



Lightning in the Serra of Prades from Montblanc.

What we had

Compared trend from the beginning of the year until:

	08/13/2008	08/13/2009
Num. fires	2.918	4.440
(VA+VU+VF)		
Area (ha)	723,71	9.431,15

PROVISIONAL INFORMATION, WAITING FOR VALIDATION.

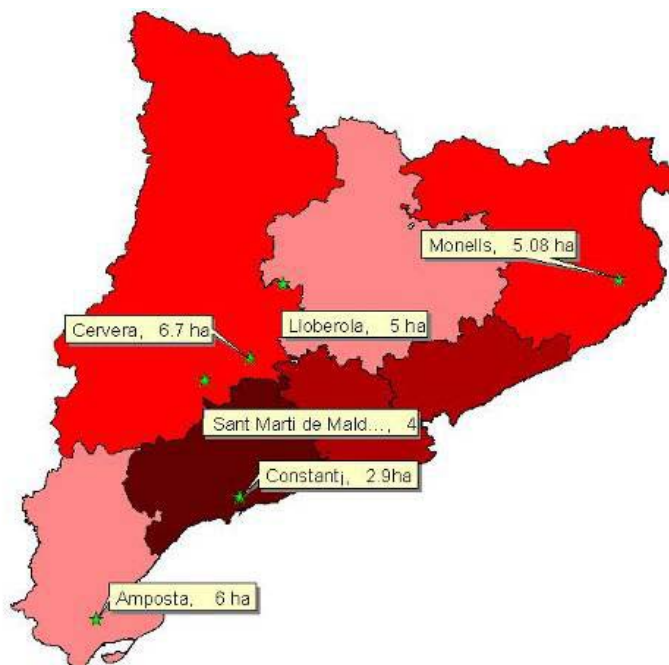


Fig 1 Number of fires (VA+VU+VF) from 30/07/09 to 13/08/09, larger than >1ha.





Description of the situation

Drought evolution (live fuels and coarse dead fuels availability)

The last period of raining, from August 5th to 9th has been a break. After that a hot wave from Sahara increased moisture more than 30 mm in some areas (dark blue). Drought has been accumulated in the rest of the territory. In Girona's coast has got an important accumulation of drought, like Ports-Cardó and Tivissa-Prades mountains. Generally during last summer days holm oaks suffered more than pines and for this reason now there is a drought trouble in Prades and Gavarres.

Night moisture hasn't recovered during the last three consecutive nights, and moisture has kept very low during the day, and fuel of 100h and 1000h became available in south half inland of the country. (Like the Montferri's forest fire on 15th of August).

The warm air mass will still affect, although it will move away partially during August 21th and 22th as a result of north moderated wind.

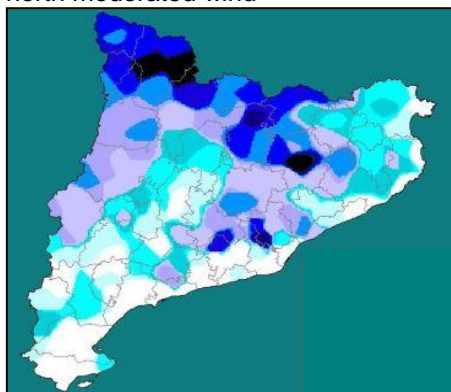


Fig. 3 Accumulated rainfall (m) from 08/05/09 to 08/09/09

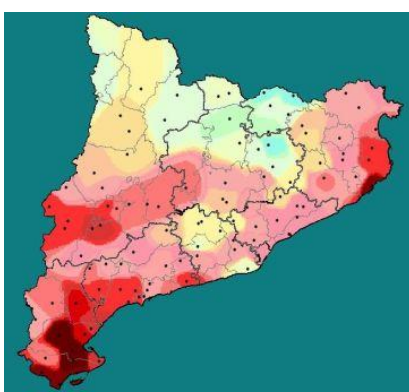


Fig. 4 Drought accumulated (Drought Code Index) of 08/10/09.

