



## Publications and Reports

## Forest fires: causes and contributing factors to forest fire events in Europe (2008)

### Description

Forest fires are the most important threat to forest and wooded area in Southern Europe. Reports of forest fires in France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain show that in these areas more than 450,000 ha burned on average each year between 2000 and 2006. In 2007 the phenomenon got even worse, especially in the south-eastern countries (Greece and Italy in particular), and the total area burned was about 500,000 ha. Fires have caused extensive damage in recent years, leading to loss of human lives, affecting human health, burning properties, infrastructures and business and causing extensive environmental damage in forest and agriculture areas. Many argue that fires also contribute to global warming through the emission of CO<sub>2</sub>. The present study aims to provide a critical analysis of the causes that lead to the most relevant recent forest fires events in the EU, focusing in particular on Southern European countries. In particular, the study assesses to what extent forest fires have been influenced by forest management, extreme weather events and climate change, territorial planning/development regulations regarding the use of forests or burned areas, and inadequacy of response and lack of material capacity. To do so, two case studies were developed, one the Portuguese forest fires of 2003 and 2005, and one on the Greek fires of 2007.

### Reference information

#### Websites:

[http://www.ieep.eu/assets/392/forest\\_fires\\_report.pdf](http://www.ieep.eu/assets/392/forest_fires_report.pdf)

#### Source:

Institute for European Environmental Policy

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#### Keywords

Southern Europe, forest carbon management, forest fire, forest monitoring, land use, planning, regulation

#### Climate impacts

Droughts, Extreme Temperatures, Water Scarcity

#### Elements

Adaptation Measures and Actions, Vulnerability Assessment

**Sectors**

Biodiversity, Disaster Risk Reduction, Forestry, Health, Urban

**Geographic characterisation**

Europe