

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002833/25
to the Commission
Galato Alexandraki (ECR)
(11 July 2025)**

Subject: Inadequate management of EU funds for fire prevention

According to a 2024 report by the European Court of Auditors, forest fires in the EU have tripled in frequency compared to the 2006-2010 period, destroying 5 250 square kilometres per year. Despite increased funding, the EU is failing to prevent an escalation of this phenomenon, owing to a lack of targeted and sustainable use of funds.

The ECA points to cases of inappropriate allocation of funding, where outdated maps were used or priority was given to areas without real risk. In Greece — where last year, for example, wildfires burned an area three times the historical average — the list of vulnerable areas is based on data from 1979, while EUR 470 million was made available through the Recovery and Resilience Facility without guarantees for a lasting impact.

In view of the above, can the Commission say:

1. How does it intend to ensure that EU funds for forest fire prevention are directed to areas in real need and on the basis of updated maps?
2. What steps will it take to ensure the sustainability and long-term effectiveness of the measures financed?
3. Does it consider it acceptable to use data as old as that used by Greece for such critical environmental projects?

Submitted: 11.7.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Fitto on behalf of the European Commission
(8 September 2025)**

The Commission has taken note of the recommendations issued by the European Court of Auditors on tackling forest fires with EU funding.

Greece's Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) ⁽¹⁾ supports fire prevention by investing in forest clearings and the creation of fire protection zones (measure 16849). The identification of the relevant areas is based on the conduct of technical studies as part of the investment.

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), support is foreseen under the Greek Rural Development Programme 2014-2022 ⁽²⁾ and the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027 ⁽³⁾. These funds may be used by Greece, also for the restoration of agricultural and forestry potential and for preventive actions.

Concerning Cohesion Policy, the Commission will disseminate good practices in terms of projects and selection criteria that use updated maps and ensure sustainability and long-term effectiveness as indicated in the Special Report.

Member States have to guarantee upon closure of the programme that projects are functional in order to receive financing. The Commission will use existing Cohesion Policy networks that deal with EU-funded investments in forest fires.

Furthermore, the findings of a recent peer review of the wildfire risk management capabilities of Greece report ⁽⁴⁾, carried out in 2024 under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism Peer Review Programme ⁽⁵⁾ provide recommendations on measures that can be taken to enhance resilience in this area.

The Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has produced a European Wildfire risk map based on historical fire information, and EU wide ancillary layers released in 2021.

It is relevant for national level applications. The JRC is working to improve and update the methods to generate wildfire risk assessments.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility/country-pages/greeces-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en.

⁽²⁾ <http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/el/content/egkrisi-tropopoiiseis>.

⁽³⁾ <http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/el/keimeno-synimmena-paa/egkrisi-tropopoiiseis>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/system/files/2024-06/EL%20Peer%20Review_final%20report_0.pdf.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/disaster-prevention-and-risk-management/ucpm-peer-review-programme>.