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Presentations	Session 5.2	<i>Social innovation in forestry.</i>

*Abstract Session 5.2 – Bottom-linked governance for wildfire resilience: A social innovation example from the Mediterranean.*

Wildfires are a major disturbance in the Mediterranean region. Despite decreasing numbers of occurrence, since the 1980s there is a trend of larger and more damaging fires (“megafires”). They have increased in size, intensity and severity, and they have become a serious threat for civil protection. This has raised the attention to those voices calling for more holistic approaches to the wildfire issue, shifting the paradigm from “zero-fire” policies, to another one which aligns more with the vision of “coexisting with fire”. Resilience thinking is at the cornerstone of this approach, yet the understanding and contribution of the socio-political processes underlying the overall socio-ecological resilience of a territory remains underexplored. With this research, we aim at increase understanding of these processes from the angle of social innovation, and its capacity to enhance socio-ecological resilience in Mediterranean forested territories. By bringing together social innovation, resilience and socio-ecological systems theories, we conceptualize the Catalan Forest Defence Groups (Agrupacions de Defensa Forestal, or ADFs) as a bottom-linked social innovation. We explore their evolution from bottom-up initiatives to well-established bottom-linked institutions, and evaluate their contributions to the overall resilience of Catalan forested territories. Our results show that even though ADFs are extremely well positioned to contribute to transformative resilience, they have not fully developed their potential, and have thus far adopted a rather reactive position. We therefore argue that their capabilities to enact the “co-existing with fire” paradigm are yet to blossom.

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