

Declaration of Civil Society Organizations on the Crisis of Deforestation and Burning in the Brazilian Amazon *on occasion of the G-7 Summit in Biarritz, France (August 2019)*

The dramatic increase in the number of fires in the Brazilian Amazon during 2019, with 32,748 occurrences registered between January 1st and August 14th (60% above the average of the previous three years) following an alarming increase in the rate of deforestation over the past year, has provoked outrage and protests in Brazil and around the world, to the point where this issue has been urgently included in the agenda of the G-7 summit to be held in Biarritz, France.

Problems of deforestation and burning in the Amazon have a long history; however, the worsening of this situation in 2019 is a direct result of the behavior of the government of President Jair Bolsonaro. Factors intensifying the environmental crisis in the Amazon, associated with the federal government, include:

- The refusal to demarcate indigenous lands, along with attempts to open up territories for exploitation by mining, hydroelectric dams and agribusiness interests, disrespecting the Federal Constitution;
- The deliberate and systematic dismantling of the operational capacity of IBAMA, the federal environmental agency, and other institutions responsible for enforcement against illegal acts of public land grabbing, forest clearing and burning, logging and mining;
- Public statements by President Bolsonaro concerning his commitment to loosening enforcement and suspending fines for illegal activities, sending a clear signal of impunity that encourages environmental crimes;
- Budget cuts, persecution of employees and dismantling of the structure of ICMBio, the federal agency responsible for the management of protected areas;
- Backsliding in the legal framework for environmental licensing of infrastructure, mining and agribusiness projects, characterized by high social and environmental impacts and risks;
- Abandonment of the Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Amazon (PPCDAm) launched in 2004 and largely responsible for a major decrease in deforestation rates between 2005 and 2012;
- Manipulation of agencies responsible for environmental protection, through nomination to high-level government posts of individuals linked to the

immediate interests of agribusiness and other sectors that should be subjected to public regulation;

- Attempts to discredit technical institutions of the federal government responsible for monitoring deforestation and other environmental problems, as in the case of the National Space Research Institute (INPE).

The increase in deforestation and burning in the Amazon, associated with land grabbing and illegal exploitation of timber and other natural resources, is directly connected to rising acts of violence against indigenous peoples, traditional communities and social movements; violence that has remained in impunity, in the great majority of cases. Meanwhile, President Bolsonaro has encouraged the criminalization of social movements and NGOs, reaching the absurdity of blaming them for increased burning in the Amazon.

Such actions, omissions and discourse have made Brazil a global outcast in an area where the country was previously a protagonist. This threatens the Amazon, the largest heritage of Brazilians, the well being of the population and the global climate, which cannot withstand emissions from the destruction of the Amazon. Ironically, this situation now threatens the future of the Brazilian agribusiness sector that the president claims to defend.

The Brazilian government urgently needs to take responsibility for leading a series of efforts, involving public, private and civil society actors, to address this grave problem, including among other concrete actions:

- Effective support for urgent actions to combat environmental crimes associated with public land grabbing, deforestation, burning and illegal exploitation of natural resources, led by IBAMA and other agencies responsible for monitoring and enforcement, with guarantees of necessary funding;
- Elimination of obstacles to the demarcation of indigenous lands, together with recognition of the territorial rights of *quilombola* communities and other traditional populations;
- Suspending legislative bills aimed at rolling back environmental protections, in line with a recent proposal presented by former ministers of the environment of Brazil;
- The re-creation of the steering committee and resumption of activities of the Amazon Fund (Fundo Amazônia);
- Resumption of the Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Amazon and neighboring tropical savannah (Cerrado), ensuring adequate

financial resources, transparency and participation of government entities and civil society.

At the same time, we urge G-7 member countries present at the Biarritz Summit to take concrete steps to:

- Guarantee effective mechanisms to avoid imports of commodities from agribusiness, mining and timber sectors that originate from areas characterized by recent deforestation and violations of human rights in the Amazon;
- Implement effective policies of prevention and 'due diligence' for investments of companies and financial institutions in projects in the Amazon that involve high levels of risk and violations of human rights and environmental legislation;
- In the case of an effective change in positions of the Bolsonaro government, contribute to efforts by government and society to address deforestation and burning in the Amazon, with the means necessary for implementing climate change policies in line with the objective of 1.5° C of the Paris Agreement.

