



Forest fires: EU helps Italy, Greece, Albania and North Macedonia to fight devastating fires

Brussels, 4 August 2021

As forest fires continue affecting various regions in the Mediterranean and the Western Balkans, the European Commission is swiftly mobilising support to assist countries in limiting the spread of the fires and protect lives and livelihoods.

- Two Canadair firefighting airplanes from France are being sent to affected areas in Italy to start firefighting operations today.
- Two firefighting planes from Cyprus are supporting Greece, on top of a firefighting team to support operations on the ground.
- Two helicopters to support operations in Albania will be equally dispatched from Czechia and the Netherlands.
- In addition, Slovenia is sending a team of 45 firefighters to North Macedonia.

All help is mobilised through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, with co-funding by the Commission of at least 75 % of transport costs.

Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez **Lenarčič** said: *"We are working around the clock to send help as fires rage across Europe. I thank Cyprus, Czechia, France, Slovenia and the Netherlands for swiftly deploying firefighting airplanes, helicopters and a team of firefighters to support countries heavily affected by forest fires. At this time as several Mediterranean countries are facing fires, EU Civil Protection makes sure that our firefighting tools in place are used at maximum capacity. This is an excellent example of EU solidarity in times of need."*

These deployments come in addition to EU-coordinated firefighting operations that are currently ongoing in Turkey, as well as in Sardinia, Italy at the end of July. Satellite maps from the EU's Copernicus Emergency Management satellite are providing further support to the emergency services to coordinate the operations.

The European Union's 24/7 [Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) is in constant contact with the civil protection authorities of countries affected by the fires to closely monitor the situation and channel EU assistance.

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