

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN LUONNONVARAKESKUS, (NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE FINLAND) (LUKE) AND THE AGENCY FOR THE INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF RURAL FIRES, I.P. (AGIF), OF THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC

Luonnonvarakeskus and the Agency for the Integrated Management of Rural Fires – AGIF, I.P., hereinafter referred to as the Signatories, in order to establish cooperation in the field of integrated fire management:

Whereas the Signatories share common goals and recognize that climate variability presents global challenges and risks to the environment and the economy, impacts human health, and leads to extreme weather events and severe forest fires that directly affect people, property, and natural heritage;

Whereas this partnership and memorandum of understanding between Luke and the AGIF I.P. can provide a broad framework for cooperation and support between the partners in reducing vulnerabilities and increasing resilience to landscape fire threats and is based on a management system, integrating planning initiatives, preparedness, prevention, suppression and post-fire recovery integrated with the socio-cultural needs of communities, economics and financing, and the fire ecology of ecosystems;

Whereas this memorandum is founded on the common understanding of the need for integrated fire management with a strong view on governance and land management for the purpose of protecting lives, property and natural resources of Finland and Portugal from landscape fires;

Considering that AGIF, I.P., under the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries' mission is to plan, strategically coordinate and evaluate the Integrated Rural Fire Management System (SGIFR), through the integration of public policies and the various entities involved;

Considering that Luke, through its role as a national R&D organization developing forest inventories, forest management practices and related value chains has as its mission to develop approaches to manage and control biomass resources to mitigate the risk of wildfires;

Whereas cooperation between the Signatories and government bodies plays a key role in implementing people-to-people solidarity and uniting public and private sector efforts in times of crisis;

Whereas both Signatories share a common interest in improving landscape fire management and prevention initiatives and work together to protect the well-being of their populations and the environment;

Whereas, in a spirit of cooperation established between the two countries, the Signatories intend to cooperate to effectively reduce the occurrence and risk of forest fires and thus respond to the threats posed by fire to the public health, safety and well-being of their respective communities, but also to ecosystems and natural habitats;

Whereas collaboration and mutual exchange of best practices, technologies and research in integrated fire management ensure that linkages are established to further increase capacity, enhance the protection of people and property and reduce loss of life:

The Signatories hereby establish the following understanding:

Clause 1
(Scope)

Share good practices in strategy, communication, research and technologies that improve and promote integrated fire management.

Share learnings on public policies, stakeholder engagement, regulatory powers, rural development economics and financing, landscape fire technical knowledge, geographic information systems (GIS) and monitoring tools, and exchange programs, including the preparation of prevention and land management plans mobilizing local communities, private and public stakeholders.

Share initiatives for the development of forest governance and risk management mechanisms, namely aimed at incorporating risk analysis into decision-making processes.

Share analyses and solutions of financing models for activities directly or indirectly related to integrated fire management, as well as tax or financial incentives, such as the insurance mechanism.

Share and explore innovations in forest and fuel management methods, including prescribed burns and controlled burns, prevention, data collection and analysis, tools and equipment, technology and policy development to mitigate the effects of severe landscape fires, developing and empowering communities resilient to the impacts of climate change, promoting better management and enhancement of agroforestry territory and improving the articulation of resources.

Promote the exchange of knowledge, taking advantage of the expertise in public and private organizations on both countries, seeking to accentuate the culture of cooperation, applying the best knowledge existing in both, in the areas of activity described above.

Clause 2 (Amendments)

This memorandum may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the Signatories in writing.

Clause 3 (Responsible Entities)

The Luke intends to be the institution responsible for the implementation and management of the activities resulting from this Memorandum and, under its own criteria, will act in coordination with other relevant institutions to implement this memorandum of understanding, in more specialized areas of technical and scientific knowledge.

In turn, the Agency for the Integrated Management of Rural Fires - AGIF I.P., may require support and participation from relevant institutions to implement this memorandum of understanding, in more specialized areas of technical and scientific knowledge or through other external cooperation initiatives.

The Signatories plan to meet, preferably, by videoconference, but possibly in each of the Countries, for the development of activities and progress assessment.

**Clause 4
(Effect)**

This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect on the date of its signature.

This Memorandum of Understanding shall cease to have effect when one of the Signatories expresses its wish to do so by notifying the other in writing.

The Signatories acknowledge that this Memorandum of Understanding is intended only to establish cooperation, without creating any legally binding rights, benefits or obligations under national or international law or authority. This paragraph shall prevail over any other provision that proves to be inconsistent. Each Signatory will bear its own expenses in connection with the preparation of the above-mentioned co-operation.

None of the provisions described herein shall be interpreted as interfering with the autonomy of the decision-making process of the Signatories in relation to their own affairs and operations. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding is intended to alter, limit, or expand the statutory or regulatory authority of each Party.

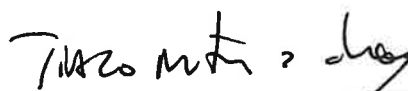
Two originals signed, duly authenticated,
in Helsinki, Finland on the 22nd of November 2024

LUONNONVARAKESKUS (LUKE)



Johanna Buchert
President and CEO

**AGENCY FOR THE INTEGRATED
MANAGEMENT OF RURAL FIRES,
REPUBLIC OF PORTUGAL**



Tiago Martins Oliveira
President