# [***Deforestation is wiping out an area larger than the size of Portugal every year***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:677V-N8N1-JCG7-850S-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Every year some 10 million hectares of forests are destroyed, an area larger than the size of Portugal and equivalent to that of Iceland, according to the UN, which points to this "alarming" global ***deforestation***, along with agriculture and other changes in land use, as responsible for 25% of global emissions of greenhouse gases.

According to the latest report from the UN-REDD Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the Green Gigaton Challenge (GGC) initiative, the world is not on track to achieve the forest goals of ending and reversing ***deforestation*** by 2030, a key aspiration for progress towards the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C target.

The report concludes that, for the 2030 targets to be achievable, the milestone of one gigatonne equivalent in emissions reversed by forests must be reached by 2025 at the latest.

Precisely climate defense in general and reversing ***deforestation*** of the ***Amazon*** in particular was one of the banners of the campaign that brought to power the new president of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who plans to convene a summit this year with the presidents of the eleven countries that share the planet's largest plant lung.

His commitment is to reestablish measures to combat ***deforestation*** in the ***Amazon*** abandoned by his predecessor in office, Jair Bolsonaro, during whose term in office forest destruction increased by almost 60%, with an average area devastated of 11,396 square kilometers per year.

Among the causes of ***deforestation*** are forest fires, which, in addition to destroying forests and biodiversity, release large amounts of CO2 into the atmosphere.

By way of example, in 2022 some 786,000 hectares of forest were burned in the EU, 39% of them in Spain, and 28 million tons of CO2 were released into the atmosphere. Figures similar to those in other parts of the planet in a particularly virulent year: the outbreaks of fires at the beginning of 2022 in the Argentine province of Corrientes, in the northeast, devastated 785,000 hectares, and in Bolivia 854,724 hectares burned only until September.

Against this backdrop, the UN believes that limiting the average global temperature increase to 1.5°C will be impossible unless forests play a major role, both in terms of the massive emissions reductions that can be achieved by halting ***deforestation*** and the additional carbon that can be sequestered through improved forest management and reforestation.

Their calculations indicate that eliminating emissions from ***deforestation*** and increasing carbon removals by promoting forest regeneration and landscape restoration could reduce global net emissions by up to 30% and, over the next decade, forests could provide up to 50% of the cost-effective mitigation available.

That target is a long way off, however, considering that between about 10 million hectares of forests are destroyed each year, ***deforestation*** that is responsible for about 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions along with agriculture and other land-use changes.

"***Deforestation*** and land degradation also undermine efforts to build resilience to climate impacts and threaten forest-dwelling communities," the UN laments.

Some 70% of tropical forest destruction is generated by the production of agricultural commodities, including palm oil, beef, soybeans, timber, and pulp and paper, says the UN, which says that halting this trend requires decoupling commodity production from ***deforestation***.

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