



AMAZON FIRES

The Amazon is burning, and in the last couple of weeks, the fires in Brazil have caught international attention. In the Brazilian Amazon, deforestation rates are linked to fire incidence, which is one of the main tools used for agricultural exploitation. Unfortunately, fires are not new to the region; but the proportion of fire outbreaks in the Amazon in 2019 is one of the largest in recent years: up to the 20th of August, burnings were 145% higher than in the same period of 2018.

The Amazon is the world's largest rainforest and harbors one of the biggest diversity of animals and plants of the planet. The forest also plays an essential role in carbon uptake, an important mechanism to prevent global warming. One of the greatest diversities of amphibians in South America is found in the Amazon Basin, with new species being constantly discovered, and over 400 species of reptiles call the Amazon rainforest their home.

At the heart of this year's fires in the Brazilian Amazon lies political actions that weakened the enforcement and protection of the rainforest. Brazilian politics also resulted in the withdrawal of international financial support to protect the Amazon Basin and created tension between political leaders. For years science has been drawing attention towards climate change, species extinction, habitat destruction, pollution, and many other environmental problems. Nevertheless, in recent years, despite the increasing evidence of the human impact on the planet, politics have increasingly neglected scientific evidence and moved policies towards immediate gains and increased economic profit.

Our organization is committed to science, and we strive to protect and provide reptiles and amphibians with the best welfare and health possible. As the world watches astonished how the lungs of the world burn into flames, we urge politicians to hear the scientific community. We need policies to help protect the environment, the diversity, and the wildlife we still have left.

Sources for more information:

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