

Community Resilience to Wildfire: Impacts, Barriers, Enablers, and Coping Strategies

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The increase in the frequency and severity of wildfires, exacerbated by climate change, has made this risk a significant global threat, affecting both ecosystems and human livelihoods. Wildfires, considered socio-natural disasters due to their mostly anthropogenic origin, mainly impact communities located in urban-rural interface areas, where the risk intensifies during the summer months. In this context, *community resilience* is understood as the capacity of communities to absorb, adapt and recover from these events without losing their essential structure, being crucial to collectively face the effects of these disasters. The objective of this work was to conduct a systematic review of the literature on community resilience to wildfires, with the purpose of identifying the impacts, coping strategies, resilience indicators and obstacles faced by communities exposed and susceptible to this type of risk.

A systematic review was performed following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, analyzing studies published between 2013 and 2024 in databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, EBSCO Host and SciELO. Of the 272 articles identified, 30 papers in English and Spanish that met the inclusion criteria were selected. The analysis focused on four main areas: i) impacts, ii) coping strategies, iii) resilience indicators and iv) barriers to resilience development.

The most relevant *impacts* of wildfires include significant damage to infrastructure, the environment, and negative effects on quality of life and mental health, such as increased post-traumatic stress. The most common *coping strategies* were knowledge of evacuation routes and strengthening social cohesion through community networks established before the disaster. Among the *promoters of resilience*, the existence of emergency plans, perceived social support during the crisis, and local organizational capacity to manage risk were highlighted. However, the *main obstacles* identified include the lack of coordination between local authorities and communities, as well as the absence of an adequate institutional framework for fire risk management (DRM).

Community resilience to wildfires is a dynamic meta-capacity that depends on social cohesion, territorial planning and the active participation of people, among other factors. Communities with a solid social organization, where local knowledge is integrated with technical-expert knowledge in (DRM), together with effective early warning systems, achieve better responses and recoveries. These early warning systems allow rapid and organized evacuations, mitigating both human and material and/or symbolic losses. However, the lack of structural resources and poor coordination among local institutions and actors continue to be major challenges. To enhance resilience, a comprehensive approach that combines participation, institutional recognition and an effective integration of technical-local knowledge is essential, thus strengthening collective and individual capacities to face future wildfires.

Keywords: wildfires, disasters, coping strategies, community resilience, risks.

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