

# Global Wildland Fire Network



## Sub-Regional Euro-Alpine Wildland Fire Network

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### Retrospective 2019-2023

- Key challenges
- Network activities
- Progress in Integrated Fire Management
- Institutional capacity building and policy development



**8<sup>TH</sup>**  
INTERNATIONAL  
WILDLAND FIRE  
CONFERENCE

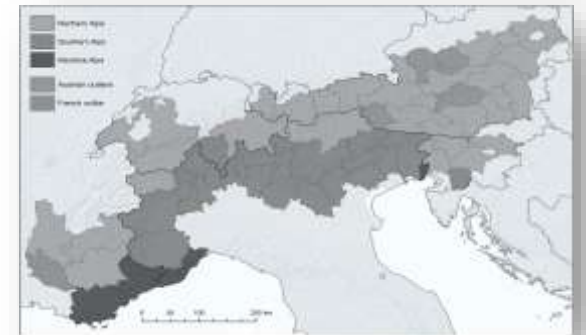
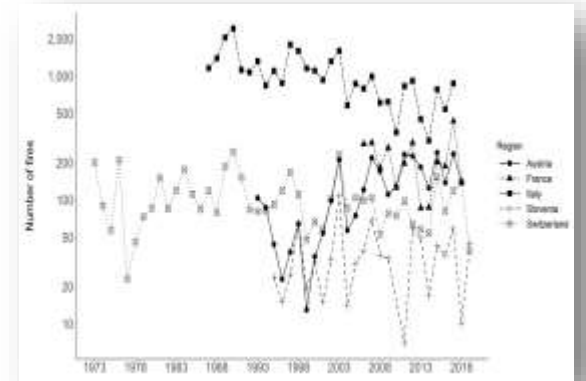
### Key challenges

- mountain forests in the Alps provide many ecosystem services and have an important contribution to protection function against natural hazards
- intensity of drought periods, heat waves and fire hazard resulting from rural abandonment and recreational activities increases wildfires in the Alpine region
- Forest fires lead to loss of natural resources, decreased productivity, soil erosion, higher risk of rockfall, avalanche-prone slopes and mudslides
- Further reduction of the protection function of mountain forests due to increased vulnerability to natural hazards
- Firefighting generally difficult in the Alps due to the rugged topography and low accessibility
- costs of firefighting, civil protection measures, post-fire restoration and necessary protective measures will strongly
- Increased danger for humans and infrastructure at wildland-urban-interface



## Network activities

- Updating database on fire records in European Alpine Region for joint publications (Conedera et al. (2018); Bekar et al. (2020); Moris et al. (2023))
- exchange between research groups in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Slovenia and Italy for joint application for funding (H2020, Interreg CE)
- White Paper for policy makers “FOREST FIRES IN THE ALPS - State of knowledge, future challenges and options for an integrated fire management” (Müller et al. 2020)



