

STATE ACTION PLAN ON FOREST FIRE

(SAPFF)

(U.T., Chandigarh, 2026)



Department of Forests & Wildlife

Union Territory of Chandigarh

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List of Abbreviations

1. NAPFF: National Action Plan on Forest Fire
2. SAPFF: State Action Plan on Forest Fire
3. MoEF&CC: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
4. SFD: State Forest Department
5. DCF: Deputy Conservator of Forests
6. ISFR: Indian State of Forest Report
7. FSI: Forest Survey of India
8. ICFRE: Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education
9. WII: Wildlife Institute of India
10. DMA: Disaster Management Authority
11. NDMA: National Disaster Management Authority
12. SDMA: State Disaster Management Authority
13. NDRF: National Disaster Response Force
14. SDRF: State Disaster Response Force
15. DFE: Directorate of Forest Education
16. CAMPA: Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority
17. CSS: Centrally Sponsored Schemes
18. NTFP: Non-Timber Forest Products
19. UT: Union Territory

1. Statement of Purpose

Forest fires constitute a serious threat to forest ecosystems, biodiversity, and ecological stability, particularly under conditions of prolonged dry spells, increasing human pressure, and climate variability. In India, the frequency and intensity of forest fires have risen in recent years, largely due to anthropogenic factors such as accumulation of dry biomass, expansion of urban–forest interfaces, tourism pressure, and deliberate or accidental human activities. While fire has historically played a role in shaping forest ecosystems, the majority of forest fires in India are human-induced, arising from activities such as NTFP collection, grazing practices, shifting cultivation, poaching, and negligence. As per the Forest Survey of India (FSI), about 54.40% of India’s forests are exposed to occasional fires, 7.49% to moderately frequent fires, and 2.40% to high fire incidence. In response to these challenges, the National Action Plan on Forest Fires (NAPFF) was formulated to reduce forest fire occurrence through community involvement, strengthened institutional capacities, and effective post-fire recovery mechanisms.

The Union Territory of Chandigarh, located in the ecologically sensitive Shivalik foothills, comprises fragmented forest areas including reserved forests, wildlife sanctuaries, and urban green belts. These forests are increasingly vulnerable to fires due to urban expansion, high human interface, recreational activities, prolonged dry periods, and accumulation of combustible material, posing risks to ecosystems, wildlife, public health, and infrastructure.

Recognizing the need for focused intervention, the State Action Plan on Forest Fires (SAPFF) for UT Chandigarh has been prepared in alignment with the NAPFF and MoEF&CC guidelines. The Plan provides a coordinated and institutional framework for forest fire prevention, preparedness, early detection, response, and post-fire recovery, tailored to the ecological and administrative context of Chandigarh. Its objective is to minimize forest fire incidents and impacts through proactive planning, technology-enabled monitoring, strengthened response mechanisms, inter-agency coordination, community participation, and systematic post-fire assessment and restoration, thereby ensuring conservation of forest resources, biodiversity, and environmental sustainability in the UT.

2. General Principles

- i. The SAPFF is guided by the principles laid down under the NAPFF and aims to ensure a holistic, coordinated, and people-centric approach to forest fire management.
- ii. Priority shall be accorded to prevention of forest fires and enhancing forest resilience through scientific planning, community participation, and sustainable management practices.
- iii. The safety of human life, including residents, visitors, frontline forest staff, firefighters, and volunteers, shall be the highest priority during all fire-related operations.
- iv. A clear command and control structure shall be maintained for forest fire preparedness, response, and suppression, with defined roles and responsibilities at each administrative level.
- v. Forest division shall function as the basic planning and implementation units for forest fire management, ensuring effective coordination with Disaster Management Authorities at the state levels.
- vi. It is noted that no major forest fire incidents have occurred in UT Chandigarh during the last five years, attributable to proactive measures such as deployment of seasonal fire watchers, regular patrolling during fire season, maintenance of fire lines, establishment of watchtowers, and promotion of fire-resistant plantation species. These measures shall be further strengthened and institutionalized under this plan.

3. Forest Fire Status in UT Chandigarh as per FSI (ISFR 2023)

As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023 published by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), UT Chandigarh comprises forest areas forming part of the Shivalik landscape, characterized by dry deciduous vegetation and scrub forests which are seasonally vulnerable to surface fires during peak summer months. According to the report, UT Chandigarh forest area comes under **Less fire prone** or **Low risk zone**.

10.31.5 Fire Prone Forest Areas

Forest Cover under different classes of forest fire proneness is given in following table.

Table 10.31.11 Forest Fire Prone Classes

			(km ²)
Sl. No.	Forest Fire Prone Classes	Forest Cover*	% of Total Forest Cover
1	Extremely fire prone	0.00	0.00
2	Very highly fire prone	0.00	0.00
3	Highly fire prone	0.00	0.00
4	Moderately fire prone	0.00	0.00
5	Less fire prone	25.78	100.00
Total		25.78	100.00

*Forest Cover including Scrub.

(Source: India State of Forest Report 2023, FSI)

3.1. Forest Fire Incidence in UT Chandigarh (Last Five Years)

Based on satellite-based fire alerts generated by FSI, UT Chandigarh has experienced limited and mostly low-intensity fire incidents during the last five years. No major fire incidents or large-scale ecological damage have been reported during this period.

