



# Fire as a nature conservation tool – EU perspective

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## Controlled Fires – effective fire prevention tool

# Land-based wildfire prevention

*Principles and experiences on managing landscapes, forests and woodlands for safety and resilience in Europe*

Environment

- Guidelines written with the help of Expert Group on Forest Fires
- Endorses prescribed/controlled burning as one of the measures to reduce wildfire risk and severity
- Needs to be part of long-term planning (continuous practice) and integrated landscape planning

# LIFE projects on prescribed burning in forests

## For biodiversity purposes:

**LIFE TAIGA, LIFE2Taiga (ongoing),  
Light & Fire LIFE, LIFE Coast**

### **Benefit:**

– restoration of Annex I Habitat  
(western Taiga) in N2000 sites in  
Sweden and Finland

## For fire prevention + biodiversity purposes

**LIFE Montserrat, LIFE Landscape  
Fire (ongoing):**

- controlled burning & grazing for  
reducing fuel load & habitat  
management for key species in  
Portugal and Spain

# Key messages

- The practice has clear benefits, especially in certain habitats (in boreal, Mediterranean but also Atlantic zones) – encouraged through EU funds
- **Habitats Directive does not exclude the use of fire** as an effective conservation measure in the suitable Annex I habitats with the goal of avoiding their deterioration (must not lead to decline in population of protected species)
- **Nature Restoration Law**: further opportunities to implement fire as a tool for ecosystem restoration within national restoration plans
- Links to other legislation: **LULUCF** – reduced emissions from avoided megafires
- **Opportunities**: training of fire fighters
- **Obstacles**: Lack of experience/expertise, social acceptance, integrated governance, legislation

# Thank you



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