Interreg
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NEXT MED
MedFireWise


Capafonts municipality, Catalonia, Spain

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NEWSLETTER #1

MEDFIREWISE PARTNERS MEET IN ATHENS AND BARCELONA

LEARNING FROM THE FIELD: CATALONIA FIELD TRIP

TESTING INNOVATION: THE MEDFIREWISE AI TOOL

MedFireWise partners meet in Athens and Barcelona

The first months of MedFireWise were marked by two key consortium meetings that helped transform a shared vision into coordinated action.

🇬🇷 Athens, November 2025

Project Kick-off Meeting

Partners from seven Mediterranean countries met for the first time to:

- Align on project objectives and priorities
- Define a common scientific and communication vision
- Establish strong cross-border collaboration
- Launch activities focused on wildfire resilience through Nature-Based Solutions





🇪🇸 Barcelona, March 2026

From Planning to Implementation

Partners gathered to review progress and coordinate the next project phase:

- Updates on wildfire risk assessment and fire behaviour modelling
- Progress on Nature-Based Solutions in pilot regions
- Planning of cross-regional knowledge exchange activities
- Alignment of timelines, methodologies, and upcoming actions





Key Takeaway

The meetings in Athens and Barcelona laid the foundations for a strong Mediterranean partnership and confirmed MedFireWise's transition from project planning to implementation.

Learning from the Field: Catalonia Study Visit

During the MedFireWise field visit to Catalonia in March 2026, partners had the opportunity to explore how Nature-Based Solutions are being applied on the ground to reduce wildfire risk.

Meet Sergi Serra



A shepherd, cheese producer, and educator, Sergi Serra is helping protect the landscapes of Capafonts, Catalonia (Spain), through prescribed grazing. As part of the Ramats de Foc programme, promoted by the Pau Costa Foundation, his herd of goats grazes strategic forest areas, helping to:

- Reduce vegetation and fuel loads
- Maintain open landscapes and access routes
- Support long-term wildfire prevention
- Preserve traditional land management practices



A Landscape Transformed

When Sergi arrived in Capafonts, there had been no shepherds in the area for more than 30 years. Today:

🌿 Overgrown areas have reopened
🌿 Narrow paths have become green meadows
🌿 Strategic forest zones are easier to manage

Why It Matters

Prescribed grazing is increasingly recognised as an effective Nature-Based Solution that can complement forestry treatments and prescribed burning, helping reduce wildfire risk while supporting biodiversity, rural livelihoods, and local communities.

As Sergi's story demonstrates, wildfire prevention often begins long before a fire starts—through the people who care for and manage the landscape every day.

Discover More

Watch Sergi's full interview and learn more about how traditional pastoral practices contribute to wildfire resilience across the Mediterranean.

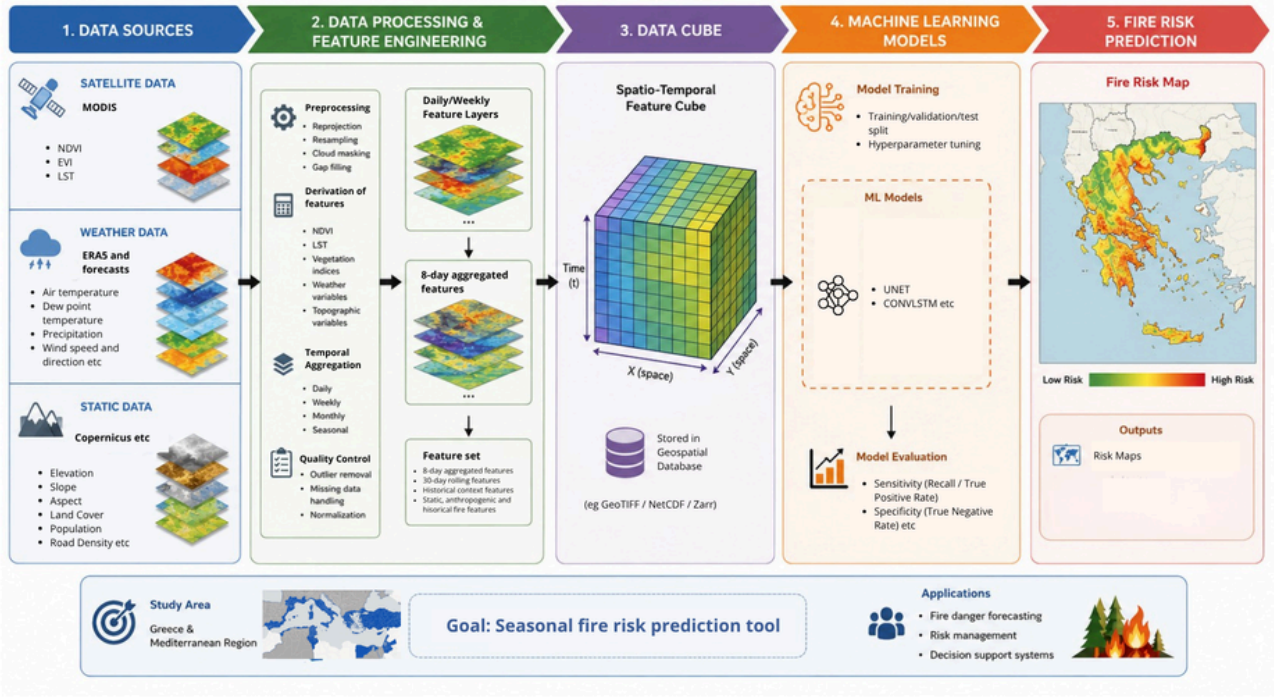
Read the full story and watch the video on the MedFireWise website.