Table 4.4 Number of Forest Fire Detected by FSI using MODIS & SNPP-VIIRS Sensors (This includes large, continuous and repeated forest fires) for Fire Season 2021-2022, 2022-23 and 2023-2024

Sl. No.	State/UT	MODIS Detections			SNPP-VIIRS Detections		
		Nov 2021 to Jun 2022	Nov 2022 to Jun 2023	Nov 2023 to Jun 2024	Nov 2021 to Jun 2022	Nov 2022 to Jun 2023	Nov 2023 to Jun 2024
31	Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	1	1

(Source: India State of Forest Report 2023, FSI)

The relatively controlled fire scenario may be attributed to proactive deployment of seasonal fire watchers, regular maintenance of fire lines, community sensitization, and timely response to satellite-based fire alerts. However, given the increasing urban–forest interface and continued preparedness remains essential.

4. Fire Risk Zonation and Mapping

Fire risk zonation and mapping provide a scientific basis for identifying priority areas for intervention, optimizing allocation of resources, and strengthening preparedness and response mechanisms. The Forest and Wildlife Department shall undertake fire risk zonation by integrating biophysical, social, and ecological parameters.

Risk zonation shall consider factors such as forest type and fuel load, proximity to habitations and infrastructure, topography, historical fire incidence, and areas of ecological or cultural importance. Risk maps shall be reviewed and updated periodically, preferably once every five years or earlier if required due to changing conditions.

The outcomes of fire risk zonation shall be incorporated into forest working plans and annual plans of operations. High-risk areas shall be prioritized for preventive measures such as strengthening fire lines, watchtowers, patrolling, and resource deployment.

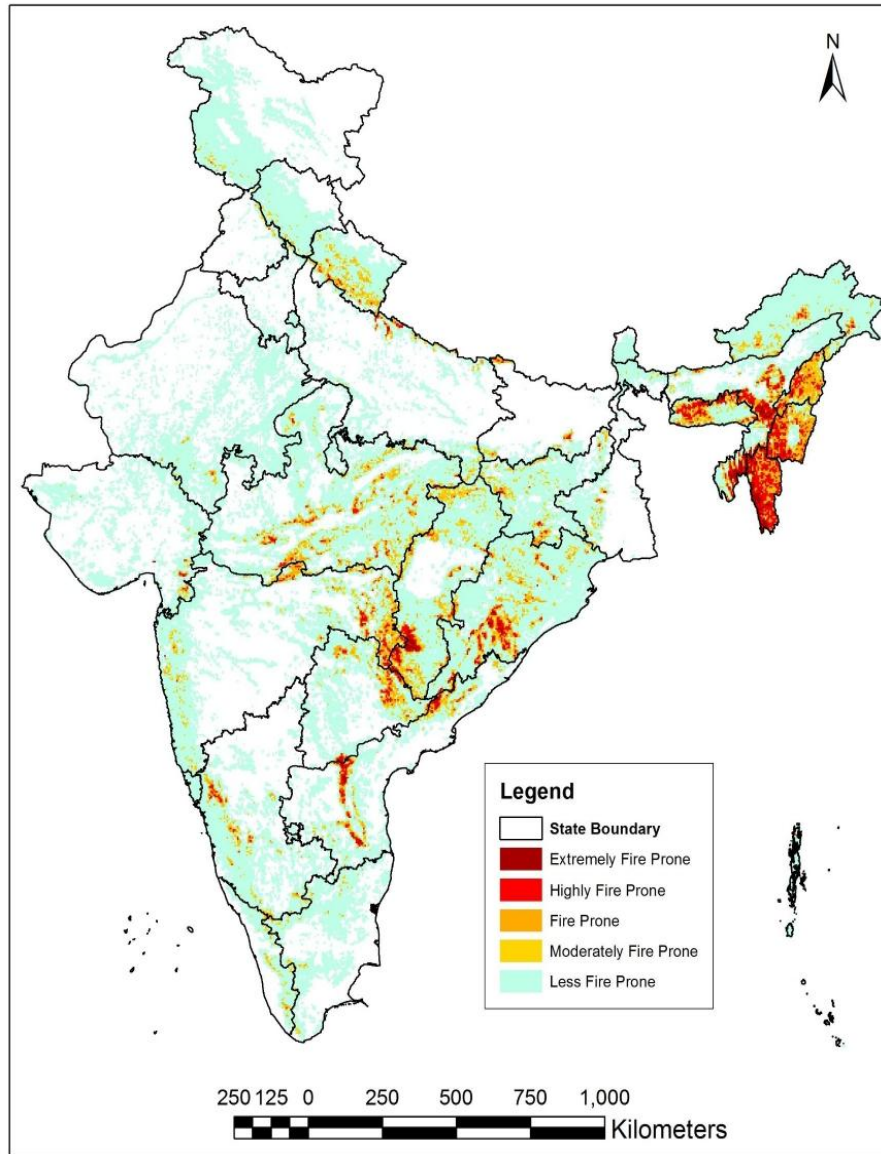


Fig. 5 Map Showing fire prone forest areas under different fire prone classes

(Source: FSI, Technical Information Series, Vol. 1 No. 1 of 2019)

4.1 Risk factors

The following factors, among other locally relevant, may be considered for identifying and quantifying fire risks:

- i. Fuels, including forest cover and type as a broad indicator of fuel type.
- ii. Proximity to infrastructure, property, and other assets, assets, including roads, habitations and other buildings, agricultural lands, transmission lines, and railways;

- iii. Topography, including slope, aspect, elevation, terrain ruggedness and other characteristics
- iv. Social indicators, including local dependence on forests for livelihoods, poverty, and traditional land use practices;
- v. Historic fire occurrence and patterns may be used to identify areas that are most prone to fires. Fire records prior to 2003 may be geo-referenced and mapped. This historical data can be used to validate the results of analysis.;
- vi. Areas of special ecological or cultural importance, including protected areas, historic sites, designated heritage sites, temples, pilgrimage routes, etc.; and
- vii. Special ecological conditions, for example, new plantations.

