

Forest Fire Prevention and Control. T. van Nao (Ed.), Nijhoff/Junk Publishers, The Hague, 236 p., 1982. Dfl.90.00 (c. US\$39.50), ISBN 90-247-3050-3.

This book constitutes the proceedings of an international seminar on forest fire prevention and control held in Warsaw, Poland, at the invitation of the Government of Poland, May 20-22, 1981. The seminar was organized by the Timber Committee of the United Nations Economic Committee for Europe, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the International Labour Organization in cooperation with the International Union of Forest Research Organizations. The seminar, attended by representatives of 20 nations, had a three-fold purpose according to the editor's foreword (1) to increase public awareness of the danger of forest fires and the need for more effective prevention and control measures; (2) to help countries improve prevention and control methods through an exchange of experience and opinions between specialists; and (3) to improve techniques of restoring productivity and environmental functions to fire-damaged forest land. An account of the seminar has been published by one of the conference participants (J.G. Goldammer, 1982. *USDA For. Serv. Fire Manage. Notes* 43(3): 18-21).

The proceedings consists of 27 papers presented during five sessions: overview of forest fire problems; fire risk and development of forest fires; detection, planning, organization and techniques of forest fire control; fire and the forest ecosystem (silvicultural measures to reduce forest fire risk and fire's effects on the environment); and support measures in forest fire control. Three of the papers that were originally prepared in French are accompanied by English titles and summaries. English titles and summaries only are available for three other papers, two Russian and one French. The lack of complete translations lessens the value of the seminar proceedings in this reviewer's opinion. The geographical foci of the papers are Europe, the Mediterranean, and North America. The sole exception is an interim report on the experimental use of prescribed fire in Brazilian pine plantations by a German forest fire specialist.

The four papers on wildfire incidence and area burned suffer from redundancy, and a lack both of organization and a critical synthesis of forest fire statistics. No long-term trends in number of fires or area of forest burned are presented. Only two papers were presented on the subject of fire danger and behavior rating. A brief review of the fire danger rating systems developed and/or used in Canada, Australia, United States, Spain, Italy, France, Poland, and the USSR is given (in French). R.C. Rothermel gives a concise summary of his mathematical model of fire spread and intensity and also of related models developed by his colleagues. The 13 papers on fire control technology offer a superficial treatment of conventional pre-suppression activities, suppression equipment, etc. A few papers in this ses-

sion provide perspectives rather different from the normal practices in North America (e.g., use of remote controlled TV cameras in lookout towers for fire detection). Three papers document the traditional strategies of fuel management in plantations used by German and French foresters. The two short papers (in French) dealing with the impact of fire on the forest environment are disappointing. There appears to be no logical reason for the final three papers (standardized training, fire insurance, and public information) to be placed in a separate session.

A summary of the discussions that took place during the seminar precedes the papers. The conclusions and recommendations of the seminar participants are included as well (e.g., international exchange of information, compilation of annual fire statistics, expansion or initiation of fire research).

This, the seventh book to appear in the publisher's forestry sciences series, would have been more appropriately titled "Forest Fire Prevention and Control: Proceedings of an International Seminar". The technical and scientific editing of the papers is minimal. The poor quality of the manuscript reproduction process (manual typewriter) detracts from this handsomely bound book.

Fire managers will not find a rigorous or innovative treatment of forest fire prevention and control in this book. Considering its price, I would only recommend its purchase by the serious student of international forest fire management.

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