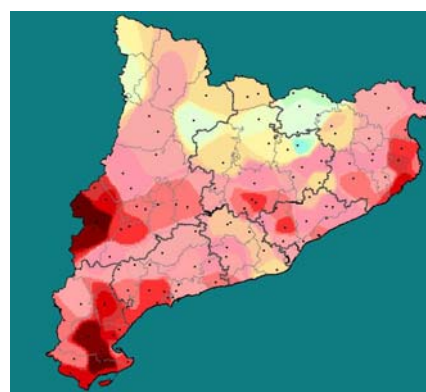
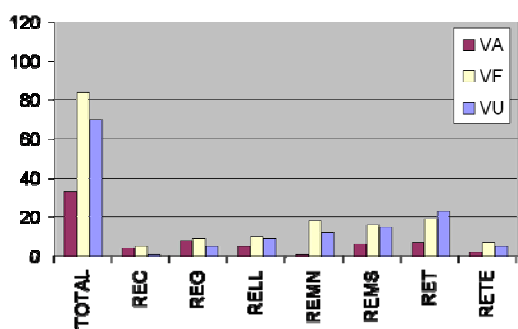


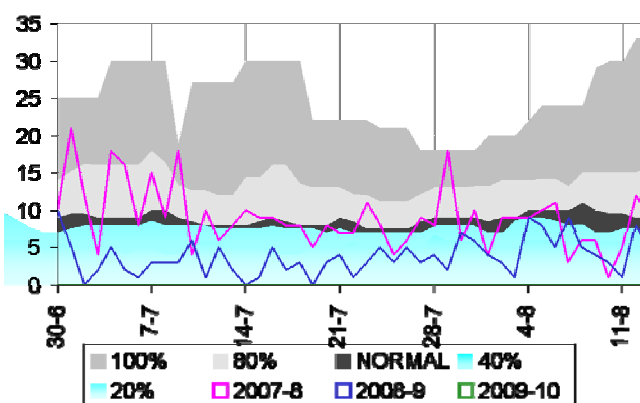
Fig. 5 Drought accumulated (Drought Code Index) of 08/19/09.

Fire services trend (VA - agricultural, VU - urban and VF - forestry)



Graph 1. Total Services and by region according to the type of services of vegetation, of the last week, from 07/31/09 to 08/13/09.

In general, the activities of vegetation have reduced, although the activities continue of VU in the RET. Manly it treats of intercity uncultivated.



Graph 2. Mbs13 (Services of forest vegetation) from 01/01/09 to 08/13/09, this period compares to the same period in 2007/8. Also it compares the evolution during the years with the number of normal services (dark, 50% percentile, less than normal services (blue) and maximum services (grey) for the last 7 years for this week.



