Effects of Forest Fires on Forest Ecosystems.

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ABSTRACT

Wildfires are a common phenomenon in the Mediterranean region and they constitute a very significant ecological factor for the survival of forest ecosystems. Forest fires along with animal grazing are the two decisive factors which gradually lead to deterioration and the collapse of forest ecosystems and finally to desertification of the burnt areas. For this reason the restriction of fires in combination with the prohibition of grazing after fire, are the two measures of immediate priority for the mitigation of deterioration of Mediterranean ecosystems.

In this study are thoroughly analyzed the effects of forest fires on forest ecosystems and especially on forest soils. More precisely, the influence on forest flora and vegetation, soil erosion, soil physical and chemical properties are examined. It is also examined the influence of forest fires on the temporary availability of plant nutrition elements, as well as on the biological activity of the soil.