Rescue protocols for wild animal in case of a fire alert

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Abstract: In the year 2017, the Campania Region (Dept. Veterinary Public Health and Prevention) establishes the Regional Reference Center for Veterinary non-Epidemic Emergencies (CeRVEnE) with the intention of providing the territory of an organizational structure able to furnish the essential levels of veterinary assistance (LEA), in case of disasters. The Directorate for "Training, Information and Applied Research" starts working (2018) in the "Vesuvio area" with the aim of carrying out a program of "Good practices of the services of the Prevention Department for the animals, in case of fire risk". During its first year, the Program named "FRAC1" provided the Dept. Veterinary Public Health and Prevention with a first "context study", starting from the "Vesuvio area", really affected by the fire disaster in 2017. The results described in this work offer an up-to-date picture of early intervention approaches and methodologies, to deal with the risks of exceptional events such as fires; highlight the critical territorial and logistic points during an evacuation consequent to a forest fire (including animals) and indicate the best response capacities of the Campania Region for the return to normality and the restoration of ecosystems. The protocols proposed tend, in fact, to indicate the best practices for the animals involved in a fire, ensuring their interventions and assistance in compliance with the rules on animal welfare but also to protect human health (food supply chain management and food safety).

Compared to the expected results during the first year, the following were achieved:

- The retrospective analysis of the causes, locations and damage of fires in the "red area of Vesuvius", relative to the incendiary events recorded in the year 2017.
- A methodological proposal to be completed before standardization for data collection.
- A first analysis of the fire and animals (wild and domestic) risk that could be involved.
- A first approach to reach an interface between the bodies involved in the surveillance and monitoring system of fire risk factors.
- the start of information and training days dedicated to the disastrous forest fire event in areas of high human concentration and high urbanization.
- A structure suitable for the assessment of the "Risk assessment" sufficiently valid to organize the second phase of the FRAC Program which will be dedicated to the "business impact analysis".

Keywords: Fire risk; Animal rescue; basic health care levels (LEA); disaster; wildlife assistance; Regional Centre for non-epidemic veterinary emergency (CeRVEnE).