

## Supplementary Material

### **Modelling wildfire activity in wildland–urban interface (WUI) areas of Sardinia, Italy**

*Carla Scarpa<sup>A</sup>, Mario Elia<sup>B</sup>, Marina D'Este<sup>B</sup>, Michele Salis<sup>A,\*</sup>, Marcos Rodrigues<sup>C</sup>, Bachisio Arca<sup>A</sup>, Pierpaolo Duce<sup>A</sup>, Maria Antonella Francesca Fiori<sup>D</sup> and Grazia Pellizzaro<sup>A</sup>*

<sup>A</sup>National Research Council of Italy, Institute of BioEconomy (CNR IBE), Traversa La Crucca 3, 07100 Sassari, Italy. Email: [carla.scarpa@ibe.cnr.it](mailto:carla.scarpa@ibe.cnr.it), [bachisio.arca@ibe.cnr.it](mailto:bachisio.arca@ibe.cnr.it), [pierpaolo.duce@ibe.cnr.it](mailto:pierpaolo.duce@ibe.cnr.it), [grazia.pellizzaro@ibe.cnr.it](mailto:grazia.pellizzaro@ibe.cnr.it)

<sup>B</sup>University of Bari A. Moro, Department of Soil, Plant and Food Science, Via Amendola 165/A, 70126 Bari, Italy. Email: [mario.elia@uniba.it](mailto:mario.elia@uniba.it), [m.deste20@gmail.com](mailto:m.deste20@gmail.com)

<sup>C</sup>University of Zaragoza, Institute of Research in Environmental Sciences (IUCA), C/Pedro Cerbuna, 12, 50009 Zaragoza, Spain. Email: [rmarcos@unizar.es](mailto:rmarcos@unizar.es)

<sup>D</sup>Corpo Forestale e di Vigilanza Ambientale della Regione Sardegna, Via Biasi 5, Cagliari, 09131, Italy

\*Correspondence to: Email: [michele.salis@ibe.cnr.it](mailto:michele.salis@ibe.cnr.it)

**Suppl. Table S1.** Description of the socio-economic, vegetation, climatic and zootechnical variables used for this study. ISTAT census data refer to the National Institute of Statistics data (<http://dati-censimentopopolazione.istat.it/Index.aspx#>); EEA 2012 (<https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/clc-2012-raster/link>); WorldClim (<https://doi.org/10.1002/joc.5086>); National Veterinary Registry ([https://www.vetinfo.it/j6\\_statistiche/#/new-list](https://www.vetinfo.it/j6_statistiche/#/new-list))

<i>Variable Group</i>	<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>YEAR</i>	<i>Source</i>
SOCIO-ECONOMIC	COMM	Number of commuters in the municipality	%	2010	ISTAT census
	ILLITER	Number of illiterate people in the municipality	%	2010	ISTAT census
	MASCUL	Masculinity ratio (=100: balance between gender; <100: ♀ predominance, >100: ♂ predominance)	%	2010	ISTAT census
	POPINC	Net taxable income in the municipality	€	2010	ISTAT census
	POPURB	Resident population inside urban areas	%	2010	ISTAT census
	RAIL	Linear meters of railways in the municipal area	m km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	ISTAT census
	ROADS	Linear meters of roads in the municipal area	m km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	ISTAT census
VEGETATION	FOR	WUI area covered by forests	%	2011	EEA, 2012
	HERB	WUI area covered by herbaceous vegetation	%	2011	EEA, 2012
	NAT	Municipal area subject to landscape-naturalistic restrictions and protection	%	2011	EEA, 2012
	SHR	WUI area covered by shrublands	%	2011	EEA, 2012
CLIMATIC	PREC	Total annual municipal precipitation	mm	1970-2000	WorldClim
	SRAD	Annual average municipal solar radiation	kJ m <sup>-2</sup>	1970-2000	WorldClim
	TMAX	Annual average municipal maximum temperature	°C	1970-2000	WorldClim
	WS	Annual average municipal wind speed	m s <sup>-1</sup>	1970-2000	WorldClim
ZOOTECNICAL	BF	Bovine breeding farms in the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	Nat. Veterinary Registry
	BOV	Bovines raised within the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	Nat. Veterinary Registry
	OCF	Ovine and caprine breeding farms in the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	Nat. Veterinary Registry
	SHEEPS	Sheeps raised within the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	Nat. Veterinary Registry
	GOATS	Goats raised within the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	Nat. Veterinary Registry
	SF	Suine farms in the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	Nat. Veterinary Registry
	SUINE	Pigs raised within the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2010	Nat. Veterinary Registry
EF	Equine breeding farms in the municipality	# km <sup>-2</sup>	2017	Nat. Veterinary Registry	

