



# How can local knowledge help reduce wildfire risk in Mediterranean areas?

Kathleen Uyttewaal, PyroLife ESR



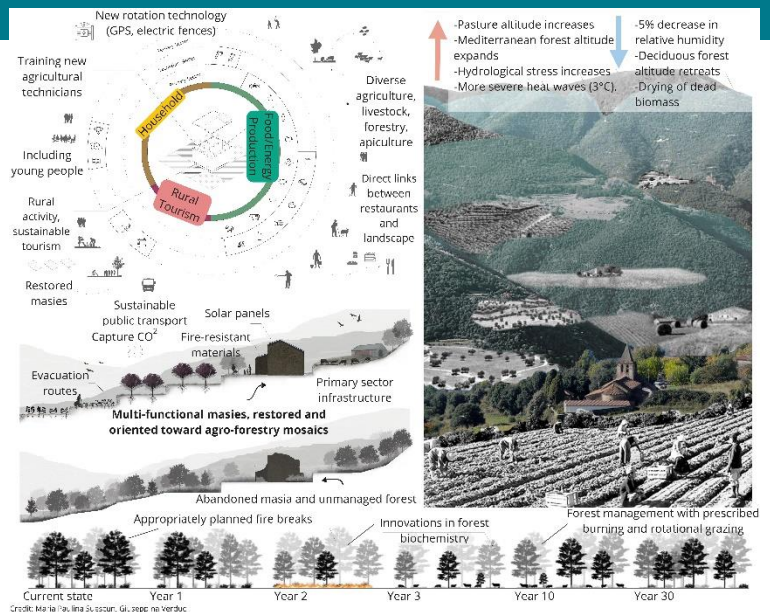
## CONTEXT

In regions like Mediterranean Europe, adapting to wildfires in the face of climate change requires weaving various forms of knowledge. Kathleen Uyttewaal studied the case of the Montseny massif and Tordera River watershed in Catalonia, Spain, to find out how different knowledge types work together for wildfire risk management. The Monseny and Tordera River areas are managed for forestry, agriculture, tourism, nature conservation, and fire management. Uyttewaal's team used co-productive methods to develop **adaptation pathways** that leverage local ecological knowledge, consider the region's historical landscape, and envision positive futures while reducing wildfire risk. This approach integrates diverse perspectives to create effective strategies for living with wildfires in a changing climate.

## OUTCOMES

Key aspects of an adaptation pathways approach to reduce wildfire risk include:

- **Identifying diverse actors' common interests** in addressing wildfire risk, sustainable development, and local knowledge.
- **Supporting pathways to change** through targeted policies and sustainable land management practices.
- **Applicability to other territories:** the methods foster deeper connections between sectors aiming for desirable, sustainable, knowledge-rich, and fire-resilient futures.
- **Potential for community initiatives,** bolstering community-led efforts focused on wildfires and sustainable development globally.



Actors' "vision" of a fire-resilient landscape in Montseny-Tordera.

## IMPACT ON WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT

Collaborations across sectors and actors can keep local ecological knowledge alive, pursue sustainable development, and reduce wildfire risk. Diverse actors can work with shared values to create more desirable, sustainable, knowledge-rich and fire-resilient futures.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### For policymakers

- Experiment with climate resilient development pathways to implement diverse management actions within complex environments and promote long-term sustainable development.
- Recognise uplifting local knowledge as a crucial component in wildfire management within climate resilient development pathways.

### For emergency responders

- Learn about and value local knowledge to create more fire-resilient futures.
- Collaborate with sustainable land stewards to meet mutual management goals.

**FULL ARTICLE:** Uyttewaal, K., Stoof, C.R., Canaleta, G., Cifre-Sabater M., Langer, E.R, Ludwig, F., Kroeze, C., Moran, P., Ottolini, I., Prat-Guitart, N. 2024. Uplifting local ecological knowledge as part of adaptation pathways to wildfire risk reduction: A case study in Montseny, Catalonia (Spain). *Ambio*. Freely available at: <https://bit.ly/4bTDUaH>

### Collaborators



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