4.2 Use of fire risk zones in forest planning

The results of the forest fire risk zonation shall be translated into concrete management actions under the forest working plans. DCFs shall identify activities or interventions to mitigate fire risks or reduce impact of the fire hazards in high-risk areas. These may include creation of additional fire lines, watch towers and other infrastructure in vulnerable areas. The same shall be examined speedily by the appropriate authorities for approval and making provisions for financing the approved activities. The Annual Plan of Operations for the forest division and protected areas, shall include the approved activities and interventions as mentioned. The state planning and finance departments shall be sensitized to prioritize resource allocation for forest fire management.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

5. Preventing Forest Fires

Given that most forest fires are manmade and are linked to socio-economic and livelihood issues of the forest fringe areas, community awareness and participation form the basis of effective fire prevention. It should, therefore, be possible to greatly reduce the forest fire incidences by making these communities aware of the many tangible and intangible benefits lost to them, both individually and collectively, due to forest fires. Special emphasis shall be laid on prevention measures in urban–forest interface zones, which are particularly vulnerable due to high human activity.

Following actions are proposed to be taken in this regard:

5.1 Effective communication strategy for awareness generation

The Department shall implement a structured mass communication and outreach strategy with adequate financial provisions for five years, for vigorous publicity and sensitization local communities. It should be specifically targeted at sensitizing forest-fringe communities, urban dwellers, tourists, students, farmers, infrastructure related professionals, and other stakeholders among others. Information on forest fire and its adverse effects should also be provided to the community through nature tours, etc. The strategy would identify most effective means for reaching out to different target groups like school campaigns, campaigns on Radio, TV, and social media, mobile campaigns during festival season, organization of music festivals, and setting up information portals and other awareness activities prior to fire season. Signages, warning boards, and fire danger index displays shall be installed at strategic locations such as forest entry points, trails, roadsides, and tourist areas during the fire season.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

5.2 Capacity building of communities

The capacity of community organizations in prevention and control of forest fires should be enhanced by periodical training and capacity building programmes. Forest fire alerts information should also be provided to representatives of communities residing in forest fringes and concerned stakeholders. They can be provided with access to the firefighting tools & equipment's including leaf litter blowers, other tools and protective clothing kept in control rooms during fire emergency. The community members shall be duly involved during the mock drills on forest fire before fire season. A manual on forest fire management may be prepared by the department which should contain the details of vulnerable areas, location of natural & man-made water sources, other infrastructure available for fire prevention and management to educate and train frontline staff and other stakeholders. Participation of community members in fire prevention and suppression activities shall be suitably recognized through certificates and public acknowledgment to encourage sustained engagement.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

6. Increasing Forest Resilience to Fires

Management interventions for increasing resilience to forest fires shall be planned according to the vulnerability to forest fires as reflected in the risk zonation maps.

Following are some of the measures which could be adopted in this context:

6.1 Moisture and water conservation

As fire hazard is more in drier and deciduous habitats and areas with predominance of grasses management action would need to aim at moisture retention for longer time after rains and appropriate preventive measures to ensure that minor fire incidences do not escalate into major fire events. A long-term plan or improving the water regime of the forest areas based on opportunities and feasibility will be useful in reducing vulnerable to fires. CAMPA provides scope for this kind of work

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

6.2 Forest floor biomass management

Necessary management interventions shall be planned aiming at minimizing accumulation of dry fuel material on forest floor in the fire season. The litter and other biomass on the forest floor leading to fire danger will be gainfully utilized for the benefit of the society in identified areas.

A framework for biomass management is suggested below:

- a. Removal of forest floor biomass, wherever required, shall be undertaken strictly on a need-based approach for fire prevention and ecological management.
- b. Forest floor biomass management shall be carried out in a manner that supports natural regeneration and plantation success. Leaf litter and organic matter shall be retained in non-sensitive areas to aid nutrient cycling, moisture retention, and biodiversity conservation.
- c. Dedicated efforts to be made for removal of fuel load from vulnerable and sensitive locations, particularly in urban–forest interface zones, while ensuring that ecological functions of forest floors are not adversely affected.

- d. Guidelines may to be framed for sustainable removal of fuel load to reduce risk of fire and also to conserve biodiversity.

6.3 Weed Management

Invasive weeds need to be controlled as they contribute significantly to the fire danger and pose a threat to native biodiversity. The following actions are recommended:

- i. A baseline study to quantify the extent and spread of invasive weeds may be initiated by SFDs in consultation with scientific institutions such as ICFRE/WII/FRI or UT level reputed institutes.
- ii. Complete removal of invasive plant biomass, such as *Lantana*, *Prosopis*, Congress grass etc. may be undertaken by the Department as part of habitat improvement and fire risk reduction. The removed invasive biomass shall be safely disposed of or composted, and the treated areas shall be restored through planting of suitable native species.
- iii. Removal of invasive species may also be organized as an attractive economic opportunity for the local communities
- iv. Rehabilitation of treated areas with appropriate species and soil and moisture conservation measures should form part of the weed removal plan.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

7. Forest Fire Preparedness

Preparedness in forest fire management leads to effective response to fire disasters resulting in reduced impact and quicker recovery.