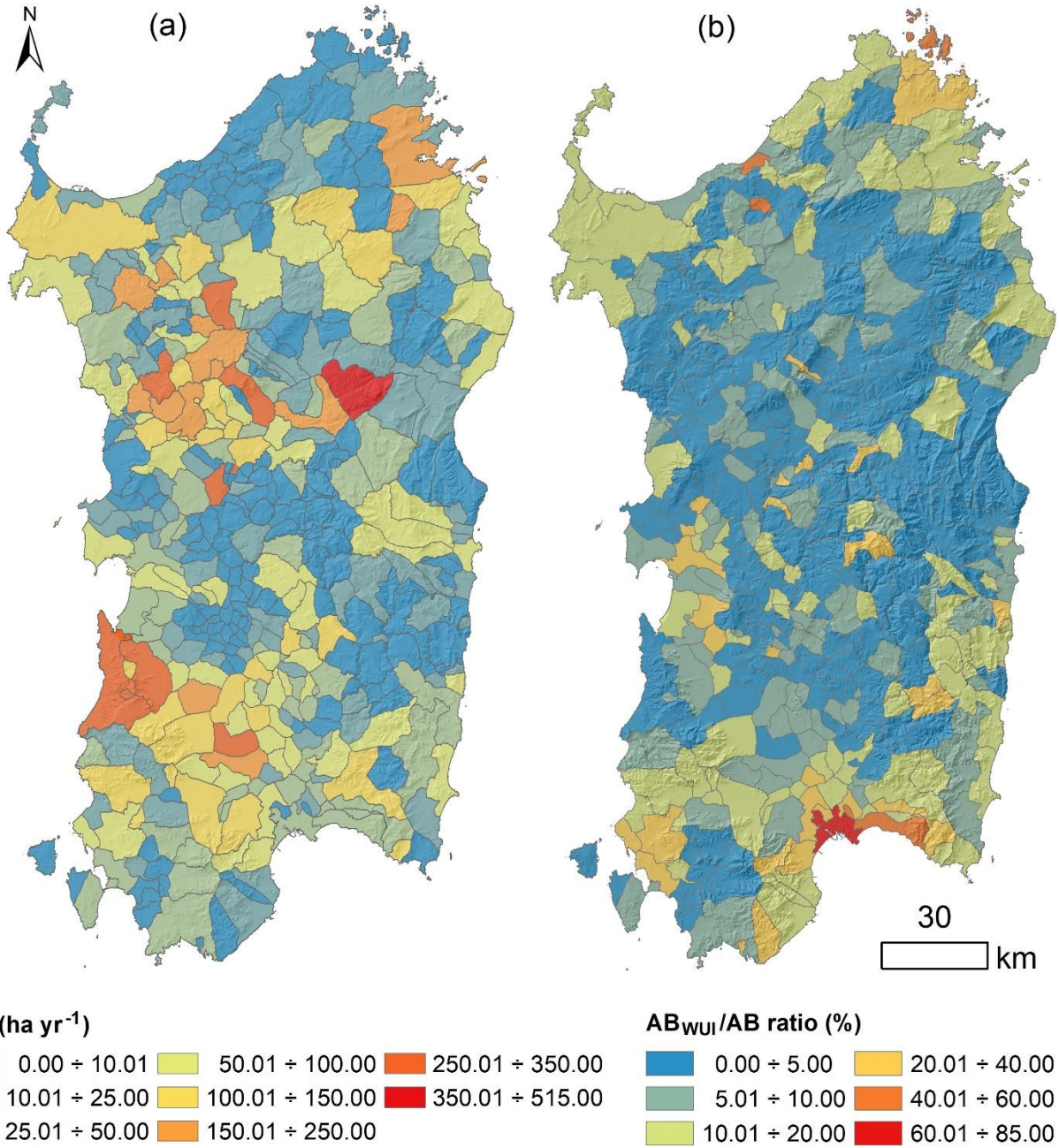
**Suppl. Table S2.** Description of the trained and evaluated models in this work (RF: Random Forest; SVM-L: Linear Support Vector Machine Kernel, SVM-R: Support Vector Machine Kernel with a radial basis kernel; LASSO: Least Absolute Shrinkage and Selection Operator; KNN: K-Nearest Neighbors; ENR: Elastic-net regression; BRR: Bayesian Ridge Regression; OLS: Ordinary least square linear regression).

