

## 1.3 WHAT IMPACTS DO WILDFIRES HAVE ON OUR DAILY LIVES?

### Aim

To better understand how wildfires affect our daily lives, even when they are not burning, including social, economic, and environmental aspects.

### Description

In fire-prone ecosystems near urban areas, wildfires are a concern. This concern has led to many structural, behavioural and organisational adaptations to take place. Let's explore how wildfire might have shaped your community.

### Linked units

- Unit 1: Understanding your environment and connecting it to climate change impacts.
- Unit 2: History of fires
- Unit 3: Fire Ecology 1
- Unit 4: Fire Ecology 2
- Unit 5: Be Prepared 1 – Preparedness
- Unit 6: Be Prepared 2 - Landscape Management
- Unit 8: Aftermath of a wildfire
- Unit 9: Wildfires in the future

### Type of results

- Presentation
- Theatrical session
- Classroom discussion

### Material you may need

- Computer with internet and/or access to a library
- Projector

### Scope of impact

- Classroom
- Community

### Activity: Understand how wildfires impact and shape our daily lives

Ask your friends and relatives if wildfires are a concern for them. If so, what type of plans and adaptations have they made to coexist with them? Consider environmental, social, and economic adaptations. Collect their views on a notepad and bring them to school.

If the educational centre is located in a fire-prone region, an interaction with firefighters and other emergency personnel might be a valuable addition to the final discussion. If the school is not located in a fire-prone region, you can think of actions to help in case of wildfires in other areas. Do you think wildfires in distant places can affect you somehow (smoke, water contamination, etc.)?

### Tasks

1. In small groups in the classroom show the results about the concerns and talk about what happens during a wildfire. What happens to the trees? To the soil? To rivers? To the animals? How about people and social relations? Does it affect their health and mental health? Does it disrupt local economic activities? Does it affect the economy on a larger scale? If you do not live in a fire-prone area, can you still be impacted by wildfires? How? (group)

2. Share your discussion with the classroom. Which are the wildfire impacts you identified for each issue? Were there similarities between your discussions? What were the differences? And what about the concerns? Can you create a graphic or a scheme that shows the different concerns of your relatives and friends? (group)

## 1.3 WHAT IMPACTS DO WILDFIRES HAVE ON OUR DAILY LIVES?

### Professions related to the topic

- Historian
- Environmental scientist
- Sociologist
- Firefighter
- Landscape architect
- Forest manager
- Civil engineer / architect
- Psychologist
- Economist

3. The groups should now choose one of the discussed impacts and research more to answer as best as they can the following questions: Can we manage this impact/concerns? Could we have avoided it? Can engineering/infrastructure measures help to minimize the impact? If so, how? Does this impact directly or indirectly affect you and your community and/or the locality where you live? Are the concerns related to the identified community wildfire impacts? Create a wildfire risk management plan (including four phases: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery) for your school and propose fire prevention policies for your locality. (group)

4. Invite your local government, firefighters and other authorities to show the results of your research and discuss in a community assembly what can be done to decrease the impacts and concerns about wildfires. Be creative! (group)

5. Share your research results with the rest of the students. Do you now feel more aware of the wildfire impacts around you? Share this awareness with your family, friends and community members! (group)