The following steps may form the basis of preparedness against forest fires:

7.1 Forest Fire Detection and Alert

Satellite based Forest Fire Alerts are already operational across the country led by FSI.

Map showing SNPP-VIIRS detections during 2023-2024 forest fire season is given as Figure 4.7.

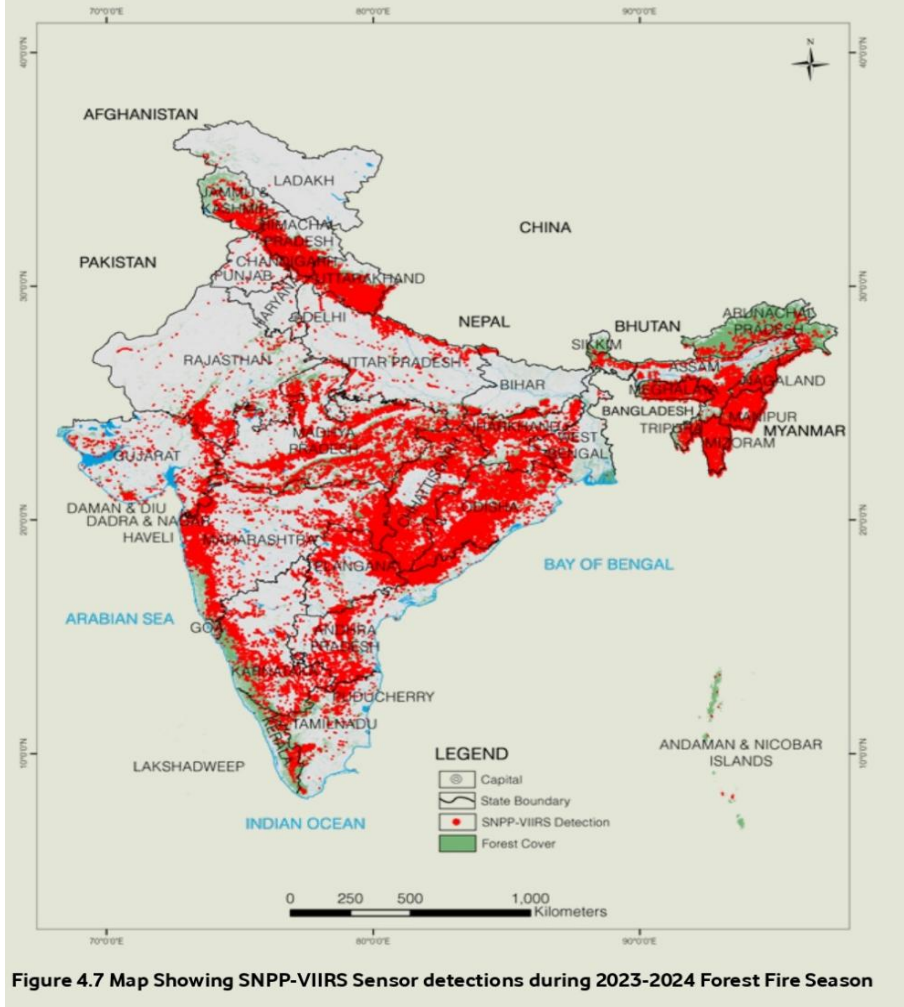


Figure 4.7 Map Showing SNPP-VIIRS Sensor detections during 2023-2024 Forest Fire Season

(Source: India State of Forest Report 2023)

During the year 2023-24, only one fire incident was detected in Chandigarh by the FSI’s SNPP-VIIRS fire detection sensor.

10.31.4 Forest Fire

District-wise number of forest fire detected by FSI using SNPP-VIIRS sensors (This includes large, continuous and repeated forest fires) during the fire season 2022-23 & 2023-24.

Table 10.31.10 District-wise Number of Forest Fire Detected

Sl. No.	District	SNPP-VIIRS Detection during 2022-23	SNPP-VIIRS Detection during 2023-24
1	Chandigarh	1	1
	Total	1	1

