learned on the development of risk communication tools;
- 3) To develop and test the communication tools developed;
- 4) To prepare and promote technical and policy recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness of the communication on wildfire risk and to reduce social vulnerability to wildfires in the Mediterranean region, with special attention to North African countries.

*Expected deliverables:*

The main results can be grouped in two areas:

- Development of a communication toolkit for the capacity building of citizens and communities towards wildfire risk prevention, adapted to three target audiences: i) Communities and municipalities (inhabitants and managers of wildland urban interface), ii) Scholars, youths and their teachers, iii) Journalists and media professionals.
- Edition and dissemination of operational and strategic recommendations for the improvement of the communication on risk and reduction of social vulnerability to wildfires in Mediterranean areas, transferred to the relevant authorities.

The results will be up-scaled and transferred to other areas in Europe and from the Mediterranean that might be affected by episodes of extreme fire in the near future, and will be useful to the strategic communication of other natural hazards such as floods, storms or avalanches. The tools developed will be proposed to UNISDR, in case they want to integrate them into their toolkit for Making Cities Resilient.

## 2. General summary of project implementation process

Generally, the project development has been done according to the initial action plan complemented within the project extension of 3 months asked on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2016 that was accepted on December 21<sup>th</sup> 2016.

The extension was motivated to ensure the fully achievement of the project objectives, especially with regards the guidelines and operational tools adaptation to the Southern Mediterranean context, as some difficulties in engaging southern Mediterranean partners were found because the budget management (see point 3). Once the situation was clarified, we could better involve them in the project development.

From administrative point of view, the extension helped to do a proper use of the financial sources of the project with the corresponding co-financing from the Southern Mediterranean partners, which had difficulties in assuming the EU rules.

A positive benefit of the extension was the full participation of the project in the V Mediterranean Forest Week held in Morocco on 20-24th March 2017, as two of the partners of the eFIRECOM consortium (CTFC and EFIMED) were in the Organizing committee of the V MFW. A session for project results dissemination was included.

All in all, expected results in terms of deliverables has been achieved and all those outcomes for public dissemination are available in the project website.

## 3. Evaluation of project management/implementation process

The project management and implementation process has been successful in terms of actions development and partnership cooperation. The international partnership of the project has provided several pan-European and Mediterranean contexts in the project development which has generated a positive results in terms of transferability and mainstreaming.

The main internal difficulty with regards the effective involvement of the southern Mediterranean countries was partially solved with the amendment sent on September 7<sup>th</sup> and accept, with regards the budget management of DGF Tunis and University of Batna.

Basically, they cannot give to LP – because of internal issues - any account where to transfer EU funds with the guaranty that it was to be used for the implementation of the project. Thus, they could not receive or pay any money to implement project's activities. Despite this difficulty, both southern partners were still very keen on participating in the project, to develop and implement the intended wildfire risk communication tools. In fact, the staff involved collaborated with the design of the proposal and participated to the discussions and tasks. Therefore, to overcome this administrative burden, it was suggested that CTFC manages the funds related to travels (e.g. workshops, meetings) and subcontracting (e.g. translations, printing of booklets) expenses. Southern partners were responsible of covering its staff expenses and daily allowances as a form of contribution to the project. Invoices related to travel and subcontracting expenses were thus addressed directly to and paid by the CTFC.

At the end of the project, University of Batna was able to provide CTFC with the corresponding co-financing. Unfortunately, although all the support and efforts done by the LP, DGF-Tunis was not able to send their corresponding co-financing documents.

#### 4. Activities (only those inside the first progress report period are mentioned)

##### *Task A: Project management and reporting to the EU Commission*

Follow-up partnership and vis-à-vis meetings has been host by the Lead Partner for the general project monitoring. In the last progress report, two on line partnership meetings were done in October 4<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>th</sup>. See minutes in the annex.

##### *Task B: Capitalisation actions on wildfire risk communication in the Mediterranean*

Actions were undertaken properly and deliverables are available in the project website.

##### *Task C: Specific fire risk communication tools for communities and municipalities (C&M)*

Actions were undertaken properly and deliverables are available in the project website.

##### *Task D: Specific fire risk communication tools for children, youth and their teachers (CY&T)*

Actions were undertaken properly and deliverables are available in the project website.

##### *Task E: Specific fire risk communication tools for journalists and media (J&M)*

Actions were undertaken properly and deliverables are available in the project website.

##### *Task F: Publicity, communication and dissemination*

Project dissemination action has been complemented into the extension period with the participation in the V Mediterranean Forest Week held in Morocco (20-24th March 2017), which give and excellent opportunity for the project results dissemination all along the Mediterranean. eFIRECOM project was presented into the Communication Side Event “Communicating for forest and people” organized by the Forest Communicator Network for the Mediterranean and Near East.

Other relevant activities where the project results were disseminated are listed below:

- International Conference on Forest Fires and WUI Fires (Aix en Provence, France, 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> May 2016)
- Conference "Cambio climático y global, incendios y uso del fuego en ecosistemas Mediterráneos" (Almeria, Spain, 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> November 2016)
- eFIRECOM workshop: “Incendis forestals i percepció social; la comunicació com a eina de gestió del risc” (Manresa, Spain, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016)
- International Congress on Prescribed Fires (Barcelona, Spain, 1<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>th</sup> February 2017). Print version of the deliverables were distributed among the participants.

