

Amazon deforestation rises for the first time in 15 months

August 8 2024



Burned trees are seen after illegal fires were lit by farmers in Manaquiri, Amazonas state, Brazil in September 2023.

Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest increased in July for the first time in 15 months, according to official data released Wednesday.

An area of 666 square kilometers (250 square miles) was destroyed in the Amazon last month, up 33 percent from the 500 square kilometers lost in July 2023.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has pledged to put a stop to illegal [deforestation](#) of the Amazon by 2030. The practice had dramatically worsened under his far-right predecessor Jair Bolsonaro.

Among the factors that contributed to the increase in July, according to the government, was a strike by public employees in the environmental agency IBAMA.

In addition, "in July last year the decrease (in deforestation) was very high," Joao Paulo Capobianco, executive secretary of the environment ministry, said during a press conference explaining this July's poor results.

During the last 12 months, deforestation decreased 45.7 percent compared to the previous period.

"Over the past year, the reduction has been extremely significant," Capobianco said.

While deforestation destroyed 7,952 square kilometers between August 2022 and July 2023, it destroyed only 4,315 square kilometers in the same period in 2023-2024.

Deforestation is strongly linked to agricultural expansion and [illegal mining](#).

The Amazon, the world's biggest rainforest, covers nearly 40 percent of South America. In the last century, it has lost about 20 percent of its area to deforestation, due to the advance of agriculture and cattle ranching,

logging and mining, and urban sprawl.

Tropical forests absorb carbon and are a vital ally in the fight against [climate change](#), but they are also the most ravaged by deforestation.

© 2024 AFP

Citation: Amazon deforestation rises for the first time in 15 months (2024, August 8) retrieved 9 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-08-amazon-deforestation-months.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.