



NEWSLETTER N.1

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1. EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

MEFISTO (Mediterranean Forest Fire Fighting Training Standardisation - GA N. ECHO/SUB/2016/742556/PREP24) is a cooperation European project co-funded by the General Directorate for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operation (DG ECHO) of the European Commission (EC), to be realized between **January 2017** and **January 2019**.

One of the aims of our project is to disseminate the activities and the results of the project, related to the improvement of knowledge and cooperation in the field of forest fire fighting among **Mediterranean European** countries, especially concerning the training activities of European fire-fighters. For doing this, a newsletter will be released periodically to reach as many individuals and organizations as possible, from the science community and stakeholders/end-users.

I hope that the launch of our 1st newsletter is the first step of the project's activities for disseminating the work carried out by **MEFISTO's Partners**. I wish that this is also the first opportunity for stakeholders in the field of forest fires to know MEFISTO and to start a productive exchange of experiences and contributions. These are the reasons why I recommend to all the people interested in fire fighting activity to write us for any question, doubt or suggestion. Many thanks to everyone who will spend time in taking part in **MEFISTO's activities**.

Enrico Marchi
MEFISTO Coordinator

Associate Professor at Department of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Systems, University of Florence (ITALY)

2. THE PROJECT

The MEFISTO project is one of the 26 projects about prevention and preparedness selected and funded by European DG ECHO (DIRECTORATE GENERAL EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID OPERATIONS), in 2016.

The full title is: MEDITERRANEAN FOREST FIRE FIGHTING TRAINING STANDARDISATION. Coordinated by the University of Florence, MEFISTO aims to raise the preparedness level through an efficient and standardised training protocol developed by a representative network of Mediterranean stakeholders. This project addresses new opportunities regarding interoperability between Mediterranean training centers, allowing international cooperation against disasters related to forest fires. MEFISTO also aims at establishing training programs with specific sessions on the organization, protocols and procedures applied in the neighboring Countries. Its general objective is improve the effectiveness of the cross-border fire fighting and to allow an easy and safe transfer of human and material resources from a Country to another.

The Project duration is 24 months, from January 15th, 2017 to January 15th, 2019, with a total budget of 434.309€, where the EC contribution is € 325.732 (75%).

Partners:



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OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the project is the development of procedures for improving efficiency and effectiveness of the forest fire fighting system at European level, increasing the collaboration capacity among Countries, developing common high quality standards in fire fighting training systems, and sharing knowledge.

The main objectives of the project are:

1. to share knowledge on strategies, tactics and methods applied in each of the Mediterranean Countries involved in the project and develop the basis for the future involvement of other EU Countries.
2. To standardize specific protocols and procedures applied in the neighboring countries, in order to improve the effectiveness on cross-border fire fighting and to allow an easy, fast and safe transfer of human and material facilities from a Country to another during fire events. These training sessions should be especially addressed to firefighters located close to the national borders.
3. To develop a standardized and common terminology in order to improve the communication efficacy in join fire fighting operation.
4. To develop standardized operational training skills for forest firefighters.
5. To establish an organization of representatives and agencies which manage and monitor the skills and the certification of competences at national level. This organization should define and maintain minimum standards of skills and abilities in forest fire fighting training, applied in all European countries. With the setting of standards, the new organization will contribute to the improvement of health and safety, and the mobility due to the interchange ability of the certificates.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. The redaction of guidelines and reports concerning the organization, strategies and methods applied in each country in fire fighting activities. These documents will contain the main elements to be included in the training sessions addressed to international cooperation; i.e. protocols and procedures applied in the neighboring countries in order to improve the effectiveness on cross-border fire fighting.
2. The definition of the standards in fire fighting training system which can be applied in all Partners' Countries (training assessment, assessment methods, scoresheets). The definition of the standards will be particularly addressed towards the improvement of both health and safety of the personnel, and the efficacy and effectiveness of prevention and suppression activities. Addressing this issue, the transferability of the results to the other EU Countries is particularly important.
3. The promotion of new initiatives of training in all the involved structures.
4. The development of European supranational qualifications of European Forest Fire personnel.
5. The institution of an European network with the aims of developing and guaranteeing the international collaboration on training and assessment of firefighter skills.
6. The implementation of an international pilot training course, including test of the skills assessment procedures.

