# **Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon sets a record for the month of February**

CE Noticias Financieras English

February 24, 2023 Friday

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**Length:** 400 words

**Body**

***Deforestation*** in the Brazilian ***Amazon*** set a record for the month of February, the second month of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration, according to official data released on Friday (24), which cover a little more than half of the period, still incomplete.

Satellite monitoring has detected 209 km2 of ***deforestation*** in the Brazilian part of the world's largest tropical forest, according to preliminary data from the DETER surveillance system of the National Institute for Space Research (INPE).

Equivalent to more than 29,000 soccer fields, the area only includes data through February 17, but already represents an increase over the previous record of 199 km2 destroyed over the month of February 2022, the last year of Jair Bolsonaro's government.

Last January, satellite monitoring showed a 61% drop from the same period in 2022, although environmental organizations had warned that it was premature to talk about a reversal of the trend, since part of the drop could be related to greater cloud cover that affected calculations.

"The increase in ***Amazon*** ***deforestation*** in DETER may be a reflection of the limitation in detection last month due to high cloud cover. The ***deforestation*** we are observing may then not only contemplate this month's ***deforestation*** but also last month's ***deforestation***," Daniel Silva, a conservation specialist with the NGO WWF-Brazil, told AFP.

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

Experts say that the destruction is mainly due to the advance of landowners who clear the forest to develop agricultural and cattle ranching activities.

Lula, 77 years old, assumed the presidency for the third time with the protection of the forest as one of his main demands so that Brazil stops being a "pariah" in climate issues.

The leftist president once again nominated renowned environmentalist Marina Silva as environment minister, who headed the portfolio between 2003 and 2008, when Brazil managed to significantly reduce ***deforestation***.

On January 24, Silva acknowledged in an interview with AFP that Brazil's environmental reality is "much worse" than expected.

"We know that there is a commitment by the new government to control ***deforestation***, but concrete results should take some time to be observed," added the WWF-Brazil expert.

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2023

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