

This quarterly publication addresses environmental education in the face of fires, with news from the SenForFire project and stories about the science of fire. More than a journal, it is an invitation to care for the Earth.

SenForFire NEWS

FIRE FIGHTING TECHNOLOGY

Journal of the SenForFire project for the development of sensor networks for the prevention and early detection of forest fires.

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04

THIS ISSUE:

FOREST COMMUNICATION

*The great challenge ahead
Building responsible narratives
SenForFire in the field*



THE FOREST SPEAKS

The forest speaks when it burns, when it is abandoned or when it silently degrades; also when its ecological processes are disrupted and its soil loses resilience. The problem is not that it does not send out signals, but that we often do not know how to listen to them or explain them. Between technical discourse that fails to reach its audience and media coverage that oversimplifies, the reality of forests is caught in an information vacuum that hinders social understanding.

This space gives rise to misunderstandings, fuels fruitless controversies and leads to decisions that are far removed from the territory. The lack of clear communication about forests and fire is not just a problem of narrative: it is also a risk. Initiatives such as **SenForFire** have emerged to bridge this gap, connecting knowledge, management and society. Giving the forest a voice does not mean idealising it, but rather telling what is happening with rigour, context and responsibility. Because only what is well explained can be understood and protected.



FOREST COMMUNICATION: THE GREAT CHALLENGE AHEAD

For decades, forest management and fire prevention have advanced thanks to technical knowledge, planning and experience in the field. However, one of the great challenges remains how to transfer all this knowledge to society. The gap between what is done in the forest and what is perceived from the outside continues to be significant, and this gap gives rise to conflicts, misunderstandings and mistrust.

Forest communication has become a strategic and almost educational tool. It is not limited to providing information, but also builds narratives, shapes social perceptions of fire and forests, and directly influences support for management and prevention policies. In a context of increasingly complex fires, intensely humanised landscapes and a public exposed to simplified or alarmist messages, communicating well is as important as acting correctly. Added to this is a profound change in society's relationship with the forest environment. The shift away from rural life, the loss of territorial culture and increasing urbanisation have reduced understanding of natural processes and the dynamics of fire. Restoring this link, through clear, knowledge-based communication, is an essential step in addressing today's challenges.

Prevention no longer begins solely in the forest. Its principles are rooted in awareness and education, in explaining ecological processes and in the ability to make often controversial decisions understandable. Explaining why a forest is managed, why it is burned in a prescribed manner, why it is cut down or why an ecosystem is allowed to evolve is key to generating shared responsibility and social support.

Forest communication must be rigorous, consistent and planned. It cannot be improvised or limited to times of crisis. It needs to connect science, territory and people and contribute to building a shared forest culture that recognises fire as a complex phenomenon. In this issue, **SenForFire News** address why communicating about fire is an urgent necessity in order to move towards more resilient, safer and socially understood landscapes.

FIRE COMMUNICATORS: BUILDING RESPONSIBLE NARRATIVES

Every summer, fire makes headlines again in Spain and much of Europe. Red maps, helicopters in flight, hectares destroyed and emergency declarations mark a repeated narrative that, although necessary in critical moments, is insufficient to understand an increasingly complex phenomenon. Forest communication today faces the challenge of explaining fires not only as isolated disasters, but as symptoms of a territory under stress from climate change, rural abandonment and decades of poor forest management.

Fire experts agree that the problem is not only how much is reported, but how and from where the narrative is constructed. Forestry technicians and fire analysts are calling for greater media presence to contextualise structural causes: fuel accumulation, continuity of the forest landscape, loss of agricultural and livestock activities, and an increase in extreme heat events. Without this framework, the fire is presented as an inevitable anomaly, when in reality it is the result of sustained human and political decisions over time.

This lack of context is compounded by imprecise use of language. Terms such as 'arson', 'uncontrollable fire' and 'natural disaster' are repeated without nuance, contributing to a simplified view that hinders public debate. Various forestry educators and professional guides insist on the need to explain that not all fires are the same, that some fulfil ecological functions and that the systematic suppression of fire has increased the vulnerability of many Mediterranean forests.

Environmental journalism plays a key role in this change of approach. Professionals grouped together in the [Association of Environmental Information Journalists \(APIA\)](#) or specialised portals such as FuegoLab are committed to narratives that incorporate science, data and voices from the territory. In the face of sensationalism, they advocate explaining what a high-intensity fire is, why some fires cannot be extinguished, and what it means to coexist with fire in ecosystems that have historically adapted to its presence. [Here is an example of this.](#)

At the institutional level, European projects such as [eFIRECOM](#) and [FirEUrisk](#) are working to improve risk communication and prevention culture by producing materials aimed at citizens, journalists and public officials. The idea is clear: an informed society makes better decisions before an emergency strikes. [Download a guide here.](#)

Communicating about fire responsibly means accepting that not every fire is a failure, that prevention is as newsworthy as extinguishing, and that the story should help people understand, not just shock them. In a scenario of increasingly virulent fires, communication is also a tool for land management.