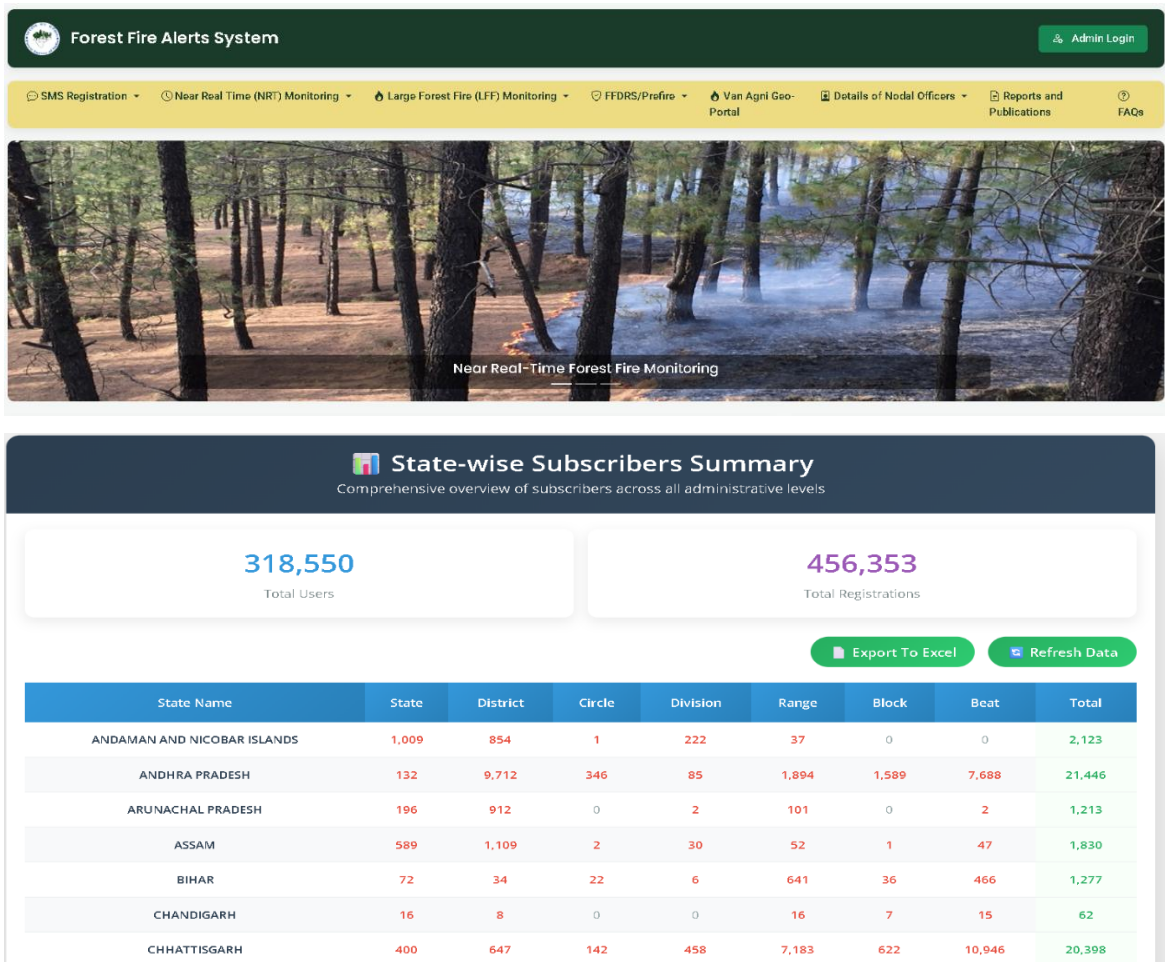
(Source: India State of Forest Report 2023)

The following steps may be taken to improve the efficacy of the FSI fire alert system:

- i. **Digitization of forest boundaries:** In the absence of digitized boundaries in many forests across the country, the FSI screens fire detections using approximations leading to reduced efficacy of the alert system. The department has already digitized the forest boundaries.
- ii. **Promoting greater adoption of the Forest Fire Alert System:**

FSI has established a robust Forest Fire Alert System, under which volunteers and officials can register to receive real-time fire alerts. Any individual can subscribe to this service, which is free of cost.

As per the latest report, a total of 62 subscribers from Chandigarh are currently registered under the system. Additionally, 22 staff members of the Forest Department are registered on the FSI Fire Alert Portal to receive fire alert SMS notifications.



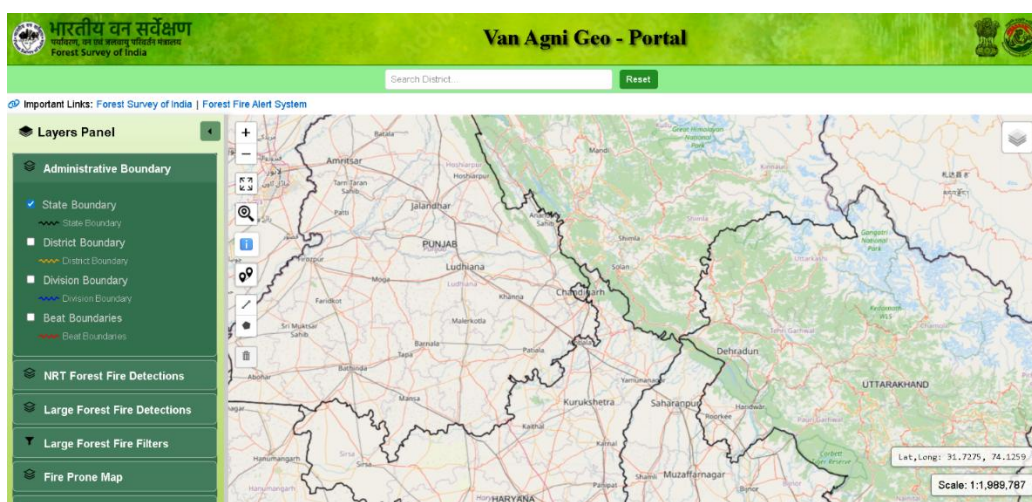
The Department shall further promote wider participation by encouraging all field functionaries, including beat-level staff, as well as interested citizens and stakeholders, to register under the system. This will ensure timely dissemination of forest fire alerts down to the beat level and to the public at the earliest possible time. This mechanism may be institutionalized through a formal protocol outlining roles, responsibilities, and response timelines.

