# **Amazon deforestation hits record in Bolsonaro administration**

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The ***Amazon*** forest lost 218.41 square kilometers (km²) of vegetation in December last year, the last under then-President Jair Bolsonaro's (PL) administration, in yet another record of his administration. The data are from Deter, a system of the National Institute for Space Research (Inpe) that issues alerts to combat ***deforestation*** in real time. The record is Bolsonaro's highest for the month of December, compared with the same period in previous years as president. If considered the historical series, starting in 2015, it is the third, behind 2017, which recorded 287.51km², and 2015, which had 266.29km². The numbers are yet to be updated by Inpe, since the information published this Friday (6/1) goes up to December 30th last year - there is one day left to complete the year 2022, therefore. The number more than doubled compared to the same period last year, when the system recorded 87.19km², but caution must be exercised in comparisons, according to Mariana Napolitano, conservation manager at WWF-Brazil.

"So," she says, "the trend projected by Deter is that ***deforestation*** data will remain high and will be confirmed in the next publication of Prodes, another Inpe system." This is also what the Climate Observatory, a network of several civil society organizations, points out. "***Amazon*** destruction alerts have hit historic records in recent months, leaving the Lula government with a kind of contracted ***deforestation***, which will negatively influence the figures for 2023," says Marcio Astrini, executive secretary of the entity. "The Bolsonaro government is over, but its harmful environmental legacy will still be felt for a long time. In her inauguration speech last Wednesday, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Marina Silva, announced the creation of an extraordinary secretariat exclusively focused on controlling and combating ***deforestation***. It was during her first term in the ministry in the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT) that ***deforestation***, with the PPCDAm -or Action Plan for Prevention and Control of ***Deforestation*** in the Legal ***Amazon***-, reached an 83% reduction in the rate from 2004 to 2012. According to Napolitano, the restructuring of command and control actions and agencies such as Ibama and ICMBio are important, but the government will need to make a quick effort in the direction of the economy. "We know that you can't hold and don't want to hold [***deforestation***] with command and control. What we want is a forest-based economy, in which ***deforestation*** no longer makes sense, because keeping the forest standing is more profitable. It is much less risky for everyone," he says. The deadline, however, is another challenge: "We can remember that, with Marina and the PPCDAm, there was a reduction in ***deforestation*** in eight years. We don't have eight more years to reduce, we need effort and resources for the response to be more drastic. It is a more critical scenario for climate, water resources, our window for change is smaller", highlights the specialist. Until the closing of this edition, the Ministry of the Environment had not commented on the new Deter data.

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