

# FOREST FIRES

## Sparking firesmart policies in the EU

R&I Projects for Policy

### Forest fires are a serious and increasing threat throughout Europe

They can have a huge economic impact and lead to a tragic loss of life

#### Each year in the EU



65 000 forest fires



€3 billion – economic damage from wildfires



95% are caused by humans



480 000 ha of forest areas are burned – 1 million ha in 2017



€2.2 billion – spent by EU governments and public agencies to fight forest fires



34 firefighters and other people killed (611 killed 2000–2017)

#### More people will be at risk, for longer periods of time



longer fire seasons



more fire-prone areas



new wildfire context with mega-fires

### Challenges



Effective forest fire management and decision-making requires science-based information



New wildfire context calls for better prevention and preparedness



Firefighting and rescue services need better coordination



Learning how to live in fire-prone areas requires adequate governance



Landscapes and communities need to become more resilient to forest fires

### The EU is investing in research for better fire prevention, suppression and integrated management

€103 million

invested over 20 years in 56 forest fire-related research projects

EU-funded research stimulates advances in fire knowledge, operational management and decision-support mechanisms while improving cooperation among key actors

#### Prevention and mitigation

**Cohesion Policy**  
funding for prevention and preparedness, including for buying fire engines and helicopters, infrastructure, training and cross-border coordination

**EU forest strategy**  
actions to support sustainable forest management

**Rural development**  
funding to implement the EU Forest Strategy

**European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS)**  
fire danger forecasts and monitoring active fires



**Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre**  
science-policy advice for risk management, including for forest fires

**EU Civil Protection Mechanism**  
complements national response capacities (rescEU)  
**Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)**  
EU assistance to an affected country

Impacts

Response

Restoration and adaptation

Preparedness

### Recommendations for policymakers



Reinforce the EU's disaster response capacity



Improve coordination and coherence between EU and national policies



Support proactive prevention operations



Integrate fire management with sustainable forest management



Improve fire preparedness through participative, multilevel governance

#### MORE INFORMATION

Read the full R&I Projects for Policy report on forest fires:  
[ec.europa.eu/research/environment/forestfires](http://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/forestfires)

#EUMegaFires @DisastResilEU

#### See also:

[https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/forest/strategy\\_fr](https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/forest/strategy_fr)  
[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/mechanism\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/mechanism_en)  
<https://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/index.cfm?pg=climate>

Find all R&I Projects for Policy reports at:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/p4p>

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