

EU helps France fight forest fires

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** said: *“The EU stands in full solidarity with France. In an immediate response, the European Commission has helped mobilise a Canadair aircraft from Italy through our Civil Protection Mechanism. Earlier this month, France helped Italy fighting forest fires and now Italy is showing its support to France. This is EU solidarity at its best. Our thoughts are with all those affected and the brave first responders working in difficult conditions”.*

In addition, the EU’s emergency Copernicus satellite is helping to provide damage assessment maps of the affected areas.

The European Commission’s Emergency Response Coordination Centre, which monitors natural disasters 24/7, is in contact with the French civil protection authorities and is closely monitoring developments and any other assistance that could be requested.

Background

The Commission’s Emergency Response Centre is actively monitoring the fires throughout Europe. It uses national monitoring services and tools such as the European Forest Fire Information System and satellite imagery to provide an overview of the situation in Europe. Over the summer period, the centre also organises weekly coordination meetings with the countries that are at high risk of forest fires.

Civil Protection Mechanism

The European Commission coordinates the voluntary offers made by participating states through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, and can co-finance the transport of relief items and experts to the country in question. The mobilisation of assistance is coordinated through the Commission’s Emergency Response Coordination Centre, which closely monitors developments and offers the possibility of transport co-financing for the offered assistance.

The assistance can consist of items for immediate relief as well as experts and supporting intervention teams. In the case of fires, this can include fire-extinguishing aircraft. The Commission cannot send planes or equipment itself via the Mechanism.

Overall, the Mechanism facilitates the cooperation in disaster response among 34 European states (28 EU Member States, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Norway, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey).

For more information:

[Photos – European Commission’s Emergency response centre](#)

[Video stockshots – European Commission Emergency response centre](#)

[MEMO – Fighting forest fires in Europe – how it works](#)

[Factsheet – EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

[Factsheet – European Emergency Response Capacity](#)