THE ACTIONS

A. Project Management

Administrative and financial implementation of the project and overall scientific and technical coordination of its activities.

B. Mediterranean forest fire fighting

Overall analysis, comparison and improvement of the forest fire fighting training system applied in the involved Countries.

C. Common terminology and good practices

Development of a common standardized terminology for common procedures in fire fighting.

D. Transnational cooperation

Development of a well-structured Mediterranean network with competence in organizing and managing transnational cooperation against forest fires.

E. Standardization and implementation

Definition of the figures involved in forest fire fighting and creation of a standardized set of training programs.

F. Communication and dissemination

Widest dissemination of the project technical results within the consortium, the scientific community and the European forestry sector.

3. PARTNERS



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Università degli Studi di Firenze

The University of Florence is one of the largest organizations for research and higher education in Italy, with over 1700 tenured teaching staff and researchers, over 1600 permanent technical/administrative staff and language assistants and over 55 thousand students enrolled.

Scientific research is carried out in the 24 Departments of the University, grouped into 5 major areas: Social Sciences, Humanities, Scientific, Technological and Biomedical areas. A large part of the yearly budget is allocated to scientific research. In the recent past, the University of Florence has been ranked top among Italian Universities in the distribution of national research funds. High-level research avails itself of the "centres of excellence", which attract funding and form synergies with other institutions.

UNIFI is the project coordinator and is responsible for task A. In task C, it shares responsibility with ENB.



**CESEFOR, Castilla y León
Wood & Forest Service
Center**

CESEFOR (www.cesefor.com) is a private non-profit Foundation founded in January 2003. It is a service Centre for the promotion of forestry and forest-based industries with a national and international remit. The Foundation contributes to the regional development, competitiveness and sustainability of the forestry industries that use regional forest resources. In order to do this, CeseFor brings together a range of services: capacity building, consultancy, training and R&D projects. One of the most active working lines is focused on IT developments for the forestry sector: web and software development, GIS analysis and applications, mobile devices solutions for geographical projects, and high-tech solutions for forestry products evaluation, such as the Lidar application for forestry inventories. Moreover, CESEFOR is highly experienced in communication and dissemination activities: CESEFOR publishes "IndForma": a leading e-newsletter of the Spanish forest sector. The Foundation has developed internal expertise in communication of forest-related R&D to forest-related audiences including: graphic design, web page development and management, social media, event planning and organization, newsletters and media work. CESEFOR's International Cooperation Department hosts the Secretariat of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network since 2008 (www.imfn.net).

The CESEFOR's end users within this project are the Regional Government of Castilla y León (final user to develop and exploit the rural roads network), the regional Civil Protection Agency of Castilla y León and the Spanish Rural Police (Seprona).

CESEFOR is the partner responsible for task F: "Communication and dissemination".



ENB, Escola Nacional de Bombeiros

The National Fire Service School (ENB) is a private non-profit organization owned by the National Authority for Civil Protection (ANPC) and the Confederation of the Portuguese Firefighters (LBP).

ENB is recognized by the Portuguese Government as a public utility entity and the pedagogical authority for the Portuguese firefighters technical training. Established on 4th of May 1995, ENB has more than two decades of experience on developing the skills and expertise of firefighters and other civil protection agents. ENB is based in Sintra and has two more national training centres, one specialized in forest fires, in Lousã, and other focused on industrial and urban incidents, in S. João da Madeira. At the regional level, the School has 38 Local Training Units strategically distributed and a network of 1800 local trainers that assure the training in the 436 Portuguese fire stations.

This know-how is properly recognized and certified at national and international level. ENB is a member of EFSCA (European Fire Service College's Association), member of NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) and IFE (Institution of Fire Engineers) Affiliate. In 2016 ENB has trained 18.522 firefighters through 1.425 training courses in different technical areas related to firefighter activity.

ENB is the partner responsible for task B: "Mediterranean forest fire fighting: state of the art". In task C, it shares responsibility with UNIFI.



**VALABRE, École D'Application
de Sécurité Civile**

Is a public civil protection body in France with the overall aim of protecting people and the environment from natural disasters and technological hazards. Within this role, ENTENTE plays a key role as a State partner for protection from wildfires and forest fires. With 29 local authorities, ENTENTE unites 14 French counties and departmental fire and rescue services. Since 2004, ENTENTE has been open to the regions of France, with the Corsican local authority the first to join.