- iii. **Improving Ground based Detection:** Even with the advances in new remote sensing technologies for fire detection, ground-based detection continues to be essential and should be sufficiently resourced. The Department shall perform an assessment of the efficacy of the existing network of watchtowers by a review of the level of functionality and operational use of the existing towers. The department may propose new locations for fire watchtowers based on coverage, visibility, ignition sources, and other relevant factors
- iv. **Strengthening engagement with local communities:** Local communities are often the first to spot fires and alert the forest department. Locally suitable mechanisms shall be developed by the department for sourcing reliable and quick information from local communities. A simple and locally understandable reporting mechanism, including use of messaging platforms or mobile applications where feasible, may be promoted.
- v. **Dedicated phone line:** A toll-free telephone number 0172-2700217 has been established by the Department 24*7 for reporting information on forest fires. Other required support needs to be established at UT level to obtain information on forest fires from tourists, passersby and local people.
- vi. **Monitoring and evaluation:** FSI has placed a system to review all fire alert detections and their ground verification. The department will ensure that feedbacks on fire alerts are sent to FSI for validation
- vii. **Control Room & Wireless network:** In order to effectively coordinate and to reduce time lag, department may establish control rooms equipped with communication gadgets, mobility, and proper facilitation to the staff on guard. The control rooms shall be equipped with firefighting equipment's and clothing including safety glasses, fire masks, fire proximity/resistant suit, hydration packs, multifunctional tool, fire beaters/flappers, rake, fire broom, flashlight, wind meter, tool kit bag, fire extinguishers, firefighting hose, chainsaw, leaf blower, drip torch, and first aid kit. In the remote forest areas mobile

telephony is not well developed and frontline staff are unable to get the information coming on the Forest Fire Alert Alarms, in such cases, forests communication system may be supplemented by a dedicated wireless network.

7.2 Van Agni Portal

The Van Agni Portal is a centralized digital platform developed to facilitate real-time monitoring, reporting, and management of forest fire incidents across the country. The portal integrates satellite-based fire alerts, geospatial mapping, and ground verification data to enable efficient tracking of fire occurrences and response actions.



The platform provides a systematic interface for recording fire alerts, updating field verification status, mapping burnt areas, and maintaining incident records in a structured and transparent manner. It supports data-driven decision-making by enabling analysis of fire trends, response timelines, and spatial distribution of fire events.

By integrating satellite inputs with field-level reporting mechanisms, the Van Agni Portal enhances coordination between central and state agencies and strengthens the overall forest fire monitoring framework. The portal serves as an important technological tool under the broader framework of forest fire preparedness and management in the country.

7.3 Digitize the location of critical resources and assets

The departments shall conduct inventory mapping of critical resources for forest fire prevention and management and make relevant information available to the forest ranges.

Resources and assets to be inventoried may include forest department resources, such as watchtowers, ground crew stations, controls rooms and fire lines as well as non-department resources, such as the locations of fire stations, fire tenders and NDRF and SDRF, and army and paramilitary camps. They may important infrastructures such as roads, and telecommunications networks and natural resources such as water bodies and natural fire breaks that could assist in preparedness and planning for response to forest fires. The digitized information shall be periodically updated and made accessible to field staff during emergencies.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

7.4 Forest Fire Lines

The Forest department has a total forest fire length of 138.01 km under maintenance for the year 2025-26. A review of the maintenance status, functionality, and adequacy of these fire lines, and an assessment of the need for new fire lines, may be undertaken considering past fire data, forest types, habitations, and other relevant factors. Further, proposals for new fire lines shall be made on a scientific basis considering their potential efficacy in reducing fire risk and their proximity to people, property, and areas of special concern (e.g., protected areas). Plantations should not be raised on existing or proposed fire lines.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

8. Fire Suppression

Immediate response to forest fires after receipt of information is of utmost importance. For this purpose, the department will be made to develop a culture of emergent response to fire alerts. This needs to fire intense training at all levels, strengthening of infrastructure, and coordination with other relevant agencies. Fire suppression operations shall strictly adhere to safety protocols and standard operating procedures to minimize risk to personnel.

8.1. Training for field staff, firewatchers, and community firefighters

The principal need for forest fire suppression is to have adequate competent, trained and equipped workforce on the ground, ready to respond and take immediate action. The Forest Department has been conducting periodic training and sensitization programmes for frontline

forest staff, and seasonal fire watchers prior to the onset of fire season. These trainings focus on basic principles of forest fire behavior, use of firefighting equipment, safety protocols, emergency response coordination, and reporting procedures.

In recent years, pre-fire season orientation programmes have been organized at division and range levels to enhance preparedness. Practical demonstrations on the use of fire beaters, leaf litter blowers, communication devices, and protective gear have been conducted to ensure operational readiness of firefighting personnel. Mock drills are also organized from time to time to test response mechanisms and identify operational gaps.

Under this State Action Plan, at least one structured pre-fire season training programme shall be conducted annually at the division level, supplemented by refresher exercises at the beat level to ensure continuous skill enhancement and safety compliance. The training shall be provided to field officers, seasonal firewatchers, and community volunteers involved in firefighting. All these firefighters should understand basic principles of forest fire management for using the most effective suppression technique at their disposal and know when retreat is necessary. The type of training provided to firefighters will be tailored according to the landscape, nature of terrain, their level of responsibility and role in the command structure in responding to fires.

