

Drought length, intensity and timing in Southern France

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Drought trends have been investigated in forested ecosystems in a Mediterranean region in Southern France on the period 1971–2006. In Southern France, temperature increase during the last decades ($0.49^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{decade}$ for the period 1979–2005) has been accompanied by a local decrease in summer precipitation and an increase in autumn precipitation. Temporal trends in precipitation, temperature and solar radiation have resulted in drier and warmer conditions over the region but with a high spatial heterogeneity:

- **in the wettest areas of the region: a significant increase in drought intensity and an earlier onset of drought by about 1 month, but a constant end of drought;**
- **in the driest areas: no change in drought intensity and an earlier onset of drought by about 1 month, but combined with an earlier end of drought, thus leading to a shift of the dry season without increasing its duration.**

Source: Ruffault et al. (2012). Climatic Change. Published online 25 August 2012.

Photo: unknown (www.sxc.hu)