

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003084/25
to the Commission
Joachim Streit (Renew)
(24 July 2025)

Subject: Risk analysis and control of resources in forest fire prevention in the EU

The European Court of Auditors' (ECA) Special Report 16/2025 (EU funding to tackle forest fires) shows that, although Member States are increasingly using EU funds for forest fire prevention, the Commission does not have a complete overview of the funds actually used. Since Member States do not provide a breakdown of their spending between forest fires and other natural disasters, it is not possible to quantify how much EU money is actually spent on forest fire prevention.

In addition, in Greece, the risk maps are still based on data from the 1980s, while Portugal uses maps based on historical fire data from 1975 to 2018, with 33.4% of forest and agricultural land being categorised as high risk. The 2023-2027 funding period also removed the previous requirement that funds should only be used for medium- and high-risk areas.

1. How does the Commission intend to ensure that the periodic (biennial) review of risk analyses and risk maps by Member States, as provided for in the proposal for a regulation on a monitoring framework for resilient European forests, is actually carried out and what are the consequences if Member States fail to comply with these obligations and continue to use outdated maps?
2. How does the Commission intend to ensure that, in future, Member States provide a clear breakdown of EU funds used for civil protection by type of risk — in particular for forest fire prevention — in order to present for the first time a complete and transparent overview of the funds actually used?

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Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(12 September 2025)

1. The proposal for the regulation on a monitoring framework for resilient European forests ⁽¹⁾ does not stipulate a requirement for Member States to carry out a wildfire risk assessment. Instead, the proposal stipulates that the Commission would do this as part of providing standardised forest data under Annex I of the regulation, based on the defined methodology for wildfire risk assessment ⁽²⁾. This methodology is already implemented as part of the European Forest Fire Information System ⁽³⁾. An obligation might arise if a Member State decides to opt out under Article 6 of the proposal — in that case, the Member State would need to provide the risk assessment data in accordance with the defined technical specifications.
2. Member States report data on the allocations of EU cohesion policy funds ⁽⁴⁾ used for civil protection by type of risk, as well by output and results of civil protection projects to the Commission via Information Technology system SFC2021. The Commission provides the clear and comprehensive overview of funds used for civil protection measures with the specific allocations, aggregated outputs and results per Member States ⁽⁵⁾. In 2021-2027, the planned EU cohesion policy contribution to the category of expenditure 'prevention or management of climate related risks: fires' is about EUR 2.2 billion, with Italy and Spain allocating around EUR 0.5 billion of EU funds each to forest fire prevention and management measures.

⁽¹⁾ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-regulation-forest-monitoring-framework_en.

⁽²⁾ No requirements exist as part of the proposal for the use of these maps on the national level, however the indicators included in the Commission's proposal would facilitate the production of up-to-date maps on wildfire risks in forests.

⁽³⁾ <https://forest-fire.emergency.copernicus.eu/apps/fire.risk.viewer/>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/available-budget_en.

⁽⁵⁾ 21-27 Adaptation and risk management, disaster and civil protection — Cohesion Open Data <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/stories/s/21-27-Adaptation-and-risk-management-disaster-and-/j4px-zny5>.