



Brussels 30/11/2022

ECHO.B.2

**Subject: Overview of the Wildfire Prevention Action Plan**

The 2022 wildfire season confirmed an upward trend in intense wildfires, with more wildfire events occurred and more forestland burnt than in previous years. Both 2021 and 2022 also saw a high number of Member States requests under the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) for assistance with wildfires. With climate change, this upward trend in wildfire intensity is expected to exacerbate in the future and the need to safeguard out forests from wildfires will grow.

Member States have repeatedly expressed support to intensify efforts to prevent wildfires, in addition to improved response and preparedness, including at the informal Ministerial meeting on reinforcing wildfire preparedness and response in Brussels in September 2022. To facilitate these efforts and help better manage forests and landscapes, reduce the ignition of fires in the first place and limit their impacts, the Commission has put forward a new **wildfire prevention action plan**. This plan will make full use of the tools under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, including the Union disaster resilience goals planned to be adopted by the end of 2022. It will complement the preparedness efforts under rescEU and will build on other EU initiatives, such as the EU Forest Strategy.

The proposed **ten actions** are organised around three themes, which will help safeguard our forests from wildfires: i) improved **capacity** to prevent wildfires, ii) improved **knowledge** on wildfires for prevention, and iii) increased **financing** for wildfire prevention actions. The plan will be taken forward through reinforced dialogue and cooperation with the Member States on these actions, with clear legal base and proposed deliverables.

<b>I</b>	<b>Improved capacity to prevent wildfires</b>
<b>1</b>	Strengthen capacity building through targeted peer reviews on wildfire prevention and preparedness (UCPM Article 6.1.e).
<b>2</b>	Develop disaster scenarios including wildfires (Article 10) and develop specific wildfire prevention disaster resilience goals (UCPM Article 6.5).
<b>3</b>	Good practice guide on wildfire prevention, with national civil protection and forest management experts building on other EU policies (e.g. EU Forest strategy 2030, Biodiversity strategy, Adaptation strategy actions) and existing guidance and recommendations (UCPM 5.1.a).

<b>4</b>	Good practices on raising wildfire risk awareness to enhance prevention, followed by development of a good practice guide further development of disaster risk awareness, public information and education with the aim to further enhance citizen protection, preparedness and prevention (UCPM Article 5.1.i)
<b>5</b>	Development of new wildfire risk awareness and communication actions at EU level (UCPM Article 3.1.d).
<b>6</b>	Launch a dialogue process with Member States on wildfire disaster prevention with recurrent UCPM activations for wildfires (UCPM Article 6.4).
<b>II</b>	<b>Improved knowledge on wildfires for increased prevention</b>
<b>7</b>	Model the economic and geographic impact of future wildfires, to better understand and plan for the future financial needs for response and prevention (World Bank study, Phase 2.0)
<b>8</b>	Improve the assessment and mapping of wildfire risk, taking a multi hazard approach and climate change scenarios into account (UCPM 5.1.b and d), and to encourage improved collection of data on past disaster events (UCPM Article 6.1.e).
<b>III.</b>	<b>Increased financing of wildfire prevention actions</b>
<b>9</b>	Encouraging use of UCPM prevention and preparedness funding instruments for national, cross-border or pan-European projects to support wildfire prevention and improve the uptake of good practices (UCPM Article 21.1.a and Article 5).
<b>10</b>	Encourage further use of EU funds for investing in wildfire prevention and analyse the current uptake of EU funds for disaster risk management (UCPM.5.1.h)