Abstract

Med-PSS: Developing a Forest Fire Risk Culture in the Franco-Italian Mediterranean Area †

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MED-PSS is a Franco-Italian cooperation project aiming at developing the culture of wildfire risk among the populations of the regions of Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur and Corsica (France), and Liguria, Tuscany and Sardinia (Italy). It is part of the Med-STAR projects consortium. MED-PSS provides, through a state-of-the-art focused on fire-fighting communication best practices related to prevention and alert, a better understanding of the relationship that institutions with prevention missions maintain with different target groups in their territory and of how to sensitize them in a relevant and effective way to prevent the risk of wildfires. The state-of-the-art proposes, in support of a survey, a definition of the variants that compose the culture of wildfires’ risk. It identifies the target groups to be informed and sensitized in priority, as well as possible actions to undertake to go beyond the simple acquisition of technical and scientific knowledge in order to engage a real understanding of the wildfire phenomenon and automatisms to anticipate the risk and reduce it. In order to enhance and disseminate the culture of wildfire risk, the eight institutions composing the project’s partnership implemented 20 communication experiments in their territories. Demonstration operations addressing neighbourhoods at risk, the creation of a youth regional forest guard, the implementation of new technology-based apps and smart signage to alert the population, a traveling exhibition on wildfire prevention, the creation of multimedia products to engage schools and students in prevention programmes, and fire risk-level bulletins for operators in the wildfire sector are among the experiments undertaken through the project to address the various audiences. Lessons learned from the experiments will be compiled in a communication best practices guide, which will provide operational keys for defining an effective, preventive communication strategy and improving transboundary institutional fire prevention approaches.

Keywords: communication; prevention; experiments; communication best practices

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