August 26, 2019

Co-signing organizations:

Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil – APIB
Associação Terra Indígena do Xingu - ATIX
Associação Floresta Protegida (Kayapó)
Associação Alternativa Terrazul
Associação das Comunidades Montanha e Mangabal
Associação de Pesquisa Xaraiés MT
Associação Indígena Aldeia Maracanã- AIAM
Articulação pela Convivência com a Amazônia - ARCA
Articulação Internacional de Atingidos e Atingidas pela Vale
Ascema Nacional
Amazon Watch
Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira – COIAB
Coordenação Nacional de Articulação das Comunidades Negras Rurais Quilombolas - CONAQ
Cáritas Brasileira Regional Minas Gerais
Centro de Formação do Negro e Negra da Transamazônica e Xingu
Clínica de Direitos Humanos da UFMG
Comitê Nacional em Defesa dos Territórios Frente a Mineração
Coletivo de Mulheres do Xingu
Coletivo Mura de Porto Velho

Articulation of Brazilian Indigenous Peoples – APIB
Association of the Xingu Indigenous Territory - ATIX
Protected Forest Association
Alternative Association Blue Planet
Association of Communities Montanha & Mangabal
Maracanã Village Indigenous Association – AIAM
Xaraiés Research Association - MT
Articulation for Coexistence with the Amazon - ARCA
International Articulation of People Affected by Vale National
National Association of Public Environmental Employees
Amazon Watch
Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon – COIAB
National Coordination of Rural Afro Brazilian Quilombola Communities - CONAQ
Caritas Brazilian Regional Minas Gerais
AfroBrazilians Training Center of the Transamazon and Xingu
Human Rights Clinic, Federal University of Minas Gerais
Xingu Women's Collective
National Committee in Defense of Territories Against

Comitê em Defesa da Vida Amazônia na Bacia do Rio Madeira
Conectas Direitos Humanos
Conselho Indigenista Missionário – CIMI
Ecologia e Ação - ECOA
Fórum Mudanças Climáticas e Justiça Social
Fórum da Amazônia Oriental - FAOR
Fórum em Defesa de Altamira
Fórum Bem Viver
Fórum São Francisco
Fundação Darcy Ribeiro
GT Infraestrutura
Greenpeace Brasil
Instituto Raoni
Instituto Kabu
Instituto Makarapy
Instituto Fronteiras
Instituto Madeira Vivo – IMV
Instituto Sociedade, População e Natureza - ISPN
Instituto Socioambiental – ISA
Instituto Ethos de Empresas e Responsabilidade Social
International Rivers – Brasil
Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra – MST
Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens - MAB
Movimento Fechos Eu Cuido
Movimento de Mulheres Campesinas - MMC
Movimento pela Soberania Popular na Mineração - MAM
Movimento Tapajós Vivo
Movimento Xingu Vivo para Sempre
Mutirão Pela Cidadania
Operação Amazônia Nativa - OPAN
Pacto das Águas
Pastoral da Juventude Rural - PJR
Planète Amazone
Proteja Amazônia
Rede de ONGs da Mata Atlântica – RMA
Rede GTA
Rede Brasileira de Arteducadores - ABRA
Rios de Encontro – Marabá
Sindiquímica – PR
SOS Mata Atlântica
Uma Gota no Oceano
WWF-Brasil

Mining
Mura Collective of Porto Velho (Rondônia)
Committee in Defense of Amazonian Life in the Madeira River Basin
Conectas Human Rights
Indigenist Missionary Council – CIMI
Ecology and Action - ECOA
Forum on Climate Change and Social Justice
Forum of Eastern Amazônia - FAOR
Forum in Defense of Altamira
Forum for Well-Being
Forum São Francisco
Darcy Ribeiro Foundation
Infrastructure Working Group
Greenpeace Brasil
Raoni Institute
Kabu Institute
Marakapy Institute
Frontiers Institute
Madeira Alive Institute
Institute Society, Population and Nature - ISPN
Socioenvironmental Institute – ISA
Institute Ethos for Business and Social Responsibility
International Rivers - Brazil
Movement of Landless Rural Workers – MST
Movement of Dam-Affected Peoples - MAB
Movement Caring for Fechos
Movement of Peasant Women - MMC
Movement for Popular Sovereignty in Mining-MAM
Tapajós Alive Movement
Xingu Forever Alive Movement
Coalition for Citizenship
Operation Native Amazonia - OPAN
Pact for Waters
Pastoral Commission for Rural Youth – PJR
Amazon Planet
Amazon Protection
NGO Network for the Atlantic Rainforest - RMA
GTA Network (Amazon Working Group)
Brazilian Network on Art-Educators – ABRA
Rivers of Encounters – Marabá
Sindiquimica – PR
SOS Atlantic Rain Forest
A Drop in the Ocean
WWF-Brazil