EPLFM is divided into 4 key departments with specific responsibilities and expertise.

The Information and Prevention Department of ENTENTE is responsible for designing and implementing prevention actions. This department serves as the communications department of ENTENTE and is also in charge of implementing prevention campaigns both for and with local authorities. These prevention campaigns can be targeted at one or more different social groups, including professionals, residents, tourists and students. The training department of ENTENTE (called ECASC), is responsible for developing and delivering innovative and highly specialized training to civil protection professionals in the fields of rescue and natural and technological risks. Since its creation in 1967, ECASC has been heavily implicated in the development and delivery of training on forest fires. The key focus of the department is to deliver training that enables professionals to carry out interventions in a common and coherent approach and to implement the national reference guides of the Ministry of the Interior.

ENTENTE is the partner responsible for task E: "Training programs standardization and implementation".

3. PARTNERS

REGIONE TOSCANA



REGIONE TOSCANA (RT)

The outline law on forest fires, law 21 november 2000, no. 353, gives the Regions a fundamental role in planning and managing activities of forest fire prediction, prevention and fighting. Therefore the Forestazione – Antincendi boschivi (AIB) Organization - of Tuscany Region is responsible of the prevision, prevention and fighting activities relating forest fires.

The AIB organisation is also in charge to draw up the regional multi-annual operational plans (called Piano Operativo Antincendi Boschivi, now current Piano Operativo Antincendi Boschivi 2014-2017) in order to plan and define the forest fire prevention and fighting: fire statistics, risk index and hazard, general prevision, prevention and fighting activities relating to forest fire, operative procedure, training and information activities are included in this operational plan.

The Tuscany Region, with the goal of complying at best with the requirements above mentioned, established the Regional Training Centre 'La Pineta di Tocchi' – Municipality of Monticiano – Siena which was inaugurated in 2007 and which is used to inform and train the personnel who take part, a different levels, to activities of forest fire prevention and fighting: courses were organized for fire incident commander, team co-ordinators, basic operators, self-protection operators, all- purpose and fire-fighting vehicles, operators dealing with provincial and regional control rooms, drip torch for backfire use, prescribed fire (planner, fire boss and drip torch).



REGIONE TOSCANA is the partner responsible for task D: "Network creation and procedures implementation for transnational cooperation".



4. EVENTS

KICK-OFF EVENT, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

The kick off meeting 2016 of the Prevention and Preparedness selected projects was held in Brussels on January 18th, 2017. The meeting was organized by the DG ECHO with the following aims:

-  To present the selected projects at the call for proposals 2016 for prevention and preparedness projects in the field of civil protection and marine pollution.
-  To share information about the selected projects among project coordinators.

Our Project Coordinator, Prof. **Enrico Marchi**, presented the MEFISTO project, and Mr. José Ferreira, a member of the ENB, also attended the meeting.








The initial meeting was divided into two parts:

In the first part, DG ECHO staff made a series of presentations on technical aspects of projects and administrative, financial and legal issues. The second part was dedicated to the presentation of the projects.

The presentation that the coordinator used to explain the project was published on the Internet through the DG ECHO website (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection-europe/selected-projects/Mefisto_en).

LAUNCHING CONFERENCE, FLORENCE, ITALY

The MEFISTO opening meeting was held in Florence (Italy) on February 6-7th, 2017 at the University of Florence (Departments of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Systems, Via S. Bonaventura 13, 50145 Firenze, Italy). Representatives of all the consortium partners attended the opening meeting. The meeting focused on the following issues:





-  Introduction of project partners of MEFISTO Project.
-  Report on the results of the Kick off Meeting.
-  Become familiar with the project objectives.
-  Establish a detailed plan for all Tasks/Actions.
-  Discuss the procedures, deliverables, milestones, steps, and actions to be taken.
-  Creation of the Scientific Board.
-  Introduction of the project management and other tools for internal communication.

During the opening meeting, our project coordinator Prof. Enrico Marchi made a presentation on the project and on the coordination, financial and administrative aspects. All Partners introduced the main aspects for the development of each Action and established the project schedule.