<i>Model</i>	<i>Model acronym</i>	<i>Description</i>
Random Forest	RF	Random Forest is an ensemble machine learning algorithm used for classification research and regression analysis. It is a combination of tree predictors trained with the bagging method (Breiman and Cutler 2020); its principle is that it selects a random subset of variables at every node of every tree. Its high performance derives from a minimum correlation between trees and numerous resamples of the sets of data points (Jain et al. 2020). RF can select and estimate the importance of every single independent variable within a large dataset, examining the relationship between independent and dependent variables, and demonstrating high accuracy and tolerance to outliers (Su et al. 2018; Rihan et al. 2023).
Linear Support Vector Machine Kernel and Support Vector Machine Kernel with a radial basis kernel	SVM-L and SVM-R	The Support Vector Machine is a machine learning algorithm used to train models for classification or regression, that uses training and test feature vectors. It is useful for pattern recognition and function estimation (Cortes and Vapnik 1995). It classifies similar dataset features in the training model in the same category and different features in another category. It uses the kernel function to map data to high dimensional space and find the best hyperplane that divides the training samples of several classes or to divide data in space (D'Este et al. 2021; Gao et al. 2024). Differences between the SVM types depend on the type of the kernel function used (Wang et al. 2021): in linear SVM (SVM-L), data can be separated with a linear line, and classified with the help of a hyperplane, while for radial SVM (SVM-R), the kernel used in training and predicting is radial.
Least Absolute Shrinkage and Selection Operator	LASSO	The Least Absolute Shrinkage and Selection Operator is a shrinkage and variable selection method for regression models. It uses a penalty for training and to achieve a sparse solution (Friedman et al. 2010; Elshewey and Elsonbaty 2020). It identifies the neighborhood of each variable, namely the set of predictor variables corresponding to non-zero coefficients in a prediction model, by estimating the conditional independence separately for each variable (Ranstan and Cook 2018). It includes all the variables in the model, and a penalty factor is applied to the coefficients, limiting their magnitude. Variables that do not contribute or contribute very little to the response variables are excluded from the model (Keyser and Rodrigue 2023).
K-Nearest Neighbors	KNN	The K-Nearest Neighbors is a supervised machine learning algorithm that employs memorized data to classify new data points into the target class depending on the nearest available points (Sharma et al. 2022). In the training set, this algorithm finds the closest group of objects to the test object, and assigns a label based on the predominance of a particular class of the closest identified neighbors (Wu et al. 2008).
Elastic-net regression	ENR	The Elastic-net regression provides the advantages of both the ridge and lasso parameters in exploring the predictors and reducing bias, includes a generalized penalty term, and it is considered a convex combination of these two regressions (Minaravesh and Aydin 2023; Sloboda et al. 2023). It is valuable when there are significantly more predictors than observations, and can select groups of correlated variables and at the same time apply a variable selection and shrinkage (Zou and Hastie 2005; Friedman 2010).
Bayesian Ridge Regression	BRR	The Bayesian Ridge Regression is a linear regression model that estimates the model parameters using Bayesian inference (Tipping 2001). In the Bayesian approach, there is a preliminary, a likelihood, and a posteriori distribution. Its advantages are a good generalization performance, high data utilization, few training sample requirements, and the ability to prevent overfitting (Andari et al. 2023; Xiang et al. 2023), exhibiting the ability to incorporate previous parameters information and create good prior distributions (Michimae and Emura 2023).

---

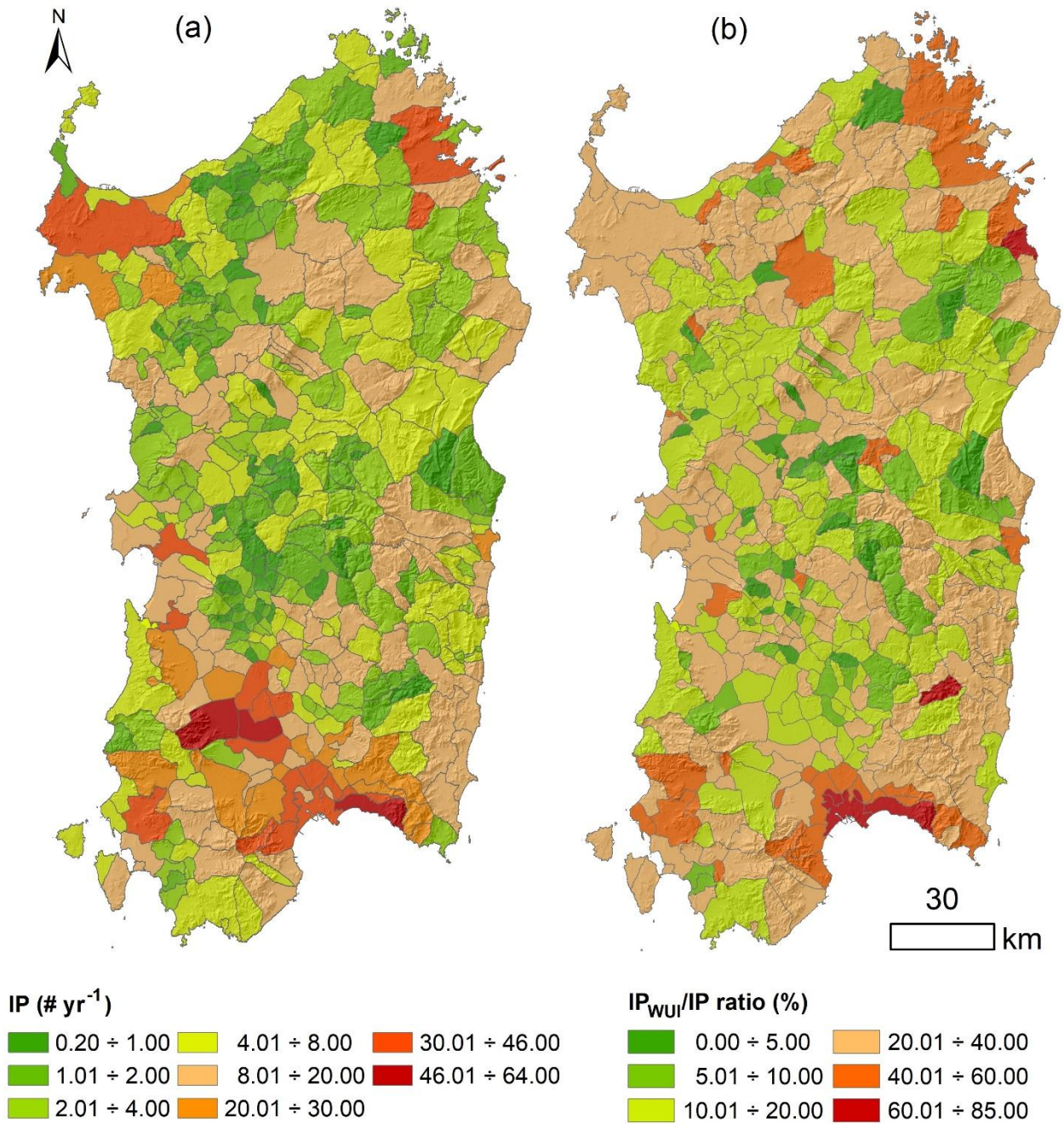
Ordinary least square linear regression	OLS	The Ordinary least square linear regression models the relationships between the target variable and one or several predicting variables that can be continuous or categorical. The target variable is modeled as a function of a constant term, coefficients on each predictor variable, and an error term (Acito 2023). This technique minimizes the sum of squared errors between the observed and predicted target values. OLS assumptions are the independent samples, error variance constancy, normality of model error term among others (Yahya et al. 2014); moreover, OLS assumes that the explanatory variables are measured without errors, and that errors are limited to the dependent variable (Leng et al. 2007).
---	-----	---