Testing Innovation: The MedFireWise AI Tool

Advancing Seasonal Wildfire Prediction: From AI Research to Operational Early Warning

As wildfire continues to pose growing challenges across the Mediterranean region, one of the key activities of the project focuses on the development of a Seasonal Wildfire Risk Prediction Tool based on machine learning models. Led by National Observatory of Athens *(NOA)*, with the contribution of Algerial Space Agency *(ASAL)*, this effort aims to leverage Earth Observation data and Artificial Intelligence to provide advanced wildfire risk assessments and support proactive fire management.

The goal is to help identify areas of elevated wildfire risk in advance, enabling more effective preparedness planning, resource allocation, and prevention and mitigation activities.



The objective is to develop an operational forecasting system capable of providing seasonal wildfire risk assessments, with regular forecast updates over time, across Greece, Algeria, and other project regions. By delivering timely and reliable information, the tool aims to support authorities and stakeholders in improving preparedness and reducing wildfire impacts on ecosystems, infrastructure, and communities.

Testing Innovation: The MedFireWise AI Tool

Advancing Seasonal Wildfire Prediction: From AI Research to Operational Early Warning

🔍 Understanding the challenge

Our work began with an extensive review of the latest scientific literature and existing wildfire forecasting systems. This process allowed us to identify current capabilities, as well as important gaps and limitations in seasonal wildfire prediction, helping us define the requirements for a more robust and operationally relevant solution.

Building the data foundation

A key milestone has been the development of a comprehensive data pipeline that integrates information from multiple sources, including:

- **Satellite Earth Observation products**
- **Weather and climate data**
- **Vegetation and land-cover indicators**
- **Topographic characteristics**
- **Historical wildfire records**

Human activity and other environmental indicators

These datasets have been harmonized into a unified framework specifically designed for advanced machine learning applications.



🔍 Understanding the challenge

Our developed a dedicated wildfire prediction dataset containing a wide range of environmental and fire-related variables. The team is currently evaluating which features contribute most to predictive performance and comparing different machine learning architectures to identify the approaches that deliver the most accurate, reliable, and robust forecasts.

From Research to Action

By helping identify areas at elevated wildfire risk in advance, the tool aims to support preparedness planning, resource allocation, and early response actions. The next phase of development will focus on refining the predictive models and further improving forecast reliability.

Visit our website

MedFireWise Project

Follow us on

💙 United for a fire-resilient future.
We are #MADE4MED.
We are #InterregNEXTMED.

Project Partners:

- **National Observatory of Athens (Greece)**
- Pau Costa Foundation (Spain)
- D.R.E.Am. Italia (Italy)
- Edirne Forest Management Directorate (Türkiye)
- National Research Institute for Rural Engineering, Water, and Forestry (Tunisia)
- Algerian Space Agency (Algeria)
- University of Balamand (Lebanon)

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Lead Partner:

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End of Newsletter