

METEOROLOGICAL SUPPORT TO FOREST FIRE PREVENTION 2006 RESULTS OF THE SEASON OF FIRES IN PORTUGAL

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Abstract

Summer in the Portuguese mainland territory is the warm and dry season; these conditions are particularly serious for the occurrence of great forest fires.

In Portugal, which has a wide forestall area, occurs a great number of forest fires and burnt area during the fire season period, between May and October.

The forest fires are a very complex issue dependent of many factors, the meteorological conditions are one of those factors that influence the deflagration and the propagation of the forest fires. Therefore any daily evaluation of fire risk as to take in consideration the meteorological conditions measured.

To support the prevention of forest fires, the Portuguese Institute of Meteorology (IM) produces specific information for prevention and the combat of forest fires, including the fire weather index (FWI) of Canadian system.

The evaluation of the results of that index for the 2006 season of fires will bring into our knowledge that in summer of 2006 Portugal had several periods of heat waves where had occurred the most biggest forest fires of the season.

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