



Bulletin of Forest Fire risk in Albania- The experience of the Albania National Centre for forecast and Monitoring of Natural Risks

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In the territory of Albania usually every year around 1000 ha are affected by forest fires, from which about 500 ha are completely destroyed. The number of forest fires (nf), with the burning surface (bs) in years has been like this: during the years 1988-1998: $nf / bs = 2.19$, 1998-2001: $nf / bs = 5.66$, year 2002 -2005: $nf / bs = 8.2$, and during the years 2005-2006: $nf / bs = 11.9$, while economic losses in a year by forest fires is about 2 million of Euro.

The increase in years of these figures and the last floods which happened in the last two years in Shkoder, led to an international cooperation, that between the Italian Civil Protection Department and the Albania General Directorate of Civil Emergency. The focus of this cooperation was the building capacity of the Albanian National System of Civil Protection in forecasting, monitoring and prevention forest fires and floods risks. As a result of this collaboration the "National Center for the Forecast and Monitoring of Natural Risks", was set up at the Institute of Geosciences, Energy, Water and Environment. The Center is the first of its kind in Albania.

The mission of the Center is the prediction and monitoring of the forest fire and flood risk in the Albanian territory, as a tools for risk reduction and mitigation. The first step to achieve this strategy was the implementation of the forest fires risk forecast model "RISICO". RISICO was adapted for whole Albania territory by CIMA Research Foundation. The Center, in the summer season, issues a daily bulletin. The bulletin reports the potential risk scenarios related with the ignition and propagation of fires in Albania. The bulletin is broadcasted through email or fax within 12.00 AM of each working day. It highlights where and when severe risk conditions may occur within the next 48 hours