

New June record for deforestation of Brazilian Amazon

July 9 2021



This file photo taken on August 16, 2020, shows a burnt area of Amazon rainforest reserve in Para, Brazil.

Deforestation of the Brazilian Amazon reached a record in June for the fourth consecutive month, according to official data released Friday.

A total of 1,062 square kilometers of forest was destroyed—an area almost the size of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

This was up from 1,043 km² in the same month last year, said the INPE research institute, which uses [satellite images](#) to measure [forest cover](#).

In total, 3,609 km² of Amazon was lost in the first quarter of 2021, up 17 percent from the same period last year.

The figure was the highest for a month of June since the INPE started gathering data in 2015.

Since coming to power in 2019, far-right President Jair Bolsonaro has promoted the commercialization of the Amazon and described NGOs trying to protect the jungle as a "cancer."

However, he recently pledged to eliminate Brazil's illegal deforestation by 2030, some 10 years ahead of target, though environmentalists say he is insincere.

Last month, vice president Hamilton Mourao announced a [military operation](#) against Amazonian deforestation.

Two weeks ago, Brazilian Environment Minister Ricardo Salles resigned after the Supreme Court ordered an investigation into allegations he was involved in a timber trafficking scheme.

He was replaced by Joaquim Alvaro Pereira Leite, allied to one of the country's largest agricultural lobby groups.

The Brazilian Amazon also marked its worst June for [forest fires](#) since 2007 this year, with some 2,308 fires detected—an increase of 2.3 percent from the same month last year.

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