

# Worst-ever February rainforest data for Brazilian Amazon

February 24 2023

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The Brazilian Amazon recorded its worst February for deforestation in 2023.

Brazilian Amazon deforestation reached its worst-ever February level in

the second month of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's presidential term, provisional data showed Friday.

Surveillance satellites had detected 209 square kilometers (80.6 square miles) of forest destroyed, according to the INPE space research institute's DETER monitoring system.

This is an area equivalent to about 30,000 football fields.

The INPE report included data only up to February 17, but was already an increase from the previous worst February, in 2022, when far-right leader Jair Bolsonaro was still in office.

Last month, Amazon [deforestation](#) was down 61 percent from a year earlier, according to the same source.

But experts warned at the time it was premature to talk of a "reversal" of the deforestation trend, partly because some [forest loss](#) may have been unobserved due to heavy cloud cover.

The February increase may partly reflect [forest](#) losses that were unobserved in January, WWF Brazil expert Daniel Silva told AFP.

Over Bolsonaro's presidency, average annual deforestation increased by 75 percent compared to the previous decade.

Bolsonaro instigated policies that favored the agriculture and logging industries mostly responsible for deforestation.

Having previously governed Brazil from 2003-10, Lula took office on January 1 this year with a promise to rebuild the [government agencies](#) tasked with protecting the environment after severe budget and personnel cuts inflicted on them by Bolsonaro.

He has also announced an ambitious goal of zero deforestation by 2030.

In order to do so he is counting on international aid, notably through the Amazon Fund, to which Germany and Norway are the main contributors.

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