



Improving the INM meteorological support for wildfire prevention and fighting in Spain

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For more than 15 years, the Spanish Meteorological Service (INM) has been providing meteorological support to the Forestry Protection Agencies and Civil Authorities at both national and regional level in order to facilitate the organisation of the wildfires prevention activities and the allocation of the available resources in the areas showing the highest wildfires risk conditions. In this regard and in the context of the annual wildfire campaigns, specific meteorological bulletins containing predictions for the next day of the components of the Spanish meteorological risk index are being routinely issued for a total of 98 sub-zones covering the whole country.

Presently, a new project aimed at updating and improving this meteorological support is being developed in the framework of a close cooperation between the INM and the General Direction of Biodiversity (DGB) of Spain. The first phase of this project is expected to be experimentally implemented during the 2007 national fire campaign, being the newly developed fire-weather products available at a INM-DGB web-page specifically designed to be used by the Spanish Agencies having competences on fire prevention and suppression. In the second phase of the project, to be implemented during the next year 2008, the shifting from the currently used meteorological forest fire risk index to the Fire Weather Index (FWI, a part of the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System), as the basic input in the meteorological wildfire risk assessment and prediction system will be undertaken. Besides this, a more integrated approach to estimate and predict the fire behaviour parameters making use of meteorological, topography and fuel type information layers will be applied.

This presentation will provide a description of the different products included in the first project phase, ranging from predicted maps of the meteorological wildfire risk

indexes and fire behaviour parameters to specific meteorological products oriented to help the mobilisation of aerial means to combat the wildfires as well as a summary of the activities in progress to undertake the next phase.