

1.2.10 Greece

Fire danger in the 2022 fire season

The forest fire season for 2022 in Greece started out with temperatures above normal level for the whole country and with precipitation levels lower than normal.

However, even though June, July and August were characterized as warm months for most parts of the country, the unstable weather conditions during certain periods of those months gave local showers and isolated thunderstorms that caused damage. The precipitation amounts were higher than normal levels in most parts of central and north mainland especially in July, and recorded extreme values for a long period in the Meteorological Stations of Kalamata and Skiros Island apart from the South Aegean area and Crete.

Fire occurrence and affected surfaces

According to the data supplied by the local Forest Services, the most notable forest fires for 2022 are listed below:

- 19th July Penteli, in Attica area
- 20th July Rethymno, in Crete
- 21st July National Park of Dadia in Evros area.
- 23rd July Vatera, in Lesvos
- 22nd October Papikio Mountain, in Rhodope area

During the 2022 forest fire season, a total number of 962 forest fires were recorded in Greece, with a total affected burnt area of 18 806.77 hectares on wooded and non-wooded forest land. More specifically, 17 561.51 hectares were burned on wooded forest land and 1 245.26 hectares were reported on non-wooded forest land. The most of fire incidents (710) resulted in less than 1.00 hectare of burnt area.

According to the current provisional results, there is a significant reduction not only in the total number of fire incidents in the 100-500 ha size class with sixteen (16) fire incidents compared to the previous 2021 fire season which had twenty-five (25) fire incidents, but also in the >500 hectares size class where ten (10) fire incidents were recorded, compared with nineteen (19) fire events in 2022 (Figure 26, Table 19)

The yearly trends in terms of numbers of fires, burnt areas and average fire size in Greece from 1980 are shown in Figure 26.

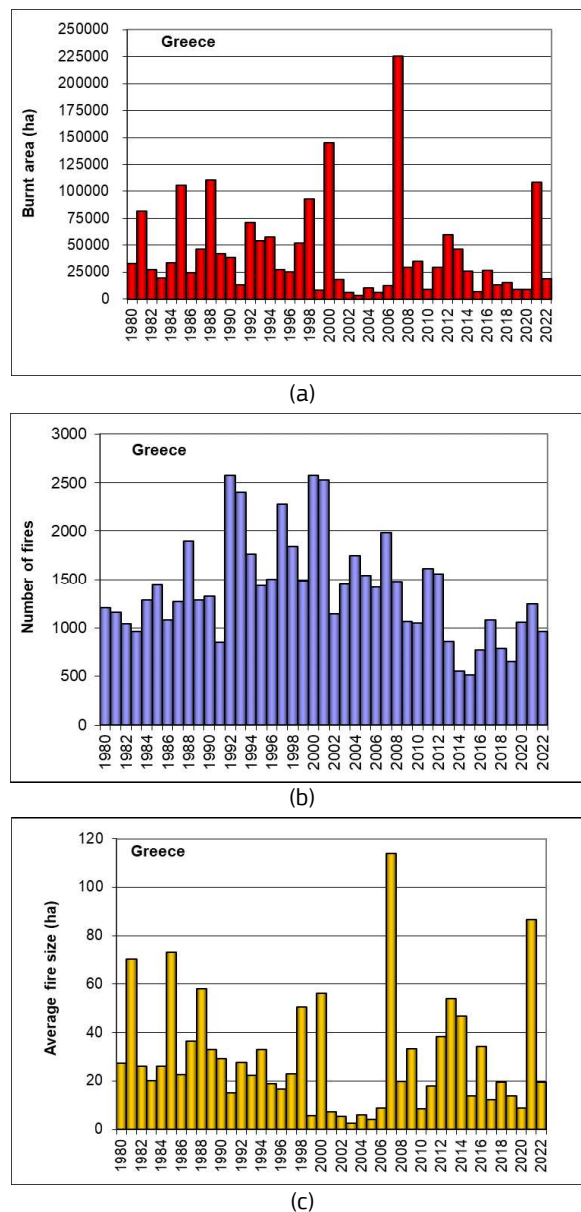


Figure 26. Burnt areas (a), number of fires (b) and average fire size (c) in Greece from 1980 to 2022.

Table 19 shows the number of fires and burnt area in Greece in 2022. These numbers are still provisional and are likely to rise when the compilation of fire data will be completed.

Table 19. Number of fires and burned area in 2022 by Inspection of Forest Policy Implementation.

FOREST ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITIES	Number of fires						Burned area (ha)		
	Total	<1 ha	1-5 ha	5-100 ha	100-500 ha	>500 ha	Total	Wooded	Non wooded
Macedonia-Thrace	191	130	42	14	3	2	7373.53	7271.45	102.08
Epirus & Western Macedonia	151	120	24	7	0	0	220.79	181.81	38.98
Thessaly and Central Greece	265	213	40	9	2	1	1753.17	1078.07	675.10
Peloponnese, Western Greece & Ionian	201	146	29	20	5	1	3340.54	3246.51	94.03
Attica	48	29	9	5	4	1	2678.40	2655.40	23
Crete	81	59	12	7	0	3	1119.99	929.89	190.10
Aegean	25	13	6	2	2	2	2320.35	2198.38	121.97
TOTAL	962*	710	162	64	16	10	18806.77*	17561.51	1245.26

* Figures are still provisional and are likely to rise when the compilation of fire data is completed.

