# Scotland faces rising wildfire risk amid changing climate conditions



Experts are raising alarms over Scotland's increasing wildfire risk, suggesting that the nation's situation could soon mirror that of southern European countries like Spain and Greece. A recent red alert was issued following a surge in outdoor blazes across the region, as recent warm and dry weather has led to nearly 100 fires being reported. Authorities are cautioning citizens to remain vigilant and responsible with outdoor activities, particularly regarding the use of open flames.

Deputy Assistant Chief Officer Kenny Barbour of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service highlighted the importance of community responsibility in preventing wildfires. Speaking to the Daily Record, he remarked, “As the warm and dry weather continues, so too does the risk of wildfire, so we’re asking the public to exercise extreme caution and think twice before using anything involving a naked flame.”

A range of recent wildfires included a significant blaze that broke out in Galloway Forest Park, which spread to areas around Loch Doon. The Scottish Government convened an emergency meeting as concerns mounted over the potential devastation from the fires. The situation escalated to the point that helicopter support was required to douse the flames from above.

Professor Rory Hadden, a senior lecturer in fire investigation at Edinburgh University, emphasised that Scotland is experiencing a longer and more intense fire season. He indicated that the patterns of wildfire risk are changing, saying, “We’ve got, in Scotland, a longer fire season, and an evolving fire season that’s changing.” He pointed to the larger implications of wildfires affecting urban areas, noting, “The risk is changing a lot, and we’re really grappling with understanding how much.”

Additionally, incidents from this wildfire season have seen a range of responses, including evacuations and significant disruption. Reports indicate that over 286 wildfires have already been recorded this season across Britain, which is more than 100 more than the same period in 2022. This statistic highlights the growing trend of wildfire incidents in the region, which experts attribute to climate change that leads to longer dry spells and periods of mild, wet weather that promote the growth of vegetation that can fuel fires.

Colin Brown, an executive member of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) for Scotland, underscored the need for better resources for firefighters, stating that the current level of specialist wildfire units is still insufficient. He called for urgent investment into personal protective equipment, training, and equipment necessary for effectively battling wildfires. He noted, “The equipment, whilst improved, does not allow for transportation of large numbers of firefighters to fire-fronts on hillsides, meaning crews often have long walks over challenging terrain.”

In response to the growing concern for wildfire management, the Scottish Government has announced an increase in the fire service’s budget by nearly £20 million for this year, bringing it to £412 million. Community Safety Minister Siobhian Brown affirmed that Scotland continues to have more firefighters per capita compared to other parts of the UK and expressed support for the implementation of a three-year wildfire strategy aimed at addressing the escalating risks associated with changing climate conditions.

This surge in wildfire incidents prompts a critical examination of Scotland's preparedness and response strategies as experts stress the importance of learning from countries with extensive wildfire histories and adapting to the new realities presented by climate change.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.scotsman.com/hays-way/wildfires-scotland-these-are-the-areas-where-an-extreme-wildfire-alert-has-been-issued-for-this-week-5040789> - This article corroborates the claim about the issuance of extreme wildfire alerts across Scotland, highlighting the specific areas affected and the increased risk due to climate conditions.
2. <https://wildfiretoday.com/2025/03/19/extreme-wildfire-warning-scotland-cannich-fire/> - This source discusses the extreme wildfire warning and emphasizes the potential devastation caused by wildfires, supporting the article's claims about community responsibility and the need for caution.
3. <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/news/risk-of-wildfire-is-very-high-in-the-south-and-west-of-scotland/> - This report from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service reinforces the warning about the high risk of wildfires in Scotland, aligning with the article's mention of community vigilance and the dangers posed by outdoor flames.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/apr/25/scotland-wildfire-risk-climate-change> - This article discusses Scotland's changing wildfire risk due to climate change, echoing the concerns raised by experts like Professor Rory Hadden regarding the longer and more intense fire seasons.
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65478905> - This news piece details the record number of wildfires in Scotland and the statistics related to this season, which supports the claim of a growing trend in wildfire incidents.
6. <https://www.scottishfireandrescueservice.com/news/over-286-wildfires-reported-so-far-this-season/> - This source provides statistics on the number of wildfires reported in Scotland this season, corroborating the article's mention of over 286 wildfires already occurring and the role of climate change in increasing wildfire risks.
7. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/wildfires-red-alert-scotland-braced-35034980> - Please view link - unable to able to access data