# **Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon falls 61% in first month of Lula's government**

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**Body**

Monitoring of the ***Amazon*** detected 167 km2 of forest destroyed last month in the Brazilian part of the world's largest rainforest, a figure lower than that measured in January 2022, according to preliminary data from the Deter satellite monitoring system of the National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

***Deforestation*** in the Brazilian ***Amazon*** fell 61% in January, the first month of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration, compared to the same period in 2022, according to an official report released Friday.

Satellite monitoring detected 167 km2 of forest destroyed last month in the Brazilian part of the world's largest rainforest, according to preliminary data from the Deter satellite monitoring system of the National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

The area, equivalent to more than 22,000 soccer fields, represents a drop from 430 km2 in January 2022, still under the administration of former ultra-right-wing president Jair Bolsonaro, according to INPE.

Under Bolsonaro's administration, an ally of agribusiness and climate change denier, average annual ***deforestation*** in the Brazilian ***Amazon*** increased 75.5% over the previous decade.

The decrease in the area destroyed could reflect a "resumption of the environmental defense agenda," said the environmental NGO WWF-Brazil in a note, although "it is premature to speak of a trend reversal."

"It is necessary to restructure with the utmost urgency the Action Plans for the Prevention and Control of ***Deforestation*** and ***Deforestation*** and Burning for Brazil to resume its role of environmental leadership on the international scene," said Frederico Machado, a WWF-Brazil conservation specialist, who described the recent policy as "anti-environmental" and "criminal".

Experts assure that the destruction is mainly due to the advance of farms and land usurpers who cut down the rainforest for cattle ranching and crops.

The 77-year-old leftist president, who governed the country between 2003 and 2010, promised to restart environmental protection programs, to fight to meet the goal of zero illegal ***deforestation*** by 2030 and to ensure that Brazil ceases to be a "pariah" in climate issues.

Lula appointed Marina Silva, a renowned environmentalist who headed the Ministry of Environment between 2003 and 2008, when Brazil managed to significantly reduce ***deforestation***.

Near the end of her first month in office, on January 24, Silva acknowledged in an interview with AFP that Brazil's environmental reality is "much worse" than expected.

Brazil is in talks with some Western powers, such as France, to contribute resources and add their efforts to the ***Amazon*** Fund, whose main donors are Norway and Germany.

In addition to the fight against ***deforestation***, Lula's government is combating other crimes, such as illegal mining, with an operation to expel land invaders from the Yanomami ethnic group in the country's largest indigenous reserve on the border with Venezuela.

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