5. STATE OF THE PROJECT

1. Task A - Coordination and project management

During the first MEFISTO six months the following project management activities have been implemented:

-  **Participation to the kick off meeting:** The kick off meeting was held in Brussels on January. MEFISTO project was represented in the kick off meeting by the Project Coordinator Prof. Enrico Marchi and Mr. José Ferreira member of the ENB team.
-  **Opening meeting:** The first MEFISTO meeting, held in Florence on February 6th and 7th, 2017, aimed to the organization of project activities in agreement with the project proposal. A detailed program with internal deadlines was prepared and shared with the Partners in order to better control the implementation of the whole project activities.
-  **Partnership Agreement:** During the first two months of the project the consortium drafted and signed the MEFISTO Partnership Agreement.
-  **Project's amendments:** Following the decisions of the MEFISTO opening meeting an amendment request was sent to MEFISTO Desk Officer in order to inform DG ECHO on some changes and needs for a better project implementation.

2. Task B - Mediterranean forest fire fighting: state of the art

During the first six months a specific questionnaire was prepared to gather the most accurate information on the activities related to forest fire fighting in each Participating Country. All Members completed the questionnaire. In addition, the questionnaire was circulated to other entities responsible for fire fighting services in other European Countries to collect information outside the MEFISTO Partnership. This information is essential for the preparation of the report "Drafting of guidelines: Similarities and differences between EU Mediterranean Countries in the fight against forest fires: a challenge for improvement".

3. Task C - Towards European procedures for Forest Fire Fighting: developing common terminology and good practices sharing and agreement

In the first six months of activity the glossary structure and a first draft of the glossary was created by UNIFI. ENTENTE also prepared a questionnaire to be compiled by all Partners regarding their actual existing procedures in forest fire fighting. Partners will fill in the questionnaire not later than October 15th, 2017. The collected information will be the fundamental base for developing the expected shared European procedures.

4. Task D - Network creation and procedures implementation for transnational cooperation

The establishment of a new organization for improving the networking among European countries was discussed: MEFISTO project aims to be the starting point for a joined European standardisation in forest fire fighting. Standardised methods, procedures and techniques, which will be implemented during the project, will allow cross border collaborations, also thanks to the new figure of European Forest Firefighter. These are the fundamental aspects that, together with the new "organisation", will deeply enhance and improve the European collaboration in forest fire fighting.

5. Task E - Training programs standardization and implementation

To be developed in the coming months.

6. Task F - Communication and dissemination

The website has been created: www.mefistoforestfires.eu and is currently online...check it out!


A press release was written by CESEFOR and disseminated within a list of stakeholders previously prepared thanks to the contribution of all the Partners.

Moreover, CESEFOR prepared several documents to help information and dissemination activities following a "communication and corporate identity strategy".

6. FOLLOW UP

For the next 6 months the following activities are planned:

Task B - Mediterranean forest fire fighting: state of the art

 **September 2017:** Based on the questionnaires carried out in the past months, UNIFI will prepare, with the participation of all partners, a series of guidelines: "Similarities and differences between EU Mediterranean Countries in Forest Fire Fighting: a challenge for improvement".

 **November 2017:** UNIFI will prepare the final version.

Task C - Towards European procedures for Forest Fire Fighting : developing common terminology and good practices sharing and agreement

 **October 2017:** Information collection regarding existing protocols of trans national and trans regional cooperation in forest fire fighting.


 **November 2017:** Portugal meeting. The collected data will be discussed during the meeting in Portugal in order to define the European procedures.

 **December 2017:** Between the months of August and December 2017 the partners will translate the glossary that UNIFI sent to them in the month of June.

Task D - Network creation and procedures implementation for transnational cooperation

 **November 2017:** The establishment of the new organization is expected: between the Tuscany Region and the other MEFISTO partners and, possibly, other interested stakeholders.

Task E - Training programs standardization and implementation

 Before the meeting in Portugal: Each partner will send to ENB the programs of the training courses included in its own training activity. This information will be evaluated by everyone at the meeting in Portugal.

Task F - Communication and dissemination

 **November 2017:** the next project meeting will be held in Portugal. CESEFOR will distribute the project brochures and posters.

Contact us:

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