Per regions

REC	<p>S'incrementa la sequera acumulada a la zona de la Costa Brava i la disponibilitat dels combustibles morts a la zona del Cap de Creus pel vent i manca de recuperació d'humitats nocturna.</p> <p>Què es preveu Les noves entrades de sud implicaran dies de no recuperació d'humitats i mantindrà els nivells de sequera acumulats. Cal estar atents a les pluges dels fronts que puguin arribar.</p>
REMN	<p>Les pluges dels últims dies ens han donat un respir a la Regió sobretot al Nord però el canal de sortida de ponents continua marcat en el Drought Code.</p> <p>Què es preveu Xafogor a nivell de costa, però a l'interior dels Vallesos l'acanalament del vent de sud, les altes temperatures i la baixa humitat faran pujar el nivell d'assecada a les cotes anteriors a l'episodi de pluges.</p>
REMS	<p>L'episodi de pluges ha afectat de ple el nord de la regió deixant-la fora de campanya durant 3-4 dies. Amb tot el sud de la regió, extrem sud del Garraf, no ha rebut precipitació i segueix assecant-se.</p> <p>Què es preveu Seguirà augmentant la sequera al sud de la regió amb la nova entrada de sud. Esperem no recuperació d'humitats.</p>
REC	<p>L'episodi de pluges ha deixat definitivament el nord de la regió fora de campanya. El sud es mantindrà fora de campanya almenys fins la següent entrada de sud. L'oest de la regió (sud de Solsonès i Segarra), és la zona que pot presentar més activitat.</p> <p>Què es preveu L'augment de temperatures i no recuperació d'humitats de cara a la propera entrada de sud implicarà el sud del Solsonès. Caldrà estar atents amb el reforçament de les marinades i les interaccions amb les valls principals del Segre i Llobregat.</p>
RETE	<p>La regió segueix plenament en campanya, sobretot la part sud. Les pluges han regat la part nord de la regió, que s'ha mantingut en baixa activitat durant una setmana.</p> <p>Què es preveu La entrada de sud del cap de setmana implicarà marinades reforçades i no recuperacions d'humitat. De cara a la setmana vinent es preveuen tempestes de tarda encara que pràcticament sense aigua.</p>
RET	<p>En general la regió es manté en activitat de campanya, tal i com ho mostra el nombre de serveis que ha registrat tot i el període de pluges.</p> <p>Què es preveu El reforçament de marinades i la baixada de les humitats amb l'entrada de sud comportarà un augment general de l'activitat. Cal estar atents als eixos Prades – Montsant i Llaberia - Vandellòs com els que poden implicar més potencial forestal. Les zones de cereal del sud de la conca i la zona de l'Alt Penedès poden presentar activitat.</p>
RELL	<p>La zona de cereals de la Plana ha baixat de forma considerable el nombre de serveis amb les últimes pluges. És d'esperar que amb la nova entrada de sud el cereal tornarà a estar disponible, sobretot camps de rostoll sense segar.</p> <p>Què es preveu La nova entrada de sud implicarà marinades reforçades, augment de temperatures (30 – 35°C) i baixes humitats relatives. Tot i les pluges s'espera que la nova entrada de sud faci entrar de nou en disponibilitat el combustible fi. Cal estar atents als incendis al límit amb la REC que podrien implicar les zones més seques del sud del Solsonès.</p>

Grau d'activitat

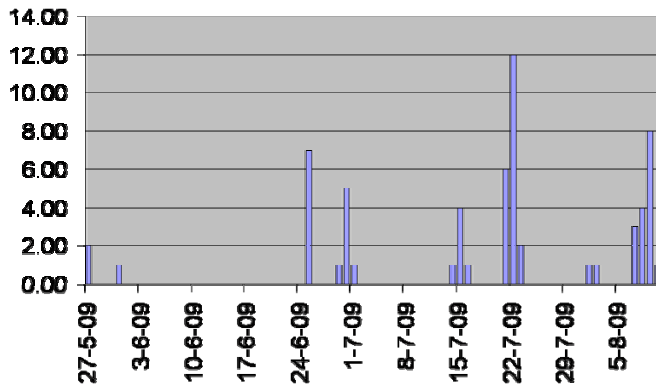
Baixa
Normal
Mitja
Important
Crítica
Gran incendi





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3.1. Simultaneous lightning episode.



Number of daily lightning services in 2009. Lightning fires tend to appear on inaccessible areas, concentrated at same sites and the same time. In forestry areas lightning appears when storm starts and the fuel burns when forecast conditions become worst. Episodes of simultaneousness's happen again years after years.



Works of hose lines at small fires of lightning. Working with hand tools is a key factor when there are accumulations of litter fuels. Some parts of lightning fires effects are suppressed with hand tools because most of forest areas are inaccessible



Lightning fires in Maials, 14/7/2009. Lightning fires often involve working through green vegetation creating hose lines to reach the burned areas, in this case not very long lines.





