Record 1st-quarter deforestation in Brazilian Amazon

April 8 2022

New data suggests Brazil may be on track to set a new yearly deforestation record in 2022.

Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon set a new quarterly record in the first three months of 2022 compared to a year earlier, official data

showed Friday.

Satellite images revealed the destruction of 941 square kilometers (363 square miles) of rain forest—the highest quarterly rate since the start of Brazil's Deter monitoring program in 2015.

This is an area about the size of Dallas.

For the month of March, deforestation slowed by 15 percent year-on-year to 312 km2, according to data from the INPE Brazilian space agency.

But this followed on two months of record highs under far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, who has pushed to open protected Amazonian lands to agribusiness and mining.

Since he entered office in 2019, Brazil's average annual deforestation in the Amazon, a crucial resource in the race to curb climate change, has risen more than 75 percent from the previous decade.

The destruction is driven mainly by farming and land speculation in agricultural powerhouse Brazil, the world's biggest exporter of beef and soy.

The country hosts about 60 percent of the Amazon forest.

"Clearly, we have seen in recent years a setback in environmental policy and the result is seen with deforestation records for the first quarter of 2022 and in previous years", Greenpeace Brazil spokeswoman Cristiane Mazzetti said in a statement.

The new figures suggest Brazil may be on track to set a new yearly deforestation record in 2022.

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