FIREPOCTEP

LUCHA CONTRA EL CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO

METHODOLOGY DEVELOPED FOR IMPROVED FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT
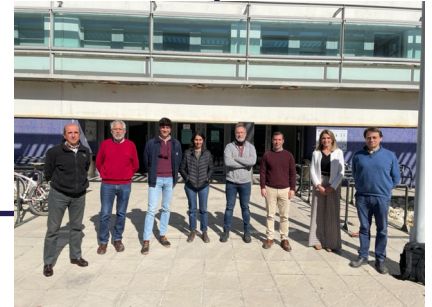
PROJECT CODE: POCTEP_0756_FIREPOCTEP_6_E
CALL: Interreg V A España – Portugal (POCTEP) Programme
PERIOD: 30 MONTHS
BUDGET: 5.632.280,05 €
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: RICARDO ZAMORA DÍAZ

The prevention of and fight against forest fires is a constant social concern. Thus, the FIREPOCTEP project arose with the aim of improving the management of territories affected by fires, raising awareness in the populations near areas affected by them, and improving the related allocations of European funds.

> The European FIREPOCTEP project will make it possible to determine the degree of difficulty of extinguishing a fire in a given territory, and to predict the corresponding costs

This project's work of research focuses on two pilot areas on the Iberian Peninsula near the border with Portugal; specifically, in the provinces of Huelva and Seville. In these two action areas, strategic management actions for the prevention of and fight against forest fires are being taken with a view to extrapolating the results to other areas. Knowledge transfer to society is also fundamental, so the project includes the organization of awareness-raising activities such as workshops and seminars that seek to engage local actors to promote good practices related to the prevention of and self-protection against potential fires in urbanized areas and near forested land.

The role of the University of Cordoba in FIREPOCTEP involves both the definition of strategic management zones to classify

areas that require priority attention in terms of preventive actions linked to local inhabitants, and thematic mapping to improve fire-fighting strategies and avoid very high extinction costs. The coordinator of the project at the UCO, Professor Ricardo Zamora Díaz, explained that "we developed a methodology to determine the operational parameters and, thus, be able to classify the territory and carry out effective and efficient defense against fire."

The execution of this project, according to Zamora, "will allow us to determine how easy or difficult it may be to put out a fire in a given area, and to predict the costs of extinguishing it, as well as to calculate potential losses incurred by damage done to natural resources in the area." This methodology will help us to set priorities by detecting which areas it is more costly to recover, and in which it is most necessary to invest economic resources.

> FIREPOCTEP features the organization of activities to engage local actors in promoting the adoption of good practices for the prevention of and protection against fires in urbanized areas

The University of Cordoba's participation in this project also includes the drafting of guidance manuals on good practices

applicable to the rural world, the implementation of controlled grazing to reduce the excess fuel that can produce and sustain major fires, and the holding of workshops aimed at raising awareness in the population.

FIREPOCTEP, composed of 20 partners and coordinated by the Junta de Andalucía, (regional government), through the Agriculture, Ranching, Fishing and Sustainable Development Department, follows up on and supports the UCO's CILIFO project, dedicated to forest fire prevention. A total of three female and six male researchers at the Cordoban institution are participating in this new initiative.

Forming part of the FIREPOCTEP project has been an enriching experience for this team, furthering coordination and relationships with other research groups, knowledge contribution, and a commitment to future projects.

The "FIREPOCTEP - Fortalecimiento de los sistemas transfronterizos de prevención y extinción de incendios forestales y mejora de los recursos para la generación de empleo rural posCovid-19" (Ref. 0756_FIREPOCTEP_6_) project is financed by the European Union through the Interreg VA Spain-Portugal (POCTEP) Programme