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3.2. The 10 myths: N° 3. Burned trees logging is necessary to restore the forest after fire episode.

We continue with myth's list we started last spring. Those myths are written by nord american point of view but they make possible to set a discussion of different outstanding issues from our particular cases.

Ref.: George Wuerthner, 2006. WildFire. A century of failed forest policy. Island Press.

“Salvage logging is a myth perpetuated by timber industry. Burned trees logging is a perpetuated myth by timber industry. Forests have evolved over millennia to regenerate themselves after a blaze.

Certain species, particularly nitrogen-fixing plants, often colonize burned sites immediately after fire. Short circuiting this process by cutting and planting trees may ultimately bankrupt the forest ecosystem due to a reduction in nutrient replacement. .

We are taught to believe that something “dead” is useless, forgetting that many species find food and shelter in dead trees.

Removal of burned trees takes away many valuable forest legacies, including nutrients bound up in trees that would otherwise remain on-site and provide for the next generation of trees. Logging also removes snags, and the potential woody debris that creates habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms. Snags even create a microclimate that fosters tree regeneration, slowing wind, providing shade, and reducing soil moisture losses. Many animals, such as woodpeckers and flying squirrels, use snags for homes and food.

Salvage logging also potentially facilitates the spread of exotic weeds and plant diseases that are carried on logging equipment. The creation of logging roads may increase siltation in streams through erosion and runoff, and also may increase access for hunters, trappers and poachers—all with potential negative impacts on wildlife.”



Image 1. GRAF Tarragona in Areu wildfire of 2003. In some parts of forest fire we observed fallen logs and braches. That supposes a high availability of fuel in a dry season and an unquestionable good ecologic supply.



Image 2. This is an American point of view about NATURAL forest: this is an image from Oregon forests where there's stocking of dead trees and the floor is full of different woody debris.

Attached note





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We wish was a nightmare

Many days ago I got a call of a friend and he comment us if we would compromise to write some words to our colleges of GRAF Lleida and UT, deceased in Horta de Sant Joan wildfire.

Reply is not easy. Those are sad, pain and helpless days. Those are days to explain the inexplicable. Our friends lost.

That happened many days ago, but seems like every morning meeting. We talked about everything: forecast, moisture, wind, fires and how we could suppress them. We talk about work, life experiences and future plans.

That happened many days ago, but seems as last night when we were working without any brake in a wildfire as common one. We kept on set the hose lines reaching our main objective: reduce the fire advance and control its damned left flank.

After long and exhausting night they take our turn as every working day. We share a few comments and hugs. We are pleased and we celebrate the all done work although there is still a lot of work to do.

I go home and I close my eyes and in a few hours the phone rings insistently. Something happened.

After that, a dark and uncertain afternoon starts sadly, for every one of us. We're trying to deduce, going to Horta de Sant Joan, the disastrous consequences of the accident: four dead and two serious bounded colleges. Even the exhaustion I try to find, deepest in my head, some explanation about what had happened. Let's hope everything turns out as a nightmare. Days are passing on and it looks like yesterday when the accident happened. There are five funerals already.

Accidents are lost of things and those things become as a bad consequences.

And we, the fire fighters, know that perfectly.

It's already few days after that and still seems I talk to David telling me a bicycle adventure around de world. I can talk to Jordi asking me-- How are your children?-- and comments about children habits.

I can talk to Jaume trying to manage some event in l'Atmetlla with his happiness. I see Ramon sitting somewhere and telling something funny. I've never seen him sad. And I can see Pau trying to learn and help as always with his youth and attention.

If I try to find something at the clouds from all them I find positive things. Those things took part of their spirit. The Fire fighters spirit. The naturalness to do little things that seems insignificant sometimes, but those things become important, things that make turn the world up.

Pepe. Every one of us hopes the best for you. Still, you have many adventures and trips left to do. All the best!

GRAF

