

# TEPILORA BURNING

## RESTORATION OF A PORTION OF THE BIOSPHERE RESERVE AFFECTED BY FIRE



Every year, Sardinia loses part of its natural heritage due to arson. Mr. Pasquale Muntoni, who has worked in firefighting since 1984 and now works for the Regional Agency *Foresta*s, told us that one of the most devastating fire in Baronia was set on 06/08/2023, affecting the area of Monte Longu and the coast of San Giovanni in Posada (Nuoro). Because of the strong *mistral*, the flames quickly spread towards the seaside resort of La Caletta (Siniscola). Six hundred homes were evacuated,

Comparison between areas affected by fire on 06/08/2023 and “Tepilora, Rio Posada and Montalto Biosphere riserve”.

frightened tourists and residents found shelter on the beach.

The fire destroyed 80 hectares out of the 160,000 of the "*Tepilora, Rio Posada and Montalbo Biosphere Reserve*", the only one in Sardinia among twenty Italian UNESCO MAB reserves, and also part of the EU Framework Programme of "Horizon 2020" fire prevention. The law

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**"It takes years to grow a forest, an instant to destroy it".**

**MR. P. MUNTONI**

forbids to use burnt wood land for 5 years, but this is not enough. The fire pollutes the atmosphere with toxic combustion gases, and other chemicals formed at high temperatures.

With time, these pollutants settle on the ground, affecting the soil. While gases have a local impact, the new chemicals created at high temperatures are dangerous over time, because they can accumulate and also move in the soil. This means that land in the biosphere and groundwater can be polluted at distances very far from the fire.

The good news is that we can help giving this burnt land a new life:

➤ Building *trellises and bundles*, which are fast and cheap to make using plants or wood from tall trees. They help slow down the rainwater and retain the debris from the forest such as "dirt" and leaves, preventing soil erosion.

➤ Building *palisades and pilings* to protect the avifauna like our famous pink flamingos and the habitat of *Salicornia*, and to avoid landslide near the banks of water collectors.

➤ By *replanting* trees and other plants we can rebuild the ecosystem and help biodiversity conservation. Planting also makes erosion more difficult because the roots hold the soil together.

➤ The installation of a turret for fire sighting and birdwatching.



Restoration of burnt land with trellises, bundles, palisades, pilings and by replanting trees and plants.

(Canu Isabel, Chighini Viola, Muntoni Margherita, Pilurzi Gemma, Rosu Claudia)

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