# **Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon sets historical record in February**

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**Body**

Rio de Janeiro, Mar. 10. ***Deforestation*** in the Brazilian ***Amazon*** soared in February by 61.8% compared to the same period in 2022 and even before the end of the month it was already the highest for the period since the measurement began, the government reported Friday.

According to data from the ***deforestation*** alert system of the National Institute for Space Research (Inpe), 322 square kilometers of native vegetation were devastated last month.

In addition to significantly surpassing the 199 square kilometers destroyed in the same month of 2022, this is the highest devastation recorded for a month of February since 2015, when the Government began measuring with the Real-Time Legal ***Amazon*** ***Deforestation*** Detection System (Deter).

The area destroyed in the biome last month was also 93.3% higher than in January, when it lost 166.58 square kilometers.

In the first month of the year, ***deforestation*** of the largest tropical rainforest on the planet recorded a sharp drop (-61.3%) in the year-on-year comparison and decreased by 27% compared to December.

That month, however, experts emphasized that the data were partial, since the dense cloud cover over the biome in January prevented satellites from capturing devastated areas in more than half of the Brazilian ***Amazon***.

Thus, it is quite possible that in February the Deter will have recorded the devastation that it failed to capture in January.

In 2022, the Brazilian ***Amazon*** lost 10,278 square kilometers of vegetation cover, a level never seen before since Deter has been used in Brazil.

The ***deforestation*** of the biome increased by almost 60% in the four years of Jair Bolsonaro's government (2019-2022) compared to the previous four-year term due to the lack of controls and the weakening of environmental bodies, since the ultra-right-wing leader defends the exploitation of natural resources in the forest, even in indigenous reserves, where it is prohibited by law.

The recovery of the Brazilian ***Amazon*** is one of the main commitments announced by Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva since he was elected president of the South American giant, a promise he reiterated when he assumed his third mandate on January 1.

In his first month in office, Lula reactivated the ***Amazon*** Fund, financed by Norway and Germany and in which he also announced that the United States will participate; he revoked controversial measures of Bolsonaro and set up a group with 17 ministries to define policies for the preservation of the rainforest.

He also faced a strong fight against the illegal extraction of precious metals in the biome after the health crisis discovered in the Yanomami reserve, caused by the invasion of some 20,000 miners who are still being expelled from the indigenous territory by the authorities.

"We have just come out of a government that supported ***deforestation***. Until oversight and control do not reach the entire territory, illegal deforesters will continue to take advantage to act," said Romulo Batista, spokesman for the ***Amazon*** for Greenpeace Brazil, attributing the increase in devastation in the first two months to the effects of Bolsonaro's policies. EFE

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