

Chile reports 125,339 hectares affected by forest fires

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In the annual environmental report, INE assured that at least 86,910 hectares of the total had to do with intentional fires. | Photo: EFE

Santiago de Chile, December 30 (RHC)-- The area damaged by forest fires in Chile reached 125,339 hectares in the period from mid-2021 to the same stage of 2022, according to the National Institute of Statistics (INE).

In the 2022 Annual Environment Report, issued in Santiago de Chile, the INE recorded at least 86,910 hectares of the total had to do with intentional fires. "During the 2021-2022 season, which runs from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, the area damaged by forest fires increased, reaching 125,339.04 hectares, of which 86,910.20 hectares correspond to intentional fires," reads the text.

The document itself speaks of a "sustained water crisis" and estimated a decrease in the average annual flow in the basins of between ten and 25 percent. The northern and central regions of the country are the most affected, with forecasts of a decrease of more than 50 percent in the availability of vital liquid. Likewise, a greater decrease in average rainfall is expected, as well as warmer temperatures.

Regarding the forest area in Chile, about 17.4 percent corresponds to plantations, 91.8 percent of which are concentrated in O'Higgins (center) and Los Ríos (south). Of the total plantations, 60.5 percent are *Pinus radiata* monocultures, followed by eucalyptus monocultures, which account for 33.3 percent.

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