

Wildfire ravages massive section of Argentine forest

January 27 2021



Flames pictured in Rio Negro province, Argentina on January 26, 2021 are part of a wildfire raging in the south

A wildfire raging in the south of Argentina has consumed a vast swathe of forestland in three days, local authorities said Wednesday—an area half the size of Liechtenstein.

About a hundred firefighters, 26 fire trucks, two water-bombing helicopters and two planes are fighting to contain the blaze in a region unaccustomed to forest fires, officials said.

The blaze, its origins unknown, is threatening a vast region around El Bolson, a town of some 18,000 inhabitants in the Rio Negro province in northern Patagonia.

By Wednesday, it had destroyed some 8,500 hectares.

Vegetation parched by recent drought, high temperatures and [strong winds](#) have complicated the firefighting effort.

El Bolson [civil protection](#) official Leandro Romairone said rain was expected later Wednesday, but "not enough to have a decisive impact on firefighting."

No populated area is immediately threatened, and "no evacuation is planned at this time," he told AFP.

At least four firefighters have been treated in hospital for injuries sustained in the line of duty.

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