

The nature burns

When you live with one of Europe's largest bog areas as your closest neighbour, we know what is at stake. From my childhood, I remember the fierce fires that arose in the wild bog.

My father worked out there and he was summoned to long night watches, where he and his workmates formed human chains using fire beaters. My, now, a hundred-year-old mother still remembers the fear constantly lurked, when she sent our father out on these night watches.

The fire often jumped over the chains of men, and within minutes the tired laborers could be surrounded by fire in all directions. The bog soil burned.

Often the fire was apparently extinguished in an area, but in the underground layers of dry peat embers could hide. Such underground fires could continue throughout the winter.

My father came home exhausted,

grimy on the face and on the clothes. Often both shoes and socks were spoiled by running around in soot and embers.

In recent months, serious conflagrations have ruined the livelihoods of humans and vast wildernesses in many parts of the world. Worst of all it seems to have been in Greece, California and Sweden. It is difficult to assess whether it is worse than it has been before, or whether the climate change and the human incomprehension of the interaction with nature now are starting to threaten our lives.

This summer my home region again is experiencing a fierce fire in the bog. When will we be debating whether we should jointly avoid human and natural values being lost because of an increasingly greedy exploitation and unrestrained relation to natural resources?



*Near the village Dokkedal,
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