Brazil to deploy army to fight Amazon deforestation

7 May 2020

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, pictured on May 6, 2020, faced scathing criticism in 2019 for initially downplaying Amazon wildfires.

The far-right leader has faced criticism on the world stage for record-breaking wildfires in 2019, his first year in office.

And though fire season will only start in late May with dryer weather, there are already worrying signs for this year.

Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon for the first three months of the year increased by more than 50 percent from the same period last year, to 796 square kilometers.

Bolsonaro signed a decree authorizing the armed forces to take "preventive and restrictive action against environmental crimes, namely illegal deforestation and wildfires."

© 2020 AFP