---

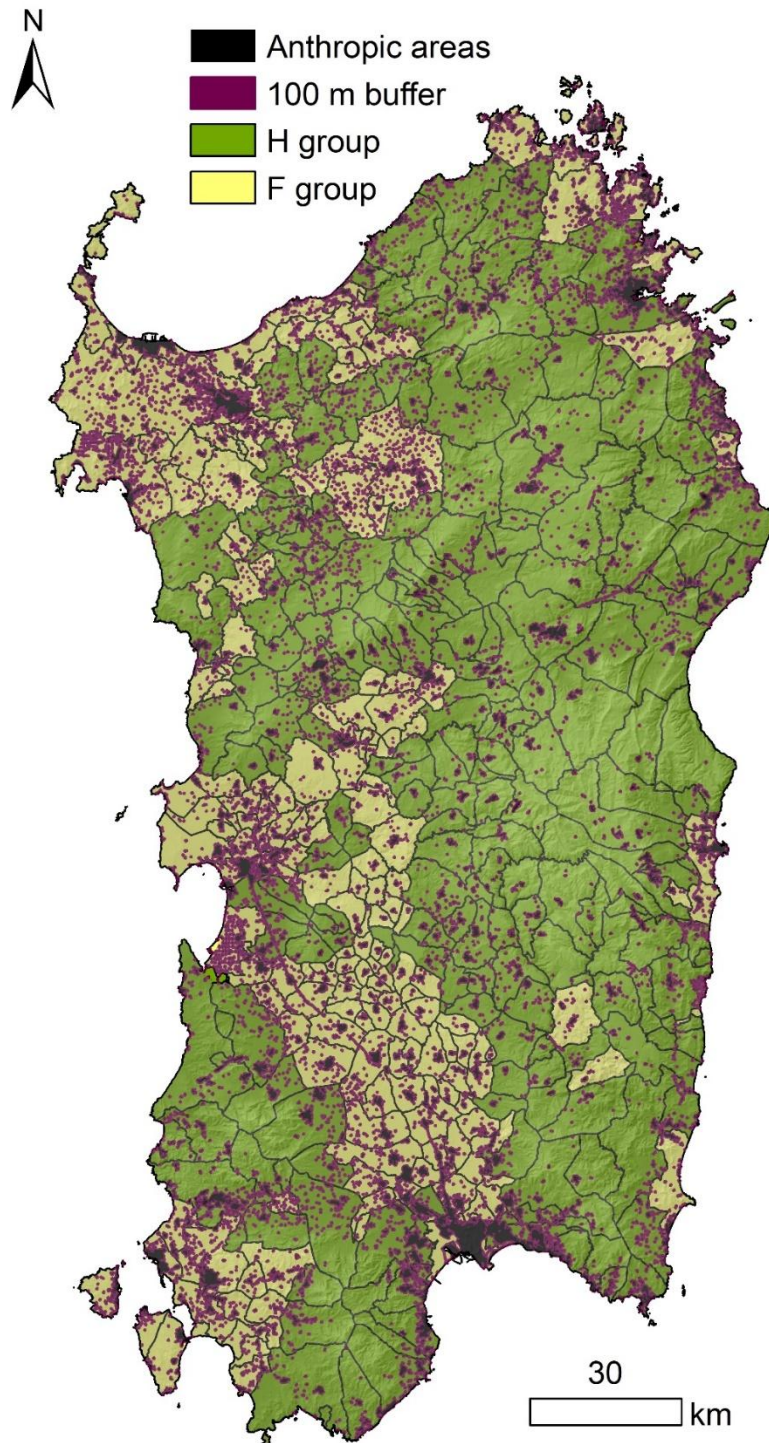


**Suppl. Fig. S1.** (a) Average annual area burned at the municipal level, and (b) ratio between annual area burned at WUI and annual area burned at the municipal level. Both maps refer to observed data and to the study period 2005-2019



