

EN

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Answer given by Ms Lahbib
on behalf of the European Commission
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Based on 2006-2022 data, the Commission estimates wildfire losses to be around EUR 2.7 billion annually. Accurate future estimates of these costs in the EU in the next 10 years require running projections, which the Commission plans to do. Under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework (MFF), the EU financed 12 new firefighting aircraft, which will join the permanent rescEU¹ wildfire-fighting fleet as of 2028. In line with the adopted preparedness union strategy (PUS)², the EU also plans to scale up the existing capabilities of rescEU, including aerial firefighting. The next MFF will build on the PUS.

The Commission will encourage expanding more insurance/reinsurance capacity and accompany the sector in the required changes in their investment decisions and underwriting practices. As announced in the PUS, the Commission will explore possible solutions to reduce the insurance protection gap in the EU³. Under the EU Copernicus programme⁴, the Commission is developing new tools in the European Forest Fire Information System⁵ to help assess current and/or possible future high-risk areas and potential impact of wildfires. Under the common agriculture policy⁶, support is possible for insurance covering drought losses.

Since the beginning of the programming cycle, the programme for the environment and climate action (LIFE)⁷ has financed 34 projects⁸ targeting climate resilience, providing a total contribution of EUR 84.9 million. Regarding cohesion policy, out of EUR 14 billion of EU funds allocated to climate adaptation and disaster risk management, EUR 4.2 billion is dedicated to preventing climate-related risks, including actions for drought prevention. Under cluster 6 of Horizon Europe, research and innovation projects on forest management are funded⁹.

¹ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/resceu_en.

² https://commission.europa.eu/topics/preparedness_en.

³ Public-private solutions may be necessary to address risks that are or may become uninsurable by the private sector alone.

⁴ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/eu-space/copernicus-earth-observation_en.

⁵ <https://forest-fire.emergency.copernicus.eu/>.

⁶ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-glance_en.

⁷ https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en.

⁸ These projects target drought prevention actions such as water management and drought-resistant agroforestry practices, as well as the setting up of monitoring systems.

⁹ Ongoing projects, worth in total of EUR 72 million, include: FIRELOGUE, FIRE-RES, SILVANUS, TREEADS, FirEURisk, focusing on better decision-making for sustainable and integrated forest management, development of climate resilient forest management platform and demonstrating forest resilience to wildfires.