On the other hand, project results have been presented in three official master degrees at different universities of Spain.

A massive directed sending of the project outputs has been done at Spanish level to main end users actors identified, such as universities, associations and organizations dealing with forest fire risk issues and with special attention on its communication. In sum, 112 organizations received 4 exemplars of the

booklet of myths and facts in forest fires and 4 exemplars of guideline for journalists and communicators (2 units in English language + 2 units in Spanish language) plus a brief presentation of the eFIRECOM project.

With regards dissemination actions beyond the project calendar, eFIRECOM project has been selected to be present in the following activities:

- Annual meeting of the UNECE/FAO Forest Communicators Network, which will be held in Malaga (Spain) next 30<sup>th</sup> May 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Spanish Forestry Congress (26-30<sup>th</sup> June in Plasencia (Spain) to present the tools and the actions for children and youth developed.
- European Forum on Urban Forestry (Barcelona, May 31<sup>st</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup>).
- The eFIRECOM output “video about forest fires phenomenon” to promote awareness amongst children, youth and their teachers has been selected to participate in the International Eco & Tourism Film Festival, which will take place during 31<sup>st</sup> May to 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017 in Tortosa (Spain).

Detailed information of all dissemination actions is described in the Deliverable “Compilation of information and publicity actions at EU and international level” available on the project website.

## 5. Presentation of the technical results and deliverables

Fundamentally, project results achieved can be grouped in three main groups:

- 1) Those related the Project Management, as the Project Management Plan or meeting minutes, not available for the public audience.
- 2) All the technical reports and deliverables available in on line version, in the project website, in English version.
- 3) Among the second category, all edit, printed and translated to the local languages outcomes.

Within this third category, they are the most tangible results, a total number of 10 printed documents available in English, Spanish, French, Catalan and Arabic have been edit and distributed, as follow:

- Booklet on myths and facts about wildfires in the Mediterranean, addressed to general public, with the title: “Fire and forest fires in the Mediterranean; a relationship story between forests and society”.
- Booklet with operational recommendations to enhance citizens’ involvement in wildfire risk management through communication actions, addressed to communicators, risk managers and practitioners, with the title: “Forest fires risk communication operational recommendations to improve social prevention”.
- Policy brief about wildfire risk culture and communication, addressed to policy makers, with the title: “FOREST FIRES: Creating a resilient society”.
- Document on “Forest fire risk in the wildland-urban interface; elements for the analysis of the vulnerability of municipalities and homes at risk”, including two study cases of Guideline for the self-evaluation of properties to the Wildfire risk in urban interface and, Guideline for the assessment of wildfire risk in the municipality in French. A trans-national common document with an available matrix to be adapted to each context in the other languages is included.
- Storybook for children about fire and forest fires in the Mediterranean called “Baby burn and Fierce Flame”.

- Teaching Programmes for children, youth and teachers.
- Short videos created with and for children and youth (original version in Catalan, and subtitle in English, Spanish and French).
- Forest fires phenomenon posters to be exposed in classroom.
- Guideline for the journalists and media on the effective information of fire risk towards a better social understanding and resilience, with the title: “FOREST FIRES; guideline for communicators and journalists”.

## 6. Evaluation of the technical results and deliverables

In terms of contents, the international partnership and visits has been very useful for correctly adapt the deliverables to the local context. This is referred not only in terms of updating local information of burnt areas, normative, etc., but also including cultural aspects. For example, the Arabic version of the storyline has had some modification as the potential of using the prescribed burning at southern Mediterranean countries is not the same as is in Spain or France.

The active involvement of some of the expert form the Panel has also help to better adapt the project delivers to the Mediterranean country.

A successful story about the interest on the project results took place during the International Congress on Prescribed Fire where many results of the eFIRECOM project where delivered and disseminated through the audience (500 attendants). The specific deliverable for journalists and media “Forest fires, guidelines for journalists and communicators”, reached an important interest level amongst different actors and potential synergies and networking can be established at the short term. In particular, the coordinator of the project “Hungarian forest fire prevention and training program -FIRELIFE”, co-financed by the EU’s LIFE programme (LIFE13 INF/HU/000827) was strongly interested on the journalist guideline as a best practice to be implemented in FIRELIFE project. For these reason they ask to LP to establish collaboration in order to submit an editable version to be adapted at the Hungarian context.

## 7. Follow-up

The project results are being intensively disseminated along meetings, workshops and conferences, and globally, they are showing a high interest about them.

Partners will follow undertaking actions with regards the promotion of risk culture and communication, and therefore, synergies with other projects and initiative are expected. Project website will be on line two more years, and main project results will also be host in the knowledge platform *Lessons on fire* developed in the frame of the prior FIREfficient project.

Contacts done with the Forest Communication Network as well as the Forest Communicator Network for the Mediterranean and Near East will facilitate the project results dissemination all across Europe and the Mediterranean.

Finally, from technical point of view, knowledge base developed along the project will be taken into account for next UCPM calls, for potential new projects.