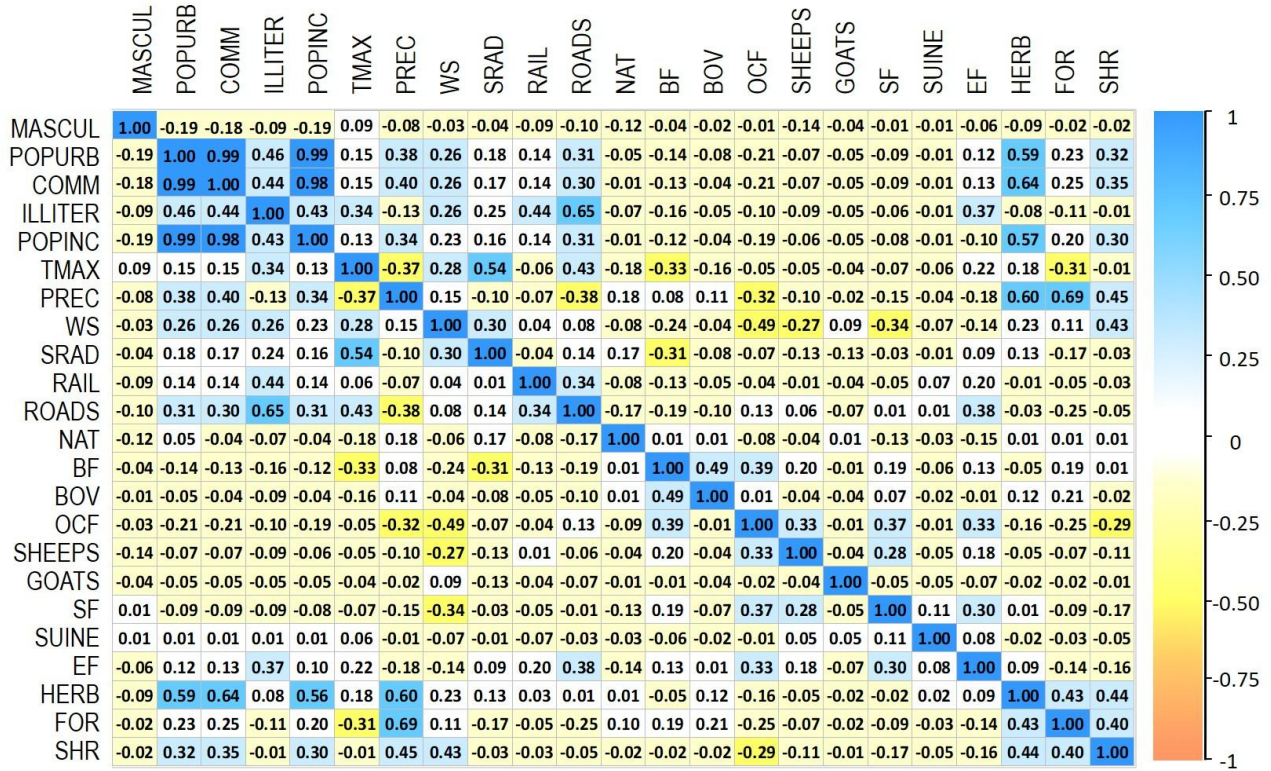


**Suppl. Fig. S2.** (a) Average annual wildfire ignitions at the municipal level, and (b) ratio between annual wildfire ignitions at WUI and annual wildfire ignitions at the municipal level. Both maps refer to observed data and to the study period 2005-2019