TRAINING IN FORESTRY COMMUNICATION, DOES IT EXIST?

Forestry communication does not yet have a consolidated training programme in Spain or Europe, but there are ways to acquire key skills. In a context of increasingly complex fires, this training is essential for journalists, technicians and public officials who must explain risks, prevention and difficult decisions to the public.

In the field of journalism, organisations such as the [Madrid Press Association](#) promote seminars on emergency communication, aimed at improving news coverage in crisis situations and strengthening the relationship between the media and civil protection systems. Although they do not focus exclusively on forest fires, they offer essential tools for reporting accurately, precisely and without alarmism.

In the public administration, the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge (MITECO), through [CENEAM](#), includes content related to communication, social participation and conflict management in natural areas in its training programmes. These programmes, aimed at environmental technicians and professionals, help to improve the ability to convey complex information about territory, risk and prevention to diverse audiences.

The main shortcoming continues to be the lack of programmes that systematically connect fire science, forest management and public communication. The foundation exists: now the challenge is to articulate and recognise that communicating well about fire is also a form of prevention.





SENFORFIRE IN THE FIELD

Since its inception, the SenForFire project has understood communication to be an essential part of its work: not only to inform, but also to make the technology understandable to the public and to connect research/innovation with the territories where it is applied. SenForFire's communication strategy has been built progressively, accompanying the scientific progress of the project with informative content designed for the general public. In this approach, clarity, visual language and proximity have been key principles. Rather than strictly technical communication, the project has opted to explain the 'why' and 'how' of the technology, focusing on its real usefulness in the face of forest fires.

One of the pillars of this strategy has been this digital magazine, [SenForFireNews: Technology against fire](#), which, over the course of its four issues, has established itself as the project's main informative space. Conceived from the outset as a publication open to the public, the magazine translates scientific advances into reports, articles and visual content that allow readers to understand what is being researched, how the sensors work and what is being tested in the pilot areas of south-western Europe. Its quarterly frequency and narrative approach have made it possible to construct a continuous, accessible and understandable story, without the need for prior technical knowledge.

The use of audiovisual language has been another key element in bringing the technology closer to the public. [SenForFire's animated corporate video](#) acts as a gateway to the project, explaining in a simple and visual way how the sensor network works and its role in early fire detection. In addition to this content, there are [four informative videos dedicated to the pilot areas](#) (Fundão, Cáceres, Andorra and Guadarrama), which show in a close-up and contextualised way how the technology is applied in different territories. These videos, disseminated through social media campaigns, put a face and landscape to the innovation, helping to understand that the research is carried out in real environments and has a direct impact on forest protection.

The communication strategy has also been reinforced by an active presence on social media, especially [LinkedIn](#), where informative content, videos and project news have served to explain key concepts, contextualise the current situation of forest fires and amplify the reach of the magazine and audiovisual materials. This activity has been accompanied by significant media coverage, which has conveyed the project's message to a wide and diverse audience.

Alongside these channels, [SenForFire](#) has maintained a constant presence at conferences, technical seminars and scientific and educational meetings, where communication has played a fundamental role. Participation in forestry conferences, European events and specialised forums has made it possible to present the project's progress in an accessible way, strengthening the dialogue between science, forest management and society, and helping the results to transcend the academic sphere.

Overall, [SenForFire](#)'s communication strategy demonstrates that dissemination is an active form of prevention. All these actions, which are openly available on the [project's official website](#), reflect [SenForFire](#)'s commitment to science that is understandable, accessible and at the service of forest protection.



The icon of the Interreg Sudoe programme, under the slogan 'Cooperation is in your hands', highlights here news directly related to the SenForFire project.



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2026: CONSOLIDATING FOREST CULTURE



In 2026, the [SenForFire](#) project will enter a key phase in which communication will play a strategic role. The main objective will be to strengthen knowledge transfer, bringing scientific advances closer to society and to those involved in forest fire prevention.

One of the pillars will be the continuation of this informative magazine, which will publish four new issues, maintaining clear, visual and accessible language. In addition, digital communication will continue to be essential. [SenForFire](#) will maintain an active presence on social media, disseminating informative content, videos and news, as well as press releases that amplify the most relevant milestones in the general and specialised media.

The 2026 calendar will include face-to-face meetings of high informative value. In May, Toulouse will host an international workshop bringing together experts, researchers and forest managers. In addition, Badajoz will host an open MOOC, designed as a training tool to broaden the scope of the project. Throughout the year, outreach events will also be held in conjunction with organisations such as Rotary International, with a focus on social issues and public awareness.

The dissemination strategy will culminate in November with a major dissemination event at ARPA in Valladolid, which will serve as a meeting place to share the results, lessons learned and legacy of [SenForFire](#). In 2026, effective communication will be the best way to ensure that the project's innovation endures.

MORE INFORMATION

