

Greece raises wildfire alert level after spate of blazes

April 7 2024



On Saturday '71 fires were declared in agricultural and forestry regions' across Greece over just 12 hours.

Greece on Sunday raised its wildfire alert level to "high risk" after dozens of blazes broke out, the civil protection ministry said.

On Saturday, "71 fires were declared in agricultural and forestry regions across the country in 12 hours, between 0300 GMT and 1500 GMT", said the ministry that also looks after the climate crisis.

The fires were brought under control, including a major blaze in Lasithi on the island of Crete that was burning until midday Sunday, the [fire](#) department said.

Three people were lightly injured and one person was arrested for "causing the fire on Saturday morning", the fire department said.

He is due to be transferred to the Lasithi public prosecutor's office on Monday, according to the same source.

Strong winds of up to 60 kph (37 mph) are expected to blow until Tuesday in parts of Greece, "making the situation extremely dangerous for the outbreak of fires", the ministry said.

In those areas, which include the Athens region, the center, the Cyclades islands and Crete, "all civil protection services will be placed on level four (high risk of fires)", the ministry said.

Greece recorded a [record](#) average temperature of 11.8 degrees Celsius (53.2 Fahrenheit) over the winter, said the Athens Observatory, which has warned of a worrying level of drought.

Temperatures have been unseasonably high since the start of April, reaching 31 degrees Celsius on Tuesday at Chania on Crete.

Greece, like many other parts of the Mediterranean, experienced a prolonged heat wave last summer in which 20 people died and close to 175,000 hectares (430,000 acres) of land were scorched in fires that ravaged the country.

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