# **NGOs sue French bank BNP Paribas for financing companies that contribute to Amazon deforestation**

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**Body**

Environmental and human rights groups said **Monday they filed a lawsuit against BNP Paribas, the eurozone's largest bank, for providing financial services to companies they allege are contributing to the *deforestation* of the *Amazon* rainforest**.

Brazilian NGO Comissão Pastoral da Terra and French group Notre Affaire À Tous filed the lawsuit last week in the Paris court, alleging that BNP Paribas failed to carry out adequate checks before agreeing to finance such companies.

**Paris-based BNP Paribas said in a statement sent to Reuters that it required its clients to have a "zero *deforestation*" strategy in their production and supply chains by 2025.**

Forest destruction is Brazil's biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions, and climate campaigners are increasingly resorting to lawsuits to pressure large companies to adopt a low-carbon economy.

French companies have become a particular focus of attention due to a 2017 French law requiring them to identify and prevent risks to human rights and the environment that could occur as a result of their activities.

The case is the second to be directed against BNP Paribas on these grounds, following another complaint filed last week.

The first judgment by a French court based on the law is scheduled for Tuesday in a case against oil company TotalEnergies.

**BNP Paribas said it demanded "full traceability" of its beef and soybean supply chains from the Brazilian *Amazon* and Cerrado from its customers**. It pledged to stop offering financial products or services to those who did not agree to this.

"Only a collective commitment from financial institutions can be fully effective," said BNP Paribas.

"Simply ceasing to finance these actors would have no positive impact on their practices, as they would continue to rely on a largely sufficient number of lenders for their activity," it added.

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