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Editor's note

Dear friends and colleagues,

Forcip+ (Forest Roads for Civil Protection, GA No. ECHO/SUB/2015/718661/PREP20) is a cooperation European project co-funded by the ECHO European Commission Unit (EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection), to be realized between January 2016 and June 2017.

One of the aim of our project is to reach as many individuals and organizations as possible from the science community and stakeholders/end-users and widely disseminate the project activities and results related to efficient forest fire prevention and suppression through geomatics and ICT applications.

I hope that the launch of our 1st newsletter along with the other two in the series will build an effective communication platform and it will be a good opportunity for us to exchange information and create awareness on fire management. Please do not hesitate to send your suggestions on this publication as well as on project activities.

Petros PATIAS
FORCIP+ Coordinator.

Head of AUTH's Laboratory of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing

The FORCIP+ Project

Fire is an integral component but also a major disturbance factor in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Despite the decreasing trend of both fire number and burned area observed recently, efficient and improved fire prevention and suppression measures are needed for protecting lives, the environment and natural and cultural heritage, especially under foreseen alterations in fire regime due to climate and socioeconomic changes.

The Forcip+ Project aims at improving the use of the forest road network in case of emergency, especially forest fires. Through transnational cooperation:

- Different national requirements will be met and a homogeneous model for forest road classification and inventory will be established in the Euro Mediterranean region for civil protection needs.
- Actual field inventory of a pilot territory in the countries involved will be carried out and included in a webGIS platform.
- ICT applications based on the synergetic use of GNSS/GPS system, ground means management app, and data update system will be developed to improve the efficiency in case of emergency
- Guidelines of good practices on spatial explicit inventory, construction and maintenance of forest road infrastructure, all geared to issues of civil protection will be developed.

Fire specialists and forest managers will be trained in forest road inventory and GIS analysis for resources planning, locating most suitable places for ground means waiting areas or identifying forest surfaces where takes longer to access.

Presented in Brussels the Forcip+ Project to the DG ECHO members

The European Commission Directorate-General Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) organized a **Kick-Off Meeting** to present all the projects selected under the 2015 call for proposals January 2016. There, at the Auditorium of the European Response Co-ordination Centre (ERCC), the Forcip+ Project was represented by the Project Coordinator Prof. Petros Patias, Assistant Prof. Charalampos Georgiadis, members of the AUTH team, and Mr. Riccardo Castellini member of the CESEFOR Foundation. Prof. Patias gave a presentation highlighting the following aspects:



- Project Info
- The Consortium (beneficiary and partners)
- Motivation – Objectives – Expected Results
- Deliverables and deadlines, tentative dates and places for Major Events
- Project Budget
- Sustainability (Final Beneficiaries, Continuation)

The following data describes the project at a glance:

- Activity: Preparedness
- Duration: 18 months
- Starting date: 15-1-2016
- EC contribution (€): 400.231
- Financing rate: 75%

The partnership brings together a set of expertise and experience that cover the challenges laid out in the project. The consortium comprises of:



Coordinator: The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) - Greece



Office National des Forêts (ONF) – France



Università degli Studi di Firenze (UNIFI) – Italy



Slovenian Forestry Institute (SFI) – Slovenia



Fundación Cesefor (CESEFOR) – Spain



The objective of the kick off meeting was to inform the participants about the main administrative and financial aspects of the funding program. After the meeting in Brussels the project Leader could start the technical work launching the first related workshop in Greece ([more information](#) in this newsletter).

The Kick-Off Meeting, a place to know about our neighbors

The kick off meeting has divided in two parts. The first part was a series of presentation by DG ECHO regarding the technical aspects of the projects and the administrative, financial and legal issues. While the second part was devoted to the projects presentation:

1. During the first part the following presentations were given:

- A welcome and introduction presentation by Mr. Hans Das, Head of unit A5
- A presentation regarding the Technical aspects of the project by Ms. Elisabetta Bellocchi, Civil Protection Prevention & Preparedness Programme Manage, Unit ECHO.
- Administrative, Financial and Legal Issues by Ms Anna Szymanek, Financial Unit ECHO.C3, and Ms Mateja Munda, Financial Unit ECHO.C3 for Legal Issues
- During the coffee break the participants had the opportunity to register for a visit to the European Response & Coordination Centre (ERCC).

2. In the afternoon session, the presentations of the project managers continued.

During the lunch and the coffee breaks the project leaders met with the desk officers, responsible to monitor the implementation of the projects.

Documentation: [FORCIP+ KoM PPT](#).

1st Technical Meeting at Greece in February



The FORCIP+ opening meeting was held in Thessaloniki, Greece, at 11-12/1/2016. The opening meeting was hosted by the project coordinator AUTH. All the consortium partners were present at the FORCIP+ opening meeting.

- Office National des Forêts (ONF). France
- Università degli Studi di Firenze - Dipartimento di Gestione dei Sistemi Agrari, Alimentari e forestali (UNIFI). Italy
- Slovenian Forestry Institute (SFI). Slovenia
- Centro de Servicios y Promoción Forestal y de su Industria de Castilla y León (CESEFOR). Spain

The meeting focused on the following issues:

- Introduction of project partners of **FORCIP+**.
- 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
- Introduce the project management and other tools for internal communication.

A total of 17 partner's members and stakeholders were involved in the actions. A new meeting was scheduled for May 2016 in Soria (Castilla y León, Spain). More decisions were agreed, such as:

- To work on common methodologies for emergencies requirements
- To collect inventories data models from the partners
- To collect good practices among the partners
- To think of common cartographic data inputs

To celebrate an intermediate extra technical meeting in June, Soria, Spain.

New meeting in Spain to advance on a common strategy to use forest roads for Civil Protection

The city of Soria (in the Spanish region of Castilla y León) hosted in May 2016 the second working meeting of the Forcip+ project. For two days the partners put together their respective tasks, meeting technicians from the Regional Government of Castilla y León who are currently involved in a similar project, in collaboration with Cesefor, one of the Forcip+ partners.

The main result of this meeting was the establishment and adoption by all the partners of a common data model for road inventories based on firefighting aspects. This data model implies a common road and vehicle classification. In addition to several working sessions, technical visits were also realized in order to know some of the most emblematic infrastructure of Soria in prevention and fire detection systems, such as the air base Garray and the central command control of the province, where the mechanism for preventing and extinguishing fires, and the organization of staff and technological resources available were presented.

The next technical meeting is scheduled to be held at Florence (Italy), December 2016. Meanwhile, the partners will continue to work on the following issues:

- To build a common application for data collection
- To generate the common spatial database with roads inventoried in each region
- Review common bibliography.

