Deforestation in Brazilian Amazon hits January record
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"A number that high in January, which is the peak of the rainy season"—when deforestation usually falls—"certainly demands attention and leaves us extremely worried," said Claudio Angelo of the Climate Observatory, a network of environmental groups.

"We'll have to see how the coming months go, but it's definitely not a good sign."

By comparison, deforestation for January 2021 was 83 square kilometers—less than one-fourth the figure for the first 21 days of January 2022.

Last year was nevertheless a terrible year for Brazil's 60-percent share of the Amazon. The amount of forest cover lost during INPE's reference period, from August 2020 to July 2021, surged almost 22 percent year-on-year, to a 15-year high of 13,235 square kilometers.

Environmentalists said that translated into a high risk that 2022 would be another devastating year for the Brazilian Amazon, where deforestation has surged since far-right President Jair Bolsonaro took office in 2019.