



Climate Alliance



DESCRIPTION AND AGENDA

Brazil and the EU: Indigenous Rights, Imported Deforestation and Climate

A spotlight on current developments

Public event in Brussels, 13 November 2019, 17:30

This event will shed light upon the links between deforestation of the Amazon rainforest, European imports, human rights violations and the current situation of indigenous peoples in Brazil. Arguing that the EU-Mercosur trade agreement in its current form will only aggravate the situation and that the EU doesn't have any tool in place to ensure that its imports do not cause deforestation, the panellists will provide recommendations to improve conditions for both indigenous peoples and the climate.

DESCRIPTION

The current development in Brazil is frightening – human rights defenders and activists are increasingly facing **threats** since Jair Bolsonaro became President in January 2019. The current government unequivocally stated that instead of protecting **indigenous territories** to safeguard the environment and human rights, it will rather exploit them for “economic development” and agricultural expansion. As we know, this position emboldened exploitative appetites and eventually led to extensive **fires in the Amazon**, sparking an international outcry.

Since the beginning of 2019, the removal of environmental protections and efforts to cut financial support created a mounting challenge for environmental activists to fight back. Instituto Socioambiental (ISA), Climate Alliance's partner and one of the biggest environmental organisations in Brazil, is among the targeted organisations. A representative from ISA will share how the government is impacting civil society and the threat it represents both for **democracy** and the environment.

Brazil is the country where most carbon is stored worldwide – in forests sustainably maintained by indigenous peoples and local communities. Safeguarding these territories as **carbon sinks** is vital if we are to curb down greenhouse gas emissions and reach the **1,5°C climate target**. A Brazilian representative from the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro (FOIRN) will delve into the challenges they face and support they need to carry on despite the current political situation.

It is important to acknowledge that the EU – Brazil's second biggest export partner – largely contributes to deforestation, mostly through its imports of soy, beef and leather. This **imported deforestation** can be prevented in the future through new EU legislation ensuring **due diligence** from companies and the finance sector



This event is made possible through the project “Change The Power – (Em)Power To Change: Local Authorities Towards The SDGs and Climate Justice” with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Climate Alliance and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



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to guarantee that products on the EU market have not led to deforestation or caused human rights abuses. A representative from Fern, an organisation striving for a better inclusion of forests and forest peoples' rights in the EU's policies, will elaborate on what this future regulation could look like and how it could be part of the Commission's upcoming Green New deal.

Finally, the EU could use its influence to prevent a worsening **human rights** and environmental situation in Brazil through the inclusion of binding and enforceable rules in the EU-Mercosur free-trade agreement. According to Member of European Parliament (MEP) Anna Cavazzini, the sustainability chapter of the Mercosur trade deal in its current form – without any clause on **sanctions** - only expresses a declaration of intent. She will share her views on how the agreement needs to be amended to ensure that it does not open doors for further human rights violations and environmental degradation.

AGENDA

Wednesday, 13 November 2019

- 17.30 Welcome reception
- 18.00 Welcoming by Johanna Becker-Strunk, **Representation of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate** and opening by Andreas Wolter, **Mayor of Cologne**
- 18.10 Panel Discussion moderated by Andy Deacon, Climate Alliance:
Adriana Ramos, Instituto Socioambiental (Brazil)
Marivelton Barroso, FOIRN (Brazil)
Nicole Polsterer, Sustainable Consumption and Production Campaigner at Fern (Belgium)
Anna Cavazzini, Alliance 90/The Greens, MEP (Germany)
- 18.50 Discussion with the audience
- 19.30 Networking Drinks and Dinner

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