

July hot weather increases wildfire risk to AMBER for SE England

The recent heatwave led to the Met Office issuing a [wildfire warning](#). The wildfire alert status has been raised to AMBER across southeastern England for the period covering Friday 19 July to Sunday 21 July. This alert status is reached when extreme wildfire conditions are currently causing or likely to lead to difficult to control wildfires.

According to the [European Forest Fire Information System EFFIS](#), most of England, Wales and eastern Scotland are forecast to be high risk for Saturday 20th July (Figure 1). There is also a belt of very high risk running from Dorset to London. This is the largest area of very high risk anywhere in northwest Europe outside of Spain and Portugal. High risk conditions are affecting most of northwest Europe, while the rest of France, Italy and Northern Spain remain at uncharacteristically very low risk for this period.

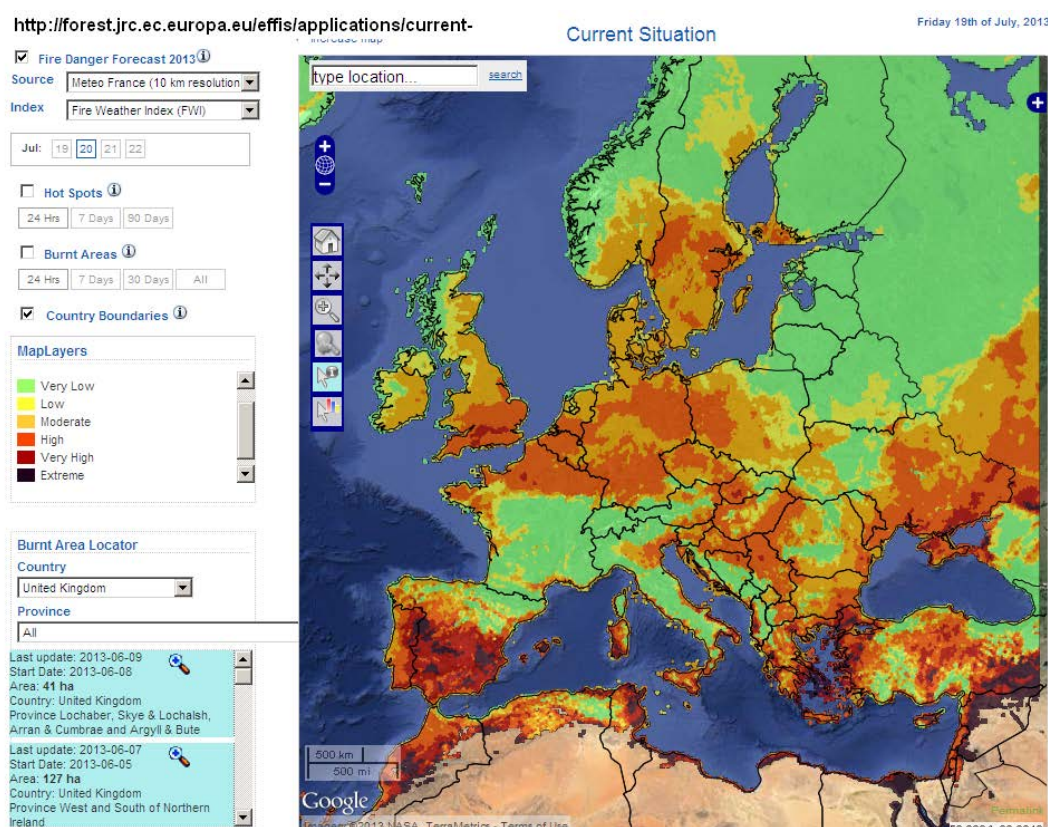


Figure 1; EFFIS Fire Weather Index forecast for 20 July 2013. Source: European Forest Fire Information System <http://forest.jrc.ec.europa.eu/effis/applications/current-situation/> accessed 19 July 2013.

The EFFIS Fire Danger Forecast Chart for Dorset-Somerset-Wiltshire area shows that FWI levels have been high since 16th July. The upward trend is expected to level off at just under 40 over the weekend (figure 2). An FWI above 38.0 is classified as very high risk, and 21.3 - 38.0 as high risk.

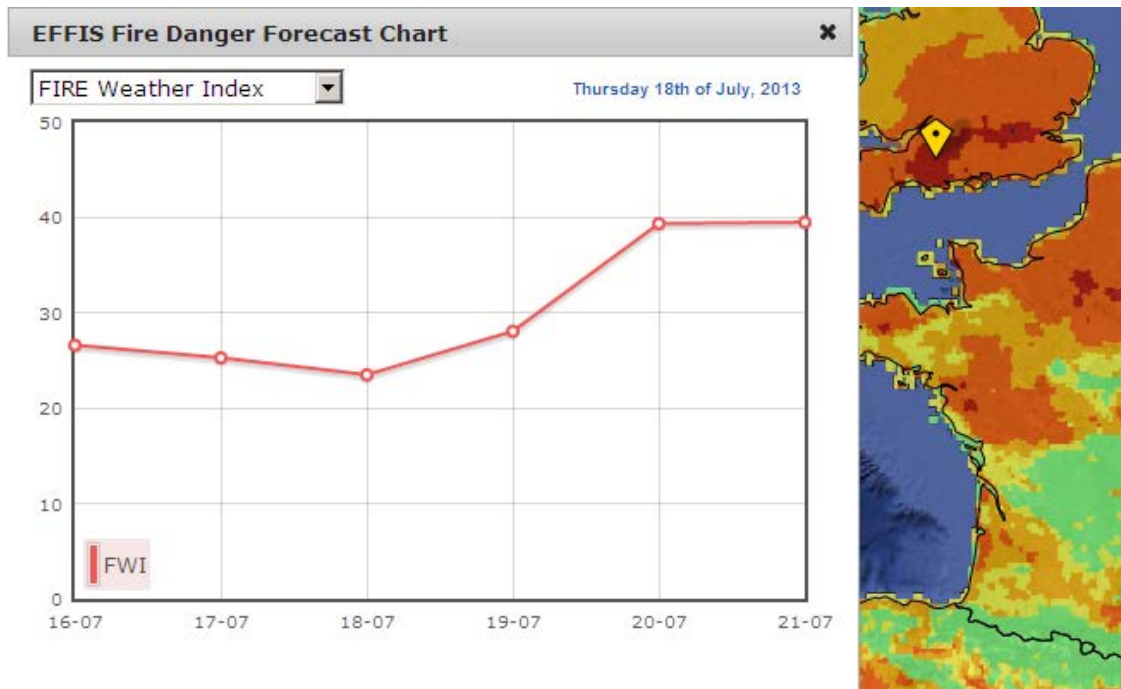


Figure 2; Fire Weather Index for the Dorset-Somerset-Wiltshire area, accessed from EFFIS 18 July 2013. Source: European Forest Fire Information System
<http://forest.jrc.ec.europa.eu/effis/applications/current-situation/> accessed 19 July 2013.

The five individual components which make up the FWI can also be queried on EFFIS using the drop-down menu at the top right. More information on the FWI and how it is used in EFFIS to forecast fire danger is available [here](#). See also the [User Guide to the EFFIS Current Situation](#).

Met Office Fire Severity Index (MOFSI) is also based on the FWI. More information is available [here](#).

The weather conditions have already led to wildfires, such as those on moorland and forest in [southeast Wales](#) on 17th July, grassland in [East London](#) on 19th, and heathland in Dorset at [Studland Heath](#) on 8th and [Ham Common](#) on 19th.