

Operational tools for improving efficiency in wildfire risk reduction in EU landscapes

FIREfficient

Course

***New tools for fire prevention.
Risk management with a territorial vision.***

(Barcelona and Castellnou de Bages, Octubre 2015)

Course description

Title: New tools for fire prevention. Risk management with a territorial vision.

Objective: The main objective of the course was providing a new territorial vision, based on the big forest fires prevention, to the environmental sector professionals.

Methodology: To reach such an objective we used *Methodology for incorporating large fire risk into landscape management decision making* and *Large forest fire assessment and fuel management: into operational tools and integrated approach* developed in the FIREfficient project.

Pupils: The pupils of the course were mainly environmental technicians from different levels (mainly local and regional). Several Degree and Master's degree students also took the course in the Environmental Science and Forest Engineering fields.

Course development

The Association of Environmentalists of Catalonia and Pau Costa Foundation organised a technique session named 'New tools for fire prevention. Risk management with a territorial vision', which took place during the 15th and 16th of October. This activity was carried out with the support of *FIREfficient: Operational tools for improving efficiency in wildfire risk reduction in EU landscapes* European project. The first day was a theoretical session which was carried out in a classroom of the Association of Environmentalists of Catalonia (COAMB, Barcelona) and the second consisted on a field trip in Bages region.

Theoretical session

The theoretical session started with Mr. Eduard Plana's explanation (Responsible from the Forestry and Governance Political Area from the Technological Centre of Catalonia) that brought to light the complexity of risk management, where the human being as an individual, the technological factor, the "change" factor, the economical factor, the administrative juridical factor and socio-political factor are involved. One of the conclusions was that forest fires are becoming a plausible reason to involve the society in the promotion of the forestry sector.

The theoretical session continued with Mr. Eduard Balsells, president and promoter of Ramats al Bosc association, explaining the problem from which the association initiative came up, as well as his objectives and values, mainly socioeconomic and environmental. He also explained the procedure they follow to carry out an intervention and which obstacles can be found.

Finally, Mr. Jordi Pagès, forestry engineer and GRAF technician – Firemen of Generalitat de Catalunya, expounded and determined that the main objective in the forest management is to ration the fuel load and distribution. He introduced two tools to carry it out: on one hand, the prescribed burning and, on the other hand, the intensive silviculture or forest and pasture management in SMP's (Strategic Management Points) zones.



Image. Theory session in Barcelona, 15th October

Field session

On the day after the field trip, which had three stops, was carried out. The instructors Mr. Asier Larrañaga (GRAF assistant inspector – Firemen of Generalitat de Catalunya) and Mr. Albert Besalú (environmental specialist specialised in forest fires) guided and exposed the concepts. The first stop was focused on explaining in detail the performance of Castellnou de Bages fire (2005) from an elevated geographical spot of this municipality.

Right after, the second stop was located in a close zone of Avinyó village, where an intensive forestry management which had been carried out in a determined zone to create a SMP was observed. To end the session, a last stop was done in Clapers zone (Santa Maria d'Oló) where prescribed burnings have already been done in several plots through the Prescribed Burn Plan and the procedure which had been used was exposed in detail; from its planning to its execution. The role of silvopastoral system as a tool to keep the zone and how it could be integrated to the other treatments was also discussed.



Image. Field trip in Castellnou de Bages, 16th October