Forest fires are reactivated with force in southern Chile

The forest fires have reached worrying characteristics in several communes and populated areas of the regions of Biobío and La Araucanía. | Photo: EFE

Santiago de Chile, February 19 (RHC)-- Chilean Interior Minister Carolina Tohá has confirmed that forest fires were reactivated with force in the last hours in the regions of Biobío and La Araucanía in the south of the country.

Minister Toha detailed that the fire reached worrying characteristics in several communes and populated areas of La Araucanía region.

According to the Chilean government official, a total of 256 forest fires have been reported in the country, of which 151 are under control and 67 are still being fought by firefighters and military personnel.

Carolina Toha added that more attention has been paid to the fires that have not been controlled, due to the possibility of the fire advancing towards more populated areas. The Secretary of State commented

that the fires developed much more severely than expected in the Biobío region, generating situations of great "tension" in some communes.

According to official data, around 25 percent of the fires registered this year have been intentional, phenomena which in the last two weeks have left 25 dead and burned more than 400,000 hectares throughout the South American country.

The data provided by the Minister of the Interior are based on evaluations carried out by the National Forestry Corporation (Conaf), which to date has investigated around 600 fires so far in 2023.

During the last two weeks, more than 7,000 people have been affected during the fire emergency, described as one of the worst catastrophes suffered by Chile.

So far, more than 430,000 hectares have been consumed by the flames, 200,000 of which have been recorded in the Biobío region in the south of the country.

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