



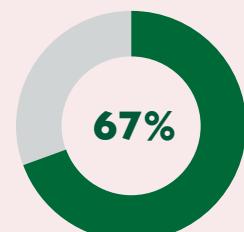
# Wildland Fire Assessments Africa

The International Programs Office of the United States Forest Service is embarking on an effort to **assess the wildland fire situation across Africa**. The assessments will be guided by the Integrated Fire Management (IFM) approach, which incorporates a holistic understanding of fire on the landscape and the many trade-offs of management actions. The assessments will inform the design and implementation of country-specific strategic programming by International Programs staff.

## Africa Wildland Fire

Wildland fire-related programming is in high demand throughout the world, and Africa is no exception. Africa has the highest portion of fire-prone ecosystems in the world, and climate change is creating warmer, drier conditions. When measured by satellite, annual burned area in Africa accounts for approximately 67% of the global total. Impacts are more difficult to measure, but run the gamut, both positive and negative.

**Africa Proportion of Global Biomass Burning, 2003–2021**



By Burned Area

2023 assessment by Matt Jolly and Patrick Freeborn,  
Forest Service Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory

## The Assessment Process

International Programs staff will gather wildland fire information via academic research, government reports, interviews, surveys and other relevant sources. Assessments will begin with a summary of the wildland fire situation in each country including fire causes, fire history, seasonality and typical fuels. Next, a summary of fire impacts, both positive and negative, from ecological, economic and socio-cultural perspectives will be recorded. Applicable laws/policy and the actors responsible for their enforcement and implementation will be identified. Current fire management actions will be cataloged under the 5 R's of Integrated Fire Management. Finally, recommendations and opportunities for Forest Service technical assistance and programming will complete each assessment.

IFM activities are categorized in one of five groups. The groupings help operationalize and compartmentalize fire management actions.

- 1. Review and Analysis** | Define, analyze, and track fire activity and impacts
- 2. Risk Reduction** | Strategies for fire use, ignition reduction, and impact mitigation
- 3. Readiness** | Preparedness to manage fires
- 4. Response** | Fire response operations
- 5. Recovery** | Post fire repair, loss reduction, and community assistance

## Integrated Fire Management

IFM recognizes that fire is a natural and necessary ecological process in many ecosystems, playing a crucial role in maintaining biodiversity, nutrient cycling, and overall ecosystem health. However, it also acknowledges that fire can pose risks to human life, property, and livelihoods. IFM emphasizes the integration of various strategies and tools to effectively manage fire in a way that minimizes negative impacts while promoting positive impacts, such as ecological health and community safety. This includes acknowledging fire's positive and negative impacts from ecological, economic and socio-cultural perspectives and the trade-offs that inevitably result from decisions and actions.

The International Programs Office of the U.S. Forest Service has been providing natural resource management **technical assistance, including fire management, in Africa for more than 20 years**. We deliver high-quality activities to improve lives, landscapes, and biodiversity in the region. We have **strong on-the-ground partnerships in 32 countries**.

### Our Fire Prevention and Response Activities:

- \* National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS) training
- \* ICS position specific training
- \* Basic and Advanced Wildland Firefighter training
- \* Wildland Fire Management Plan technical assistance
- \* Firefighting equipment support
- \* Fire Danger Rating System support
- \* Fire prevention/Firewise Communities training
- \* Fire aviation technical assistance and training support
- \* Fire ecology training
- \* Fire investigation training
- \* Study tours / knowledge exchange visits – shadowing / mentoring



Fire Prevention & Response Training  
Dem. Republic of Congo

NIMS and ICS Training  
Ethiopia



Wildland Fire Assessment  
Angola



Training & Application of  
NIMS  
Botswana



Formation of the South  
African ICS Working Team  
South Africa



Wildland Firefighting Training  
& Equipment Support  
Madagascar

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