



CCCA Forest Crimes Initiative:

Protecting the Amazon
through strategic legal action

Protecting tropical forests to protect the climate

Forests are key to address the climate crisis. According to the recent IPCC Report on Land Use, deforestation contributes about 13% to global greenhouse gas emissions. It also found that protecting tropical forests is the most urgent, cost effective and uncontroversial measure to mitigate climate change through land use.

Protecting forest people

Indigenous people living in the Amazon are those most affected by deforestation. The vast majority of indigenous land is located within the rainforest, covering approximately 23% of forest land. Indigenous people's presence and deep cultural link to the land serves as a bulwark in resisting ecological devastation and preventing the expansion of deforestation. The protection of indigenous people is a matter of human rights, while also urgent in terms of environmental protection and climate action.

The Amazon Basin

The Amazon Basin is the largest continuous area of remaining tropical forest in the world.

It covers 7% of the earth's surface and roughly half of South America.

The Brazilian share (70%) alone contains more carbon stored in its forest, than the amount of global human-induced fossil fuel CO₂ emissions of an entire decade.

Deforestation pressure in the Amazon is rising. Monitoring organs and satellite data show an alarming increase of deforestation rates in 2019, especially in Brazil.

The Amazon tropical rain forest is further ravaged by man-made fires that have increased by 79% in 2019.

Demand of deforestation products

Since 1985, Brazil has lost millions of hectares of forests and gained practically the same amount of agricultural land.

- In recent years, Brazil has emerged as the world's largest exporter of beef and soy. China, the European Union and the United States are among the main global markets.
- In 2018, Brazil provided close to 20% of total global beef exports, according to the USDA.
- Brazil also had the second-largest cattle herd in the world, with 232 million, and reached its highest level of beef production at 9.9 million metric tons.

Brazil's current forest governance is based on the agribusiness management model and forest concessions auctions. This results in converting land into cash crops, pasture and energy source projects.

Unsustainable forest governance causes long term and irreparable damage to the forest, including biodiversity loss and climate change.

European Union

- The EU is Brazil's second-biggest trading partner, accounting for 18.3% of its total trade.
- Brazil is the worldwide single biggest exporter of agricultural products to the EU. EU imports from Brazil are dominated by primary products.
- 41% of EU imports of meat come from Brazil (2018).
- 26% of Brazil's exports of timber and other timber products go to the EU.

United States

- The U.S. is Brazil's top export market of timber and other wood products, corresponding to 41,5% of exports in 2017.
- Brazilian agribusiness expects to regain U.S. beef market "green credentials" (sanitary endorsement) before the end of the year. This will boost Brazil's exports of agricultural products to the U.S. and other parts of the world.



Photo by Camila Grinsztejn/Amazonia Live.
"Fica, vai ter floresta" Campaign ("Stay, there will be forest"), 2019.

CCCA's approach

According to INTERPOL, the World Bank and UNEP, a significant portion of Brazil's deforestation is linked to illegal activities, including violations of environmental laws and indigenous land rights, as well as fraud and financial crimes.

CCCA's Forest Crimes Initiative applies its expertise in criminal investigation and prosecution to impact on illegal deforestation in Brazil. Transnational law enforcement is often hindered because critical information is remote, not timely preserved or not readily shared among competent authorities. This project is intended to change that.

CCCA, in cooperation with the Brazilian environmental and law enforcement authorities, INTERPOL, Europol and a network of NGOs and other expert organizations, will provide concrete case files to commercial operators importing illegal deforestation products from Brazil into the EU or the U.S.

This will put the importers on notice and thereby trigger mandatory action under their due diligence obligations.

Ongoing violations will be referred to the competent regulatory or criminal authorities in the EU or the U.S. in support of a more effective enforcement of the EU Timber Regulation, the 2008 U.S. Lacey Act and other relevant legislation.

The CCCA's approach is intended to deter EU and U.S. importers of timber and other agricultural products from trading with Brazilian corporations or individuals who

are implicated in illegal activities. Through this strategy, CCCA intends to address illegal deforestation in Brazil from the "demand side".

About the CCCA

The CCCA is a non-profit organization of prosecutors and law enforcements professionals established to trigger and support judicial and other legal action against illegal environmental destruction that contributes to the climate crisis.

CCCA uses its law-enforcement expertise to direct and coordinate other organizations and private citizens in their efforts to generate, preserve and collect reliable information.

CCCA does not replicate the work of other organizations. It is the link between existing investigative NGOs or entities with technological or scientific expertise on the one side, and law enforcement authorities on the other side.

CCCA cooperates with, and is supported by, INTERPOL, Europol, the European Environmental Crimes Network and the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

See also: www.climatecrimeanalysis.org

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