

# SOS AMAZONIA

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## INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

At this very moment, wildfires - expanding more rapidly than ever - are destroying the Amazonian rainforest at an alarming rate.

Our home is quite literally on fire and our planet's lungs are turning into ash. Just last month, as the IPCC was releasing a new special report that reiterates the urgency for action to combat the coming environmental breakdown, massive fires were taking place in the Arctic.

These are only the latest of multiple examples of the climate crisis brought upon by climate change. We are rushing towards an uncontrollable sequence of events that will destroy our ecosystems and, hence, our livelihood on this planet.

The amazonian rainforest is the largest and most biodiverse tract of tropical rainforest in the world. The impacts of amazonian wildfires are twofold given that they the rainforest represents an essential carbon sink that absorbs CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, but also, by burning it down, releases huge amounts of greenhouse gases - thus accelerating the vicious cycle of global warming. While this climate disaster takes place, the media has chosen to remain silent.

Since president Jair Bolsonaro came into power, wildfires have risen continually - fueled by droughts but also due to the terrible environmental policy of the Brazilian government, which sees the Amazon only as a cash cow. In the meantime, the global economy still consumes Brazilian products or signs trade agreements like the EU with the Mercosur states which will cause more severe damages to the Amazon and the whole South-American agriculture.

On **August 23rd**, Fridays For Future groups, all bearing the same symbol #SOSAmazonia, will be #ClimateStriking in front of Brazilian embassies all around the world. Even though we come from many different countries and cultures, and hold different world-views, we will all stand united behind one common goal: to express our dismay and anger at the policies of the Brazilian government that are greatly accelerating the climate crisis, and demand that they align themselves with the objectives that Fridays for Future expects of all governments:

1. Keep the global temperature rise below 1.5 °C compared to pre-industrial levels.
2. Ensure climate justice and equity.
3. Listen to the best united science currently available.

We are urging the media to fulfil its responsibility and to give this tragedy the coverage that it requires and who is behind it.

It is our obligation to stand in solidarity with the people of Brazil, especially frontline communities and indigenous peoples, who are the most affected by the destruction of the Amazonian forests. This is not a local problem alone, but an issue that has global repercussions, and hence, we urge politicians around the world to take action and denounce the destruction of this essential ecosystem.

For the past four decades we have been on a path towards human extinction and this is another clear step towards our mass extinction. Our current economic system encourages greed before people and our politicians fail to recognise that this is leading us to extinction.

**Quote from Daniela Borges, Fridays For Future, Brazil:**

We want a government that recognises the importance of nature, and that it is committed to protecting our biggest natural riches. A government that maintains strict scrutiny against companies that misuse our natural resources and that puts **indigenous peoples rights** first.

**Quote from David Wicker, Fridays For Future, Italy**

Short term gains must never prevail over future devastating losses of present and future generations. **Our lungs are on fire.** Why are we not doing anything to prevent them from becoming ash?