# **Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon reached a record level in Bolsonaro's last year in office**

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**Body**

During the government of Jair Bolsonaro, the Brazilian ***Amazon*** reached a ***deforestation*** record. During his last year in the Planalto Palace alone, 10,267 kilometers of vegetation cover were lost, equivalent to a country like Lebanon.

This figure, in turn, shows an increase of 24.9% over the area of forest damaged the previous year, when it was 8,219 square kilometers. Thus, 2022 recorded the highest number since the National Institute of Special Studies (INPE) began measuring so-called ***deforestation*** alerts in 2015.

Prior to the latest report released, the year with the highest ***deforestation*** recorded was 2019, when Bolsonaro became President of Brazil, and 9,178 square kilometers were lost.

For these estimates, the agency uses satellite images disseminated by Deter, a mechanism that alerts monthly and in real time about threatened areas in the ***Amazon***. However, its data are less precise than those of Prodes, another tool used by INPE to calculate ***deforestation*** each year.

Prodes released its latest bulletin in November and reported that, between August 2021 and July 2022, the ***Amazon*** lost 11,568 kilometers of vegetation, an extension 11.3% less than that recorded in the same period of the previous year - when it was 13,038 square kilometers. This was, however, the highest in the last 14 years.

At the same time, this report informed that only between August and December 2022, 4,793 kilometers of forest were logged there, a record value for the period. In addition, in December alone, ***deforestation*** extended over 218.4 square kilometers, which represents a 150% jump compared to the same month in 2021 -when it was only 87 square kilometers-. Again the highest number for this month since the beginning of the previous government.

These figures are not surprising since, from the very beginning, Bolsonaro stated that the conservation of the rainforest was not one of his priorities; on the contrary, he decimated the offices in charge of its preservation and defended mining even in the reserves. This caused multiple criticisms from environmental groups, who hold him responsible for the current crisis in the ***Amazon***.

These organizations had already warned that in the last months of 2022, the pace of destruction there was accelerating due to the expectation of the president that he would be defeated in the October elections.

In view of this delicate context and in order to fulfill one of his main campaign promises, the new president of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, assured that one of the priorities of his administration will be to reduce ***deforestation*** in the ***Amazon*** to a minimum. He also added that he will relentlessly combat illegal logging and mining, which are also major causes of environmental disasters.

In this sense, his Minister of the Environment, the environmentalist Marina Silva, moved forward with the creation of a secretariat dedicated exclusively to combating ***deforestation***.

On the other hand, the executive secretary of the Climate Observatory, Marcio Astrini, warned that "the destruction alerts were record in the last months of 2022, which left the Lula government a rate that will negatively affect the numbers of 2023″. And he concluded that "Bolsonaro's government may be over but his nefarious environmental legacy will be felt for a long time".

(With information from EFE and AFP)

This is the alarming figure of the loss of the ***Amazon*** ecosystem

Fires in Brazilian ***Amazon*** soared in November, doubling those of 2021

Lula signed 13 presidential decrees a few hours after assuming power in Brazil

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