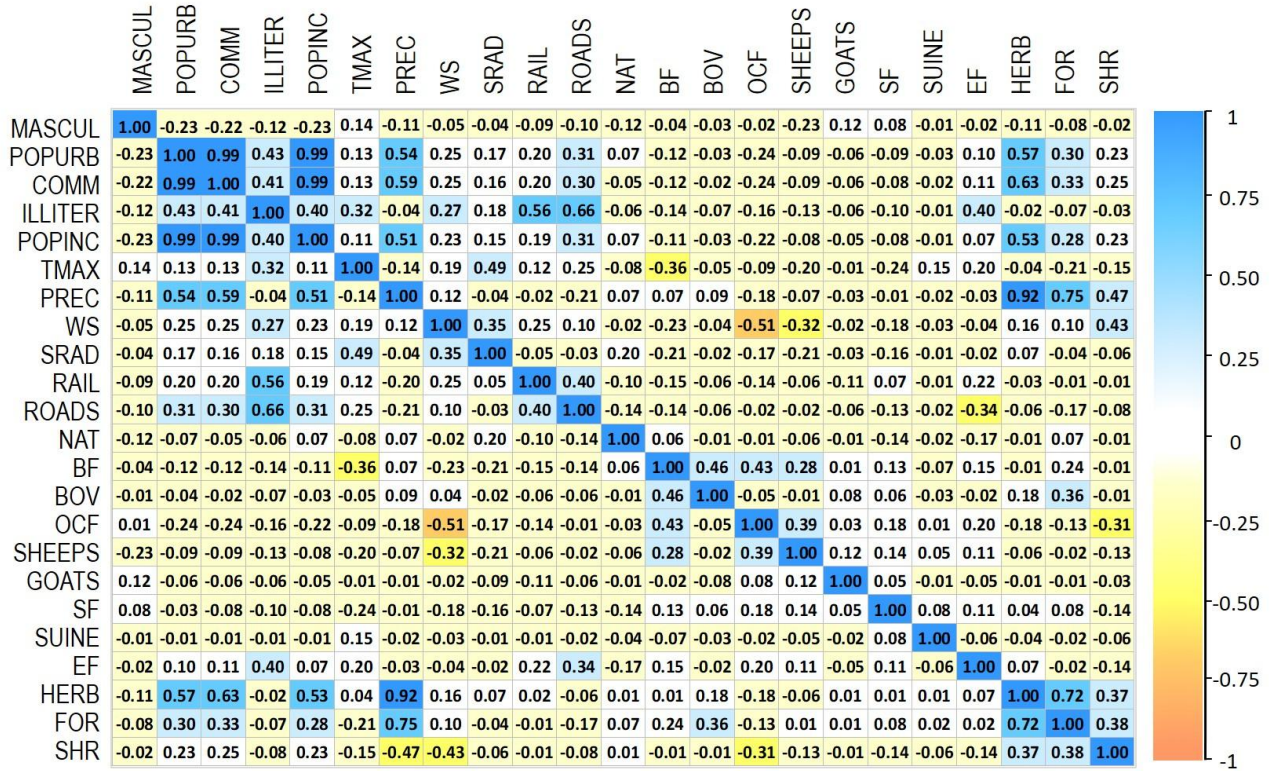
**Suppl. Fig. S3.** Map of the two groups of Sardinian municipalities based on the average municipal altitude and the elevation range, as described in the text. H = hilly and mountainous municipalities (mean altitude  $\geq 350$  m a.s.l. and elevation range  $\geq 600$  m); F = flat municipalities (mean altitude  $< 350$  m a.s.l. and elevation range  $< 600$  m). Black: anthropic land cover areas; purple: 100-meter buffer area around the anthropic layer



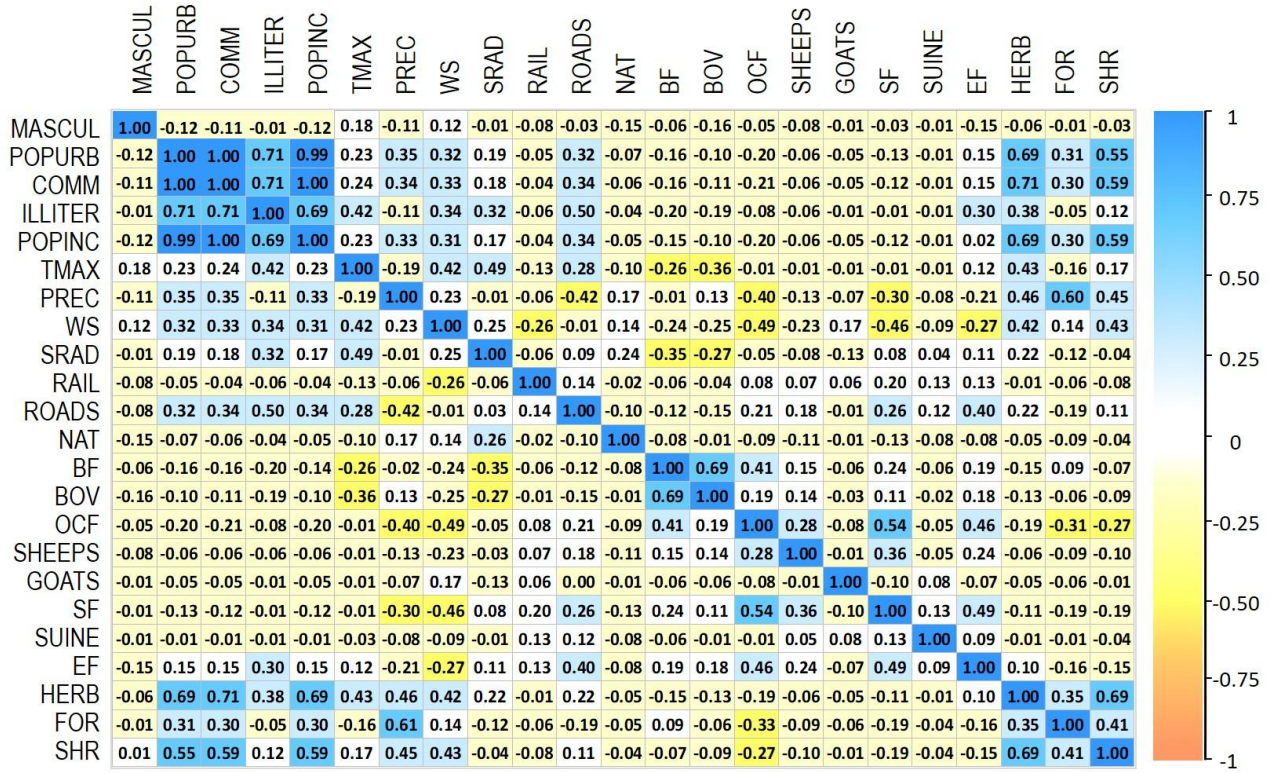


Suppl. Fig. S4. Correlation matrix of the independent variables used in this study (regional scale)

