

President of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies
Rodrigo Maia
To the Deputies and Senators of the National
Congress of Brazil



19/06/2020

To the Deputies and Senators of the National Congress of Brazil,

We write to you as members of the European Parliament, in a spirit of friendship with Brazil and its people. We would like to express our solidarity in the face of the hardship the country is currently experiencing because of the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences.

We are aware of how this grave situation requires a concerted effort by public authorities both in Europe and in Brazil. We have, however, also been concerned to hear recent comments made by Environment Minister Ricardo Salles calling on the government to push through further deregulation of environmental policy as witnessed in a video released by the Supreme Court on Friday May 22, 2020. It is all the more concerning that such comments come at a time whilst people are understandably distracted by the coronavirus pandemic.

This follows several legislative proposals which we find very worrying, including:

- Proposed law PL N.º 2633/20, which introduces new rules for land tenure regularization and would allow titling on the basis of self-declarations.
- Proposed law PL N.º 3.729/2004, which looks to modify the current environmental licensing system.
- Proposed law PL N.º 191/2020, which will amend articles 176.1 and 231.3 of the Federal Constitution establishing the specific conditions for research and extraction of mineral and water resources on indigenous lands.

Furthermore, we are also concerned about administrative and regulatory changes, such as decree Nº 9.760, which suspended fines for illegal logging.

We are worried that these proposals can create incentives for further deforestation and violence in rural areas, as they can legitimise land confiscation of indigenous and public land, as well as conservation areas. If adopted in their current form, these proposals would infringe ILO convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Furthermore, weakening of environmental regulation opens up opportunities for the proliferation of illegal alluvial gold mining, which goes against the Minata Convention and potentially the Rotterdam Convention.

We have also taken note that deforestation in the Amazon has increased in every month in 2020, in relation to the rate detected by for the same month in 2019, increasing by 109% in January, 34% in February, 30% in March and 64% in April (source: DETER satellite-based monitoring system). In addition to this, fire season is looming.

We have been made aware of the legal offensive launched by Brazilian civil society actors before the Federal Supreme Court, questioning alleged omissions of the Ministry for Environment and calling for the annulment of a rule that would authorize, in practice, the export of wood extracted from Brazilian forests without any type of inspection.

In the past few decades, the EU and Brazil have worked together to advance a global agenda for sustainable development, of which the Multilateral Environmental Agreements that were ratified by both parties are an inherent part. In light of this, we believe we need a strong, coordinated and shared effort to make these common goals work effectively. We therefore ask Members of the National Congress of Brazil to act to maintain and restore the legal framework needed to protect Brazilian forests and the rights of indigenous peoples. We strongly believe that economic development and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive. We would be delighted to work together in partnership to achieve these goals.

Yours sincerely,

SIGNATURE

Anna Cavazzini, Member of the European Parliament, Vice Chair of the Parliament Delegation for Relations with the Federative Republic of Brazil, Member of the Committee for International Trade

Kathleen Van Brempt, Member of the European Parliament, Coordinator for the Committee on International Trade, Member of the Parliament Delegation for relations with Mercosur

Peter Liese, Member of the European Parliament, Coordinator for the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, Member of the Parliament Delegation for the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

Pascal Canfin, Member of the European Parliament, Chair for the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, Member of the Parliament Delegation for the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

Heidi Hautala, Vice President of the European Parliament, Coordinator for the Committee on International Trade

Pedro Silva Pereira, Vice President of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, Substitute of the Parliament Delegation for the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

Manuel Pizarro, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, Vice Chair of the Parliament Delegation for Relations with the Federative Republic of Brazil

Bernd Lange, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the Committee on International Trade

Maria Arena, Member of the European Parliament, Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Nils Torvalds, Member of the European Parliament, Coordinator for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Thomas Waitz, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Agriculture, Co-Chair of the European Green Party

Marek Belka, Member of the European Parliament, Vice President of the S&D group, Member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Michal Wiezik, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food safety, Substitute of the Parliament Delegation for the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

Raphaël Glucksmann, Member of the European Parliament, Vice Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, Member of the Committee on International Trade, Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Yannick Jadot, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food safety

Jytte Guteland, Member of the European Parliament, Coordinator of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food safety

Pär Holmgren, Member of the European Parliament, member of the Committee for Environment, Public Health and Food safety

Marie-Pierre Vedrenne, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on International Trade

Stanislav Polčák, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food safety, Substitute of the Parliament Delegation for the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

Isabel Santos, Member of the European Parliament, Coordinator for the Subcommittee on Human Rights, Member of the Parliament Delegation for the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

Martin Hosjók, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food safety

Javi López, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Delara Burkhardt, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food safety

Fredrick Federley, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food safety

Agnes Jongerius, Member of the European Parliament, Coordinator for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Joachim Schuster, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, Vice Chair of the Parliament Delegation for relations with South Africa

Mihai Tudose, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on International Affairs

Aurore Lalucq, Member of the European Parliament, Member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs