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Ressort: Mixed News

Wildfires Turn Southern Europe's Skies Orange.

Portugal, 29.07.2026 [ENA]

As another heatwave grips Europe, massive wildfires are sweeping across the southern European countries. Beyond the destruction of forests and homes, the fires are devastating ecosystems and raising new concerns about the growing impact of climate change.

Firefighters across Southern Europe are battling fast-moving wildfires, often at great personal risk. The scale of the crisis even affected the Tour de France, where they considered cancelling a stage for the first time ever because of extreme fire danger. Although the race continued, spectators were barred from the finish area in Les Angles due to a nearby wildfire. France has already lost around 6,000 hectares of forest, Portugal about 13,000 hectares, while Spain has already seen nearly 38,000 hectares burn, almost three times the area that was destroyed last year. And this is only the beginning of summer.

The ecological consequences extend far beyond the flames. Slow-moving reptiles and young mammals often cannot escape advancing fires, while many animals that survive the initial blaze later die of smoke inhalation, severe burns or road collisions during their escape. Early-season fires are also destroying nests and breeding grounds before young animals have a chance to mature. Those that survive face scorched habitats, food shortages, polluted water sources that can lead to fish deaths, and the loss of natural shelter. Scientists warn that increasingly frequent heatwaves are making such environmental damage more severe each year.

With the Mediterranean wildfire season only just beginning, emergency services remain on high alert across Southern Europe. As extreme heat becomes more frequent, protecting both people and ecosystems is emerging as one of the continent's greatest environmental challenges.

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