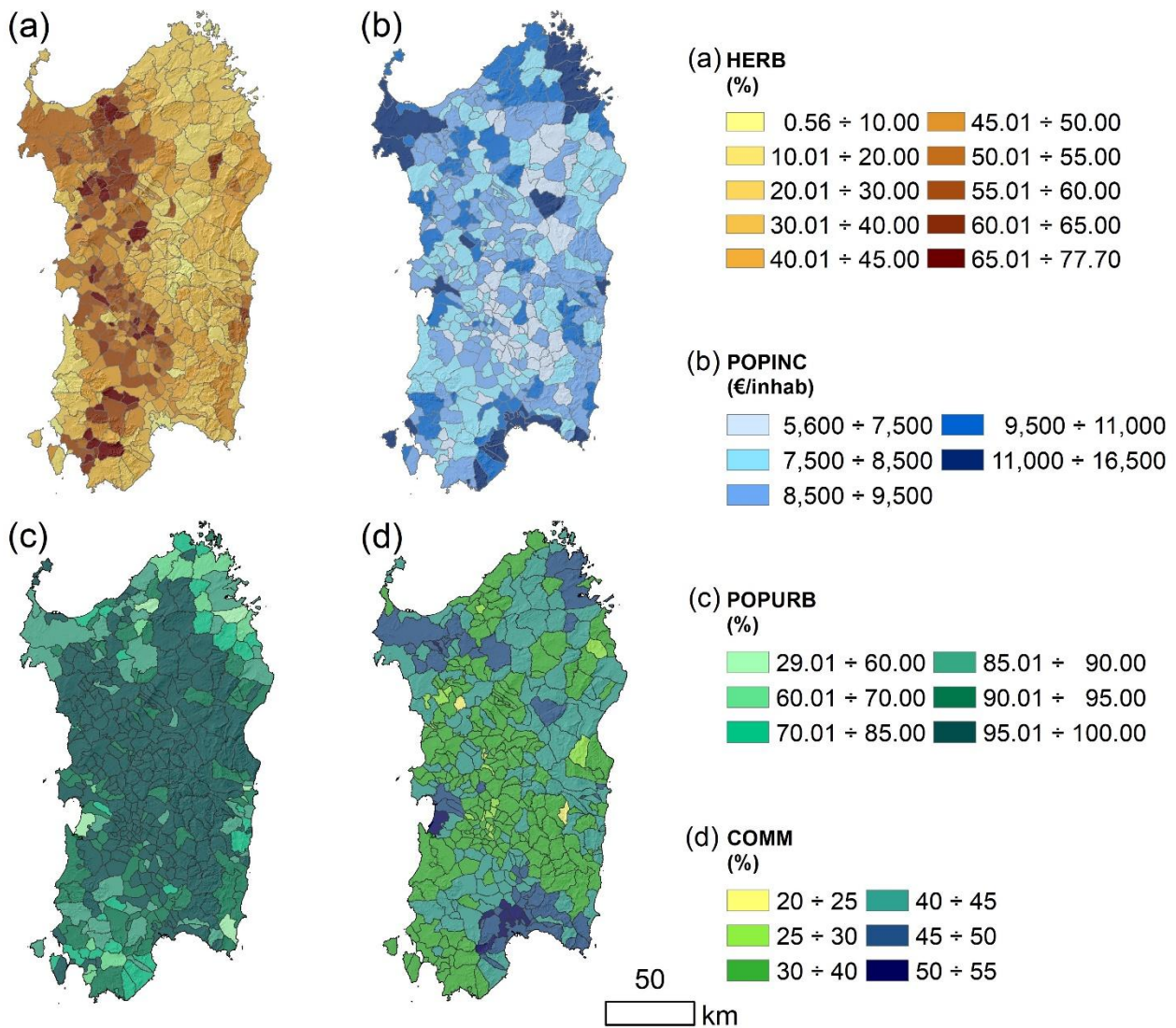




Suppl. Fig. S5. Correlation matrix of the independent variables used in this study (F municipal group)



Suppl. Fig. S6. Correlation matrix of the independent variables used in this study (H municipal group)



**Suppl. Fig. S7.** (a) Percent area covered by herbaceous vegetation inside Sardinian WUIs; (b) average annual net taxable income of resident population (€/inhabitant); (c) resident population living inside urban areas, as percentage of the total municipal population; (d) number of commuters in the municipality (ratio between commuters from other municipalities and resident population living inside a given municipality)