- i. A **modern and standardized training curriculum** shall be developed and imparted to frontline staff. by the SFDs with the guidance of Directorate of Forest Education (DFE) of the MoEF&CC. Other agencies involved in fire response, including NDMA and NDRF may be involved in a consultative role
- ii. **Mock drills** shall be organized before fire season at various fire prone areas involving all the stakeholders such as District Administration, Police Fire Department, NDRF, SDRF personnel, community organizations etc. for identification of gaps in the existing mechanism and better preparedness during crisis time
- iii. **Quick action for suppression of fire:** For quick action sufficient labour force and staff is required to be deployed. Arrangement of tools, food, water and lighting shall be there as

the process of fire extinguishing sometimes may take days together. The arrangement of transportation of men and material shall be therefore made available.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

8.2 Equipping the firefighters

The Department is equipped with essential firefighting and surveillance equipment including drones for aerial monitoring, binoculars for ground surveillance, fire line maintenance tools, water tankers, watch towers, axes, chain saws, buckets, ladders, flashlights, and spades for effective forest fire control operations. These resources are strategically deployed across forest ranges to ensure rapid mobilization during fire emergencies. The adequacy and functionality of equipment shall be periodically reviewed, and additional procurement shall be undertaken as required to strengthen fire suppression capability.

In addition, the firefighting squad including field staff, seasonal firewatchers, and community firefighters shall be provided with adequate firefighting equipment including fire masks, fire resistant suit, fire beaters, leaf litter blowers, flashlights, communication devices, wind meter, and first-aid kits. There shall be sufficient practice sessions for the firefighting personnel in the use of the firefighting equipment so as to enhance their efficiency in actual firefighting.

(Action to be taken by DCFs/SFDs)

8.3 Development of adequate infrastructure for fire suppression

- i. An effective communication network should be ensured in all fire prone forest areas using wireless where necessary.
- ii. The department will procure vehicles including water tankers for movement of firefighting personnel to the fire spots at the earliest.
- iii. Advance technologies such as use of drones shall be explored in identification of exact location, intensity & direction of fire to facilitate fire extinguishment at the earliest.

- iv. Forest road network shall be properly maintained for quick movement of firefighting forces to the fire site

(Action by DCFs/SFDs)

8.4 Arrangements for adequate manpower in fire prone areas

The SFDs will fill all vacancies especially at the level of frontline forest officials in the fire prone areas on priority basis. The trained manpower may also be mobilized from other agencies such as Police, District Fire services, NDRF, SDRF etc. The Communities living near the fire prone areas will also be sensitized and may be incentivized towards fire suppression activities. There shall be a mechanism for mobilization of forest fire fighting volunteers and providing them with adequate training on an urgent basis. A database of the firefighting volunteers should be maintained at forest department beat level.

(Action by DCFs/SFDs)

9. Post-Fire Management

9.1 Assessment of loss due to forest fires

The department may develop a UT level database for burnt area assessment on a yearly basis. A Standard methodology will be evolved in consultation with ICFRE/FSI etc., for assessing losses due to forest fire. The department will organize adequate training programs for forest officials at various levels to build capacity for this purpose.

(Action by DCFs/SFDs)

9.2 Proper investigation of the causes

The department will ensure that the causes for every fire incident are properly investigated and adequate measures taken immediately including legal actions where necessary. Findings of investigations shall be documented and used for strengthening preventive strategies and legal deterrence.

(Action by DCFs/SFDs)

9.3 Restoration of fire affected areas

A proper restoration plan shall be prepared at once for the fire affected areas with the objective of restoring to its natural profile. Appropriate silviculture practices shall be prescribed taking into account the ecological successional dynamics. Adequate soil moisture conservation measures shall be taken up in the fire affected areas for enhancing the moisture retention capacity of the land. Indigenous vegetative barriers will be identified and planted around the fire affected areas

(Action by DCFs/SFDs)

10. Inter-Agency Coordination

Forest fire management is a multifarious activity in which a frictionless interface with a range of institutions and social groups becomes very important for effective functioning. The forest department is already working in coordination with the FSI for past many years. Forest fires of disastrous proportions already come under the purview of the NDMA and the Disaster Management Authorities at the UT levels and institutional mechanisms for combating forest fires at disaster scale has already been formalized for incorporation in the National and State level disaster management plans. Institutionalization of close coordination with relevant institutions is thus already a reality but it needs to be strengthened further. For this purpose, there are existing procedures developed by the DMAs at all levels and the forest department will take urgent steps to update, upgrade and integrate their systems with those of the DMAs. Periodic coordination meetings and joint exercises shall be conducted to ensure operational readiness and clarity of roles during emergencies.

(Action by DCFs/SFDs)

11. Mobilization of Financial Resources

Forest fires pose the foremost threat to India's forests and the threat is projected to become more serious with the changing climate. Therefore, emphasis on the adequate protection of existing forest resources from fire hazards shall be accorded high priority which shall require funding. As such sufficient financial resources shall be made available at division and range

level well in advance. Besides, external financial aid should be accessed for investment on infrastructure for this purpose. A long-term plan shall be prepared for the state to develop adequate infrastructure and other support system. As it may be very difficult to get funds from one source, it can be tapped from CAMPA and CSS.