Collection of Data, Survey  
and Workshop about  
forest fires in the Alps



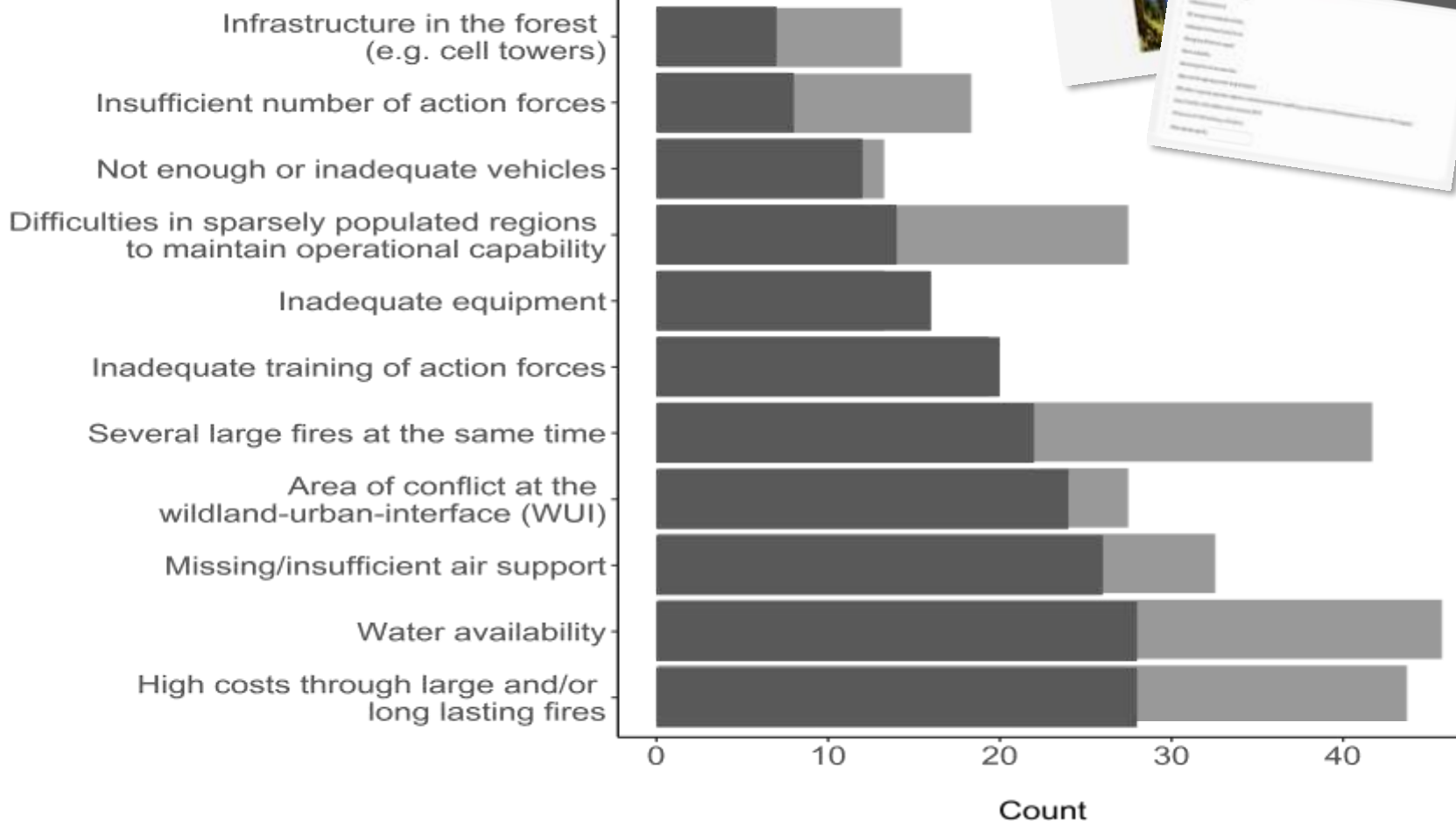
Identification of the  
main challenges



White paper for  
possible options for an  
integrated fire management

## Joint survey about prevention, suppression and policy measures

### Future challenges of forest fire fighting



### Additional challenges:

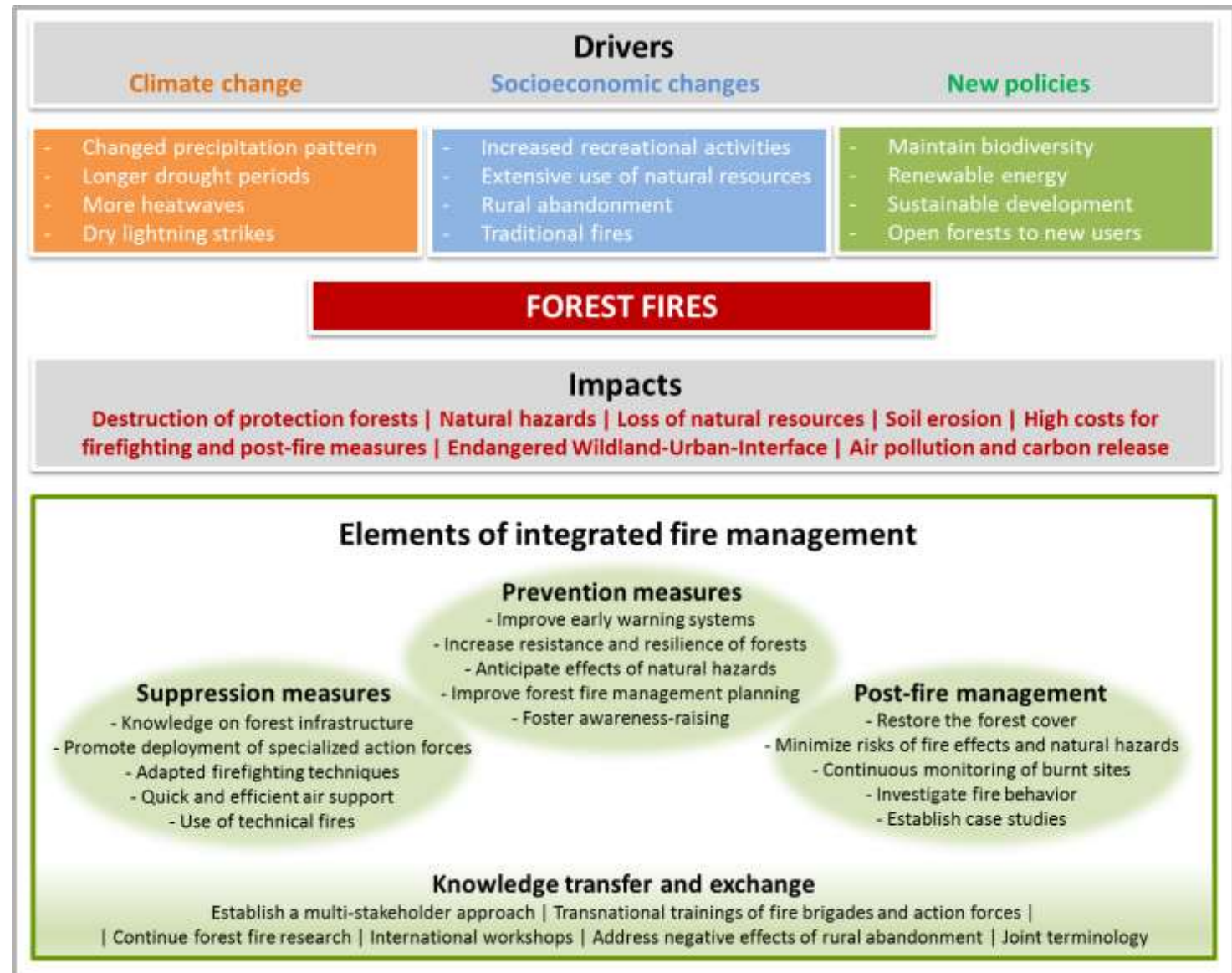
- Inaccessibility
- Poor coordination/communication
- Forest road condition (in winter)
- Adaptation to changing fire regime
- Insufficient funds
- Non-professional action forces
- Lack of experience
- Topography
- Missing training at all levels
- Management of large fires
- Inadequate air strikes / night flight prohibitions
- Staff management
- Fire intensity
- Lack of equipment maintenance

■ Importance at present  
■ Importance in approx. 10 years

## White paper: Integrated fire management for the Alpine region



Müller, MM; Vilà-Vilardell, L; Vacik, H (2020): Forest fires in the Alps – State of knowledge, future challenges and options for an integrated fire management.. EUSALP Action Group 8, 83



## Recommendations for Institutional capacity building and policy development

- **Design and implement short- and long-term prevention measures** (e.g. early warning systems promoting site adapted tree species, fuel management and prescribed burning, fire awareness culture)
- **Adapt suppression measures to specific conditions of Alpine region** (e.g. quick and efficient air support by helicopters, deployment of specialized action forces)
- **Improve understanding and measures on post-fire management** (e.g. continuous monitoring and case studies, restoration of forest cover using technical measures)
- **Support knowledge transfer and exchange of experiences** (e.g. transnational trainings joint terminology, raise awareness about rural tourism and recreational activities)

