# **U.S. support to stop deforestation in the Amazon: Lula's main goal in Washington**

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**Body**

U.S. President Joe Biden meets Friday at the White House with his Brazilian counterpart **Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** to discuss democracy and the environment, against the backdrop of the long shadow of Jair Bolsonaro.

**Stopping the *deforestation* of the *Amazon* would help save 345 million people** who are at risk of famine in the world and billions more who are being affected by climate change. The ***Amazon*** underpins much of the global food system by regulating the world's rainfall patterns. In fact, scientific models published in the Journal of Climate show how continued ***deforestation*** of the ***Amazon*** will significantly reduce rainfall vital to food production in the United States.

In the western U.S., for example, ***deforestation*** of the ***Amazon*** **could be responsible for a 10-20% decrease in precipitation**. A worrisome situation considering that together, the United States and Brazil provided 66% of the world's soybeans, 42% of its corn, 30% of its poultry, among many other foods.

However, ***deforestation*** continues and has already eliminated 17% of the entire ***Amazon***. Experts predict that **if 20 to 25% of this rainforest is lost, there will be no point of return** . This is emphasized by Natalie Unterstell, president of Brazil's Talanoa Institute. "The ***Amazon*** rainforest has become the central axis of Brazilian foreign policy and also an international policy issue for the US and Brazil because of its importance for food security. If it collapses, this will have a huge negative impact not only on Brazil but also on Latin America and on the fight against global climate change. That's why ***deforestation*** has to stop," he says.

**"Lula is going to have to deliver results."**

**Completely halting *deforestation* was one of Lula da Silva's campaign promises.** Securing Joe Biden's support to fulfill that promise is one of the main objectives of his visit to Washington. It is an endorsement that will come with responsibilities for Brazil, says Anya Prusa, Albright Stonebridge Senior Director for the Americas: "The international community is relieved to have Brazil back at the table, and this relief will translate into much-needed funding for the ***Amazon*** Fund and other mechanisms. But high expectations mean that Lula is going to have to deliver results".

The ***Amazon* Fund**, which Lula hopes the United States will join, was created in 2009 with an initial donation from Norway to help combat ***deforestation*** and stimulate sustainable development in Brazil. Bolsonaro froze the fund when he took office in 2019, but Lula restarted it with support from Norway, England and Germany.

But this is not the only resource to support Brazil against ***deforestation***, as Bruna Santos, director of the Wilson Center's Brazil Institute, mentions. "**Biden in the past has promised to mobilize $20 billion for the *Amazon***, but there are other bills stalled in Congress that are important beyond the ***Amazon*** Fund, such as for example the forest act or Amazon21, which also represent an important framework."

It is a mobilization of international resources that Lula will have to manage locally to achieve climate goals, says Luiza Duarte, an expert in Brazilian public policy: "Lula is trying to contain and undo the damage from the actions of the Bolsonaro government at home and abroad, but he faces internal challenges especially in Congress".

It is worth noting that Lula is planning to organize the COP30 in 2025 in the Amazonian city of Belem.

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