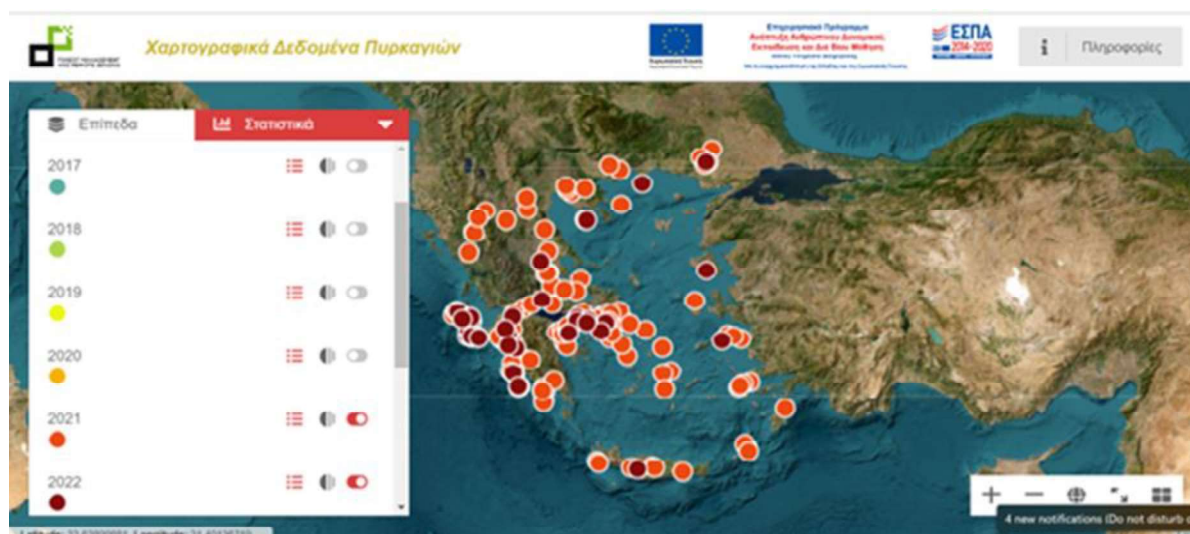


Figure 27. Map with the most notable fire locations in Greece in 2021 and 2022. (Source: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki- Laboratory of Forest Management and Remote Sensing, <http://epadap.web.auth.gr>).

Fire fighting means and information campaigns

In 2022 the Fire Brigade personnel consisted of 20 362 people, 11 301 of whom were permanent personnel of the Fire Brigade dealing also with structural fires, 2 436 personnel with a five-year contract and 2 428 seasonal personnel hired for the forest fire suppression activities. Furthermore, 105 civil service staff, 3 583 volunteer fire fighters, 9 private helicopter pilots and 500 people of the new body of personnel in Fire Brigade, the forest rangers, especially trained in forest fires, were also involved.

The Fire Brigade of Greece has a total of 3 574 vehicles of various types. These vehicles are distinguished as follows:

Firefighting vehicles	2086
Support vehicles	1116
Special vehicles	234
Motor cycles	164
Total	3600

The aerial means used during the 2022 campaign are shown in Table 20.

Table 20. Aerial means participating in the 2022 campaign.

National fleet		
Type	Number	Availability 2022 (max)
Aircraft CL-415	7	6
Aircraft CL-215	13	9
Aircraft PEZETEL	18	18
Helicopter SUPER PUMA AS 332 L1	2	2
Helicopter BK 117 CL	3	3
Helicopter CHINOOK	3	3
Helicopter SUPER PUMA of Greek army	1	1
Aircraft C-130	1	1
Helicopter SUPER PUMA of Greek police force	2	2
Total	50	45
Leased air means		
Type	Availability 2022	
Medium Press Helicopters	20	
Heavy Duty Helicopters	9	
Lightweight Type of Aircraft	15	
Total	44	

Injuries and loss of human lives

During the firefighting period of 2022, twenty-five (25) Fire fighters and two (2) citizens were injured and one (1) citizen was killed.

Fire Prevention Activities

The Ministry of Environment and Energy through the General Directorate for the Forests and the Forest Environment and in collaboration the regional Forest Services, carried out fire protection work by the implementation of anti-fire protection projects, mainly consisting of the maintenance of forest roads and fire protection zones but also of the cleaning, thinning and pruning of vegetation in forests and woodland areas. Moreover, cleanups were also held in some archaeological areas (with the coordination of the Greek Ministry of Culture) in urban forests, of the Attica Region and in the municipal parks of Athens Capital.

More specifically, 8 000 hectares of forests and woodland areas were cleaned up, 12 000 km of forest roads were maintained and 1 600 km of fire protection zones were created or maintained.

Climate Change

Climatic conditions and how they impacted the fire season

According to the climatological historical data, the year of 2022 was the 5th warmest year on record and simultaneously the 5th driest year since 1960. The two warmest years were 2018 and 2010.

On the other hand, unstable weather conditions prevailed in Greece with extraordinary large amounts of precipitation, especially the summer months for most parts of the country, reducing the fire danger, apart from the period between 15th of July and 15th of August when Greece was faced with large fire incidents.

(Source: Ministry of Environment and Energy; Directorate General For The Forests And The Forest Environment, Greece).