



TERRANOA



MEGAFIRES

— The Global Threat —

Wildfires will only get worse unless we learn how to live with them.

The world's forests are on fire, threatening not only our homes and our lives, but also the climate and our future. This film follows a dedicated global community of firefighters, scientists, activists and fire experts as they investigate the new era of catastrophic megafires.

What are the causes? How can all of us take action and learn to live safely with fire in the future?

Synopsis

Each year, 350 million hectares of forest go up in smoke, the equivalent of six times the size of France. The most ferocious fires, so-called 'megafires' are proving to be unstoppable even by experienced firefighters and cutting-edge technology. Even worse, those bigger, hotter, faster and more frequent fires now increasingly attack our neighborhoods, destroying human lives, homes and businesses, and the landscapes they char may never fully recover. The whole planet has become more flammable and the impacts of wildfires on our health and climate cast a worrying shadow over our future. How did we end up in the new 'Pyrocene era'? and how can we survive it?

A co-production:

**Georama TV Productions-ARTE France-NHK Japan &
Cábala Producciones Chile**

Presales:

**UshuaïaTV, NRK, DW, SVT, RSI, Ceska, TG4, LTV, SRF,
RTP, TV3, TVN, VRT, RTBF, ERT, COSMOTE, ODISEA**

Authors:

Nicolas Koutsikas & Cosima Dannoritzer

Director:

Cosima Dannoritzer

**90'
2x52'**

THE FILM

Our film will bring the audience at the heart of a powerful and destructive event: fire! We will immerse in real wildfires and preventive ones, even discovering positive sides of natural fire and clues on how to tame or try to live with it by protecting ourselves. Guided by its key actors and witnesses: world renowned fire scientists, field experts, firefighters, survivors of catastrophic wildfires, as well as the people who live under this threat in high-risk areas. A whole community looking for solutions to prevent or better survive the new threat posed by giant fires.

The wake-up call came from Canada in 2016 when the 'Beast', a monster blaze raging in Northern Alberta, forced an entire city – 80.000 people – to evacuate. A first in Canadian history, the Fort McMurray fire is now the most studied wildfire in the world. The film will take the viewers from this event and its local protagonists, to revisit all the mechanisms and legacy of such a tragedy to better prepare or avoid the next.

Our global investigation will unfold from Canada and the USA, to Europe and Asia, following the work of dedicated fire experts, such as Sonja Leverskus and her Canadian native trainees reviving age old practices in the mountains of British Columbia or French firefighters of Bouches-du-Rhône, one of European most advanced firefighting team in Europe, under the command of Colonel Gregory Allione. Leading scientists like Mark Finney, whose Fire Lab in US Montana can recreate fire whirls – and Guillermo Rein chasing underground fires and their toxic emissions all around the world, from his London lab to the peatlands of Indonesia. Eminent Canadians, such as Mike Flannigan of Alberta University and Mike Wotton of Toronto University will further take us into the extreme behavior of wildfires and their relation to meteorology and climate, with a particular focus on the 'hotspots' where the risks of fire are alarmingly high. Experts warn it will only get worse unless we adapt and learn to co-exist with fire! And the clock is ticking.

Are we ready for this challenge? to changing our view of fire and chose to take action on a global scale and as responsible communities?

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORS:

Colonel Gregory Allione
Head of the Fire Service of
Bouches-du-Rhône
President of the National
Federation of Firefighters
France

Mike Flannigan
Professor of Wildfire Sciences
University of Alberta, Canada

Alexander Held
European Forest Institute
Resilience Programme
Bonn, Germany



QUOTES



"We need to face some tough truths about wildfires and find out as fast as possible how we can stop them before it is too late. Where will you go when everything is burnt up? Where will you go to breathe deep and slow?" - **Paul Hessburg (US Forest Ecologist)**

The fire season is now lasting all year round so you can't really talk about a 'season' any more. - **Alex Held (European Forest Institute)**

We called it the 'Beast'. - **Lorna Dicks (Fort McMurray, Royal Canadian Mounted Police)**

It's becoming very difficult for individual countries to cope with the fires on their own. We need to develop new strategies. **E.U. ECHO director Monique Pariat and ERCC Claire Kowalewski**

In a fire, you lose everything you own, and with it, your identity, your entire life. And how do you explain to a child that he has to leave all his toys behind, and that his favorite pancake place has just gone up in flames? - **Adrien Welsh (Firefighter in 2016/Fort McMurray Canada)**



How do the emissions from wildfires affect our climate?
- **Mike Flannigan (Wildland fire scientist, Canada)**



This is when fire turns into weather, into a storm. - **Mark Finney (Fire scientist, US Missoula)**

The suppression of big wildfires is not possible. We have air tankers, crews, etc. but the failure rate is the same as 100 years ago. And it's very expensive. - **Jack Cohen (Wildfire scientist, USA)**



We have been fighting fires in completely the wrong way. Total fire suppression... worked for about half a century - at huge cost in terms of equipment and man power. And then, it suddenly stopped working and the era of megafires started. What is going wrong? - **Paul Hessburg (Forest ecologist, USA)**



The predictions are no longer on 'medium' or 'high' risk, they are starting to get stuck on 'extremely high' all summer. - **Mike Wotton (Research scientist, Canada)**

Colonel Gregory Allione, Fire chief, Bouches-du-Rhône, France has twenty years of strategic planning under his belt. His responsibility: how to develop an effective strategy to face the growing fire risk in France. Our job is to protect everyone who lives in the fire hotspots - and our crews.
Jack Cohen: wildfire scientist, USA: The neighborhood that doesn't work together to reduce their vulnerability to fire will surely burn together.

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

Each year, between **260,000 and 600,000 people worldwide die from the smoke** produced by landscape fires (source: Univ. of Tasmania)

In icy Greenland, fires in 2017 appeared to burn 10 times more area than in 2014.

Dec 2017-California : The Thomas fire, the worst of those that roiled the region that year, burnt 93,000 ha and forced the evacuations of more than 100,000 Californians

Smoke of US and Canadian wildfires traveled to Europe and all around the globe for weeks in 2017 and 2018.

The 21st century's second-deadliest wildfire swept through the Greek sea resort of Mati, killing 100 in 2018.

In 2015 the emissions from the Indonesian fires released an equivalent amount of all US emissions that year.

About 33 percent of U.S. housing units are located in the wildland-urban interface, areas at high-risk of fire.

Production calendar:
Shooting: May-August 2019
Post-production: September– December 2019
Delivery: January 2020

Shot in: Canada, USA, South of France, Greece, Portugal, Belgium, UK, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Indonesia

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