(Action by DCFs/SFDs)

12. Summarized Five-Year Action Plan (2026–2031)

The following works are planned to be carried out over the next five years: -

- 1. Creation and Maintenance of Fire Lines:** Existing fire lines shall be strengthened and new fire lines created in vulnerable forest areas based on fire risk assessment. Annual maintenance, including clearing of vegetation and removal of combustible material, shall be undertaken before the fire season. Community participation may also be encouraged in maintenance activities.
- 2. Forest Fire Risk Zonation and Mapping:** Scientific risk zonation shall be carried out using historical fire data, vegetation type, slope, aspect, and climatic factors. High, medium, and low-risk zones shall be identified to prioritize resource allocation. GIS-based maps shall be prepared and periodically updated. This will enable targeted prevention and preparedness measures.
- 3. Establishment and Strengthening of Fire Control Rooms:** Fire control rooms shall be strengthened with communication equipment, internet connectivity, and real-time alert monitoring systems. Nodal officers shall be designated during the fire season for coordinated response. Proper documentation and maintenance of fire incident records shall be ensured. Integration with FSI alerts and the Van Agni Portal shall be maintained for timely action.
- 4. Construction of Water Harvesting Structures:** More water harvesting structures such as ponds, tanks, and storage facilities shall be developed in fire-prone areas to ensure water availability during emergencies. Existing water bodies shall be desilted and maintained regularly. These structures shall serve dual purposes of firefighting and wildlife support. Site selection shall be based on vulnerability and accessibility.

5. **Installation of Fire Watch Towers:** Fire watch towers shall be installed or strengthened at strategic points for early detection of forest fires. Where feasible, technological tools such as drones and binocular surveillance shall supplement watch tower monitoring. Watchers shall be deployed during peak fire season. Proper maintenance of watch towers shall be ensured.
6. **Removal of Fuel Load and Litter Management:** Controlled removal of dry biomass, invasive shrubs, and accumulated leaf litter shall be undertaken in vulnerable forest areas. This will reduce fire intensity and rate of spread. The activity shall be carried out in an environmentally sound manner. Special focus shall be given to areas near habitations and roadways.
7. **Procurement and Upgradation of Firefighting Equipment:** Modern firefighting equipment including fire beaters, blowers, fire-resistant suits, communication devices, and first-aid kits etc. shall be procured as required. Existing equipment shall be inspected and maintained regularly. Adequate logistical support such as vehicles and water tankers shall be ensured. Inventory records shall be maintained at range and beat levels.
8. **Capacity Building and Training:** Regular training programmes and mock drills shall be conducted for field staff, seasonal fire watchers, and community volunteers. Practical demonstrations on use of equipment and safety protocols shall be emphasized. Inter-departmental coordination exercises may also be organized. Training records shall be maintained and reviewed annually.
9. **Public Awareness and Community Participation:** Awareness campaigns shall be organized in fringe villages, schools, and communities before the fire season. Signage boards and local outreach programmes shall be used to sensitize the public. Involvement of Eco-Clubs, Eco-Societies, NGOs, and local volunteers shall be encouraged. Reporting mechanisms for early fire information shall be widely publicized.
10. **Strengthening Early Warning and Alert Systems:** Greater adoption of FSI Fire Alert System and Van Agni Portal shall be promoted among field functionaries. All beat-level staff shall be encouraged to register for SMS alerts. Real-time monitoring of alerts and prompt ground verification shall be ensured. A standard protocol for response and reporting shall be institutionalized.

Provision of Funds: The above activities shall be financed through Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) of MoEF&CC for Forest Fire Prevention and Maintenance of fire lines, along with allocation from UT grants. Additional financial support may be leveraged, wherever feasible, to strengthen infrastructure and operational readiness under the State Action Plan on Forest Fires.

Conclusion

The State Action Plan on Forest Fire for UT Chandigarh provides a comprehensive, practical, and response-oriented framework aligned with national priorities. Through scientific planning, community participation, institutional strengthening, and inter-agency coordination, the Plan aims to safeguard forest ecosystems, protect biodiversity, and ensure resilience against forest fire hazards.

The successful implementation of this Plan will depend on sustained inter-departmental coordination, timely availability of resources, continuous capacity building of frontline staff and communities, and periodic review based on field experience. Through collective responsibility and shared commitment, the SAPFF aims to safeguard Chandigarh's forest ecosystems, protect biodiversity, enhance resilience to climate variability, and ensure environmental security for present and future generations.

Annexure-1

Detail of Beat In-Charges of Nepli Range

Sr. No.	Name of Official	Designation	Contact No.	Posting
1.	Sh. Vivek	Forest Guard	90343-13231	In-Charge Upper and Lower Nepli Beats
2.	Sh. Sanjay Kumar Yadav	Forest Guard	88240-09517	In-charge Upper and Lower Ghareri Beats
3.	Sh. Amrinder Singh	Forest Guard	89685-17482	In-Charge Manimajra Beat, Butterfly Park, Piplanwali Beats
4.	Sh. Manish Sihag	Forest Guard	77920-14977	In-Charge Hallomajra Beat
5.	Sh. Sudhir	Forest Guard	85297-48286	In-Charge Wildlife Squard, City Bird Sanctuary, Paryavaran Bhawan, Ambika and Tootanwali Beats

Detail of Beat In-Charge of Chandigarh Range

Sr. No.	Name of Official	Designation	Contact No.	Posting
1.	Sh. Nishant Gill	Forest Guard	97284-35929	Southern Sectors Beat & Patiala Ki Rao Beat
2.	Sh. Sandeep Chahal	Forest Guard	97296-10702	Botanical Garden
3.	Smt. Ritika Batra	Forest Guard	88476-03095	Bird Park Beat
4.	Sh. Omkar Sawroop	Forest Guard	99884-42718	Lake Beat
5.	Sh. Ankit	Forest Guard	94677-17179	Kansal Beat
6.	Sh. Davinder Sharma	Forest Guard	97280-07840	Kaimbwala & Khuda Ali Sher Beat
7.	Sh. Ramesh	Forest Guard	76578-78004	Barotiwala South Beat