## References

- Acito F (2023) Ordinary Least Squares Regression. In: Predictive Analytics with KNIME: Analytics for Citizen Data Scientists (pp. 105-124). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-45630-5\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-45630-5_6)
- Andari RY, Pradipta RA, Radianto DO (2023) Using Bayesian Ridge Algorithm to Predict Effectiveness of Body Fat Measurement. *MALCOM: Indonesian Journal of Machine Learning and Computer Science* **3**(1), 43-49. <https://doi.org/10.57152/malcom.v3i1.717>
- Breiman L and Cutler A. (2020) The Random Forest Package; 15:00:24 UTC. Available online: <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/randomForest/randomForest.pdf> (accessed on 24 January 2024).
- Cortes C, Vapnik V (1995) Support-vector networks. *Machine learning* **20**, 273-297.
- D'Este M, Giannico V, Laforteza R, Sanesi G, Elia M (2021) The Wildland-Urban Interface Map of Italy: A Nationwide Dataset for Wildfire Risk Management. *Data in Brief*, **38**, 107427. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2021.107427>
- EEA\_2012 - Corine Land Cover (2012) <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/clc-2012-raster/link> (Accessed 25 March 2024)
- Elshewey AM, and Elsonbaty AA (2020) Forest Fires Detection Using Machine Learning Techniques. Xi'an Jianzhu Keji Daxue Xuebao/J. *Journal of Xi'an University of Architecture & Technology*. XII, 510–517
- Fick SE and Hijmans RJ (2017) WorldClim 2: new 1-km spatial resolution climate surfaces for global land areas. *International Journal of Climatology* **37**(12), 4302-4315. <https://doi.org/10.1002/joc.5086>
- Friedman J, Hastie T, Tibshirani R (2010) Regularization paths for generalized linear models via coordinate descent. *Journal of Statistical Software* **33**, 1–22. <https://www.jstatsoft.org/article/view/v033i01>
- Gao B, Shan Y, Liu X, Yin S, Yu B, Cui C, Cao L (2024) Prediction and driving factors of forest fire occurrence in Jilin Province, China. *Journal of Forestry Research* **35**(1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11676-023-01663-w>
- ISTAT. <http://dati-censimentopopolazione.istat.it/Index.aspx#> (Accessed 25 March 2024)
- Jain P, Coogan SCP, Subramanian SG, Crowley M, Taylor S, Flannigan MD (2020) A Review of Machine Learning Applications in Wildfire Science and Management. *Environmental Reviews* **505**, 478–505. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2003.00646>
- Keyser TL, Rodrigue JA (2023) Legacy of thinning on woody species composition and structure in southern Appalachian Mountain hardwood forests: restoration implications. *Restoration Ecology* **31**(1), e13689. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13689>
- Leng L, Zhang T, Kleinman L, Zhu W (2007) Ordinary least square regression, orthogonal regression, geometric mean regression and their applications in aerosol science. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* **78**(1), 12-84. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/78/1/012084>
- Michimae H and Emura T (2023) Bayesian ridge regression for survival data based on a vine copula-based prior. *AStA Advances in Statistical Analysis* **107**(4), 755-784. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10182-022-00466-4>
- Minaravesh B and Aydin O (2023) Environmental and demographic factors affecting childhood academic performance in Los Angeles county: A generalized linear elastic net regression model. *Remote Sensing Applications: Society and Environment* **30**, 100942. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rsase.2023.100942>
- Ranstam J, Cook JA (2018) LASSO regression. *Journal of British Surgery* **105**(10), 1348-1348. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bjs.10895>
- Rihan M, Bindajam AA, Talukdar S, Naikoo MW, Mallick J, Rahman A (2023) Forest fire susceptibility mapping with sensitivity and uncertainty analysis using machine learning and deep learning algorithms. *Advances in Space Research* **72**(2), 426-443. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asr.2023.03.026>
- Sharma LK, Gupta R, Fatima N (2022) Assessing the predictive efficacy of six machine learning algorithms for the susceptibility of Indian forests to fire. *International Journal of Wildland Fire* **31**(8), 735-758. <https://doi.org/10.1071/WF22016>
- Sloboda BW, Pearson D, Etherton M (2023) An application of the LASSO and elastic net regression to assess poverty and economic freedom on ECOWAS countries. *Mathematical Biosciences and Engineering* **20**(7), 12154-12168. <https://doi.org/10.3934/mbe.2023541>
- Su Z, Hu H, Wang G, Ma Y, Yang X, Guo F (2018) Using GIS and Random Forests to identify fire drivers in a forest city, Yichun, China. *Geomatics, Natural Hazards and Risk* **9**(1), 1207-1229. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19475705.2018.1505667>



- Tipping ME (2001) Sparse Bayesian learning and the relevance vector machine. *Journal of Machine Learning Research* **1**, 211-244.
- Vet\_info – National Veterinary Registry. Sistema Informativo Veterinario, Statistiche [https://www.vetinfo.it/j6\\_statistiche/#/new-list](https://www.vetinfo.it/j6_statistiche/#/new-list). (Accessed 25 March 2024)
- Wang J, Shen L, Bi Y, Lei J (2021) Modeling and optimization of a light-duty diesel engine at high altitude with a support vector machine and a genetic algorithm. *Fuel* **285**, 119137. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fuel.2020.119137>
- Wu X, Kumar V, Ross Quinlan J, Ghosh J, Yang Q, Motoda H, McLachlan GJ, Ng A, Liu B, Yu PS, Zhou ZH, Steinbach M, Hand DJ, Steinberg D (2008) Top 10 algorithms in data mining. *Knowledge and Information Systems* **14**, 1-37. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10115-007-0114-2>
- Yahya WB, Olaniran OR, Ige SO (2014). On Bayesian conjugate normal linear regression and ordinary least square regression methods: A Monte Carlo study. *Ilorin Journal of science* **1**(1), 216-227.
- Zou H and Hastie T (2005) Regularization and variable selection via the elastic net. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series B: Statistical Methodology* **67**(2), 301-320. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9868.2005.00503.x>