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Answer given by Ms Lahbib
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.10.2025)

Following Spain's request for firefighting assistance, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism¹ swiftly mobilised support against the devastating wildfires. More than 300 first responders from Czechia, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Greece, Romania and Finland worked with the pre-positioned Estonian team. To reinforce operations, four firefighting planes and two helicopters from the rescEU fleet, along with two additional Dutch helicopters, helped to contain the blazes. In Galicia, firefighters from Estonia, Romania and Finland were on the ground with the French rescEU Canadair, supporting Spanish teams. The Copernicus Emergency Management Service was activated five times, delivering 74 mapping products.

The common agricultural policy strategic plans for 2023–2027 support targeted measures on sustainable forest management, fire prevention and forest restoration, while also addressing broader rural development priorities². Moreover, the afforestation measure in Galicia explicitly prohibited the planting of eucalyptus.

The 2014-2020³ European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme of Galicia supported various fire prevention and extinction actions⁴. In the 2021-2027 ERDF programme⁵, there are also similar measures⁶ planned.

The Commission is handling an infringement procedure⁷ against Spain on account of the incomplete designation of sites of community importance (SCIs) under the Habitats Directive⁸. Galicia has completed the designation process for all its 59 SCIs⁹ but has failed to set site-specific conservation objectives and conservation measures including on fire prevention. The replies provided by Spain are under assessment.

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

² Galicia programmed EUR 846 million of total public expenditure, including EUR 75 million dedicated to forest damage prevention and EUR 8 million to forest restoration. A further EUR 60 million (7%) is programmed for basic services in rural areas. Additionally, EUR 58 million (7%) are allocated to the LEADER program (https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/leader-clld_en.html) for supporting the implementation of local development strategies and thus contributing to combating rural depopulation. The plan also includes support for the setting-up of young farmers (EUR 42 million (5%) programmed), and of new farmers (EUR 9 million).

³ <https://www.conselleriadeconomia.gal/areas-tematicas/planificacion-e-fondos/periodo-comunitario-2014-2020/programas-operativos-2014-2020/po-feder-galicia-2014-2020/programa-operativo-feder-galicia-2014-2020>.

⁴ Three operations with an EU contribution of more than EUR 44 million.

⁵ https://www.conselleriadeconomia.gal/es_ES/areas-tematicas/planificacion-e-fondos/periodo-comunitario-2021-2027/programas-2021-2027/programa-feder-2021-2027.

⁶ EUR 15.6 million are planned, with EUR 2.3 million already allocated to fire preventive actions.

⁷ Reference [INFR(2015)2003]: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_20_1212, this is part of a structural action involving several other Member States in similar situation.

⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/1992/43/oj/eng>.

⁹ Following the analysis of Decree 37/2014 of 27 March 2014, declaring the SCIs of Galicia as Special Areas of Conservation and approving the Galician Natura 2000 network master plan, https://www.xunta.gal/dog/Publicados/2014/20140331/AnuncioCA02-270314-0001_es.html.