

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	Articulation of Brazilian Indigenous Peoples – APIB
Associação Terra Indígena do Xingu - ATIX	Association of the Xingu Indigenous Territory - ATIX
Associação Floresta Protegida	Protected Forest Association
Associação Alternativa Terrazul	Alternative Association Blue Planet
Associação das Comunidades Montanha e Mangabal	Association of Communities Montanha & Mangabal
Associação Indígena Aldeia Maracanã- AIAM	Maracanã Village Indigenous Association – AIAM
Associação de Pesquisa Xaraiés MT	Xaraiés Research Association - MT
Articulação pela Convivência com a Amazônia - ARCA	Articulation for Coexistence with the Amazon - ARCA
Articulação Internacional de Atingido(a)s pela Vale	International Articulation of People Affected by Vale
Amazon Watch	Amazon Watch
Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira – COIAB	Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon – COIAB
Coordenação Nacional de Articulação das Comunidades Negras Rurais Quilombolas - CONAQ	National Coordination of Rural Afro Brazilian Quilombola Communities - CONAQ
Cáritas Brasileira Regional Minas Gerais	Caritas Brazilian Regional Minas Gerais
Centro de Formação do Negro e Negra da Transamazônica e Xingu	AfroBrazilians Training Center of the Transamazon and Xingu
Clínica de Direitos Humanos – Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais	Human Rights Clinic, Federal University of Minas Gerais
Coletivo de Mulheres do Xingu	Xingu Women's Collective
Comitê Nacional em Defesa dos Territórios Frente a Mineração	National Committee in Defense of Territories Against Mining
Coletivo Mura de Porto Velho	Mura Collective of Porto Velho (Rondônia)
Comitê em Defesa da Vida Amazônia na Bacia do Rio	Committee in Defense of Amazonian Life in the

Madeira	Madeira River Basin
Conectas Direitos Humanos	Conectas Human Rights
Conselho Indigenista Missionário - CIMI	Indigenist Missionary Council - CIMI
Fórum Mudanças Climáticas e Justiça Social	Forum on Climate Change and Social Justice
Fórum da Amazônia Oriental - FAOR	Forum of Eastern Amazônia - FAOR
Fórum em Defesa de Altamira	Forum in Defense of Altamira
Fórum Bem Viver	Forum for Well-Being
Fundação Darcy Ribeiro	Darcy Ribeiro Foundation
GT Infraestrutura	Infrastructure Working Group
Greenpeace Brasil	Greenpeace Brasil
Instituto Raoni	Raoni Institute
Instituto Makarapy	Marakapy Institute
Instituto Kabu	Kabu Institute
Instituto Socioambiental - ISA	Socioenvironmental Institute – ISA
Instituto Madeira Vivo - IMV	Madeira Alive Institute
Instituto Fronteiras	Frontiers Institute
International Rivers – Brasil	International Rivers - Brazil
Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra - MST	Movement of Landless Rural Workers - MST
Movimento de Mulheres Campesinas – MMC	Movement of Peasant Women - MMC
Movimento pela Soberania Popular na Mineração-MAM	Movement for Popular Sovereignty in Mining-MAM
Movimento Fechos Eu Cuido	Movement Caring for Fechos
Movimento Tapajós Vivo	Tapajós Alive Movement
Movimento Xingu Vivo para Sempre	Xingu Forever Alive Movement
Mutirão Pela Cidadania	Coalition for Citizenship
Operação Amazônia Nativa - OPAN	Operation Native Amazonia - OPAN
Pacto das Águas	Pact for Waters
Planète Amazone	Amazon Planet
Proteja Amazônia	Amazon Protection
Rede de ONGs da Mata Atlântica – RMA	NGO Network for the Atlantic Rainforest - RMA
Rede GTA	GTA Network (Amazon Working Group)
Rede Brasileira de Arteducadores - ABRA	Brazilian Network on Art-Educators – ABRA
Rios de Encontro – Marabá	Rivers of Encounters – Marabá
Sindiquímica - PR	Sindiquimica – PR
Uma Gotinha no Oceano	A Drop in the Ocean
WWF-Brasil	WWF-Brazil