

OPEN LETTER TO VICE PRESIDENT Mourão FROM THE AMSTERDAM DECLARATIONS PARTNERSHIP¹

His Excellency Vice-President Antônio Hamilton Martins Mourão,

For a long time, Brazil has led the way in reducing deforestation in the Amazon by establishing globally respected, independent scientific institutions to ensure rigorous and transparent monitoring, combined with competent law enforcement agencies, recognition of indigenous territories and a vibrant civil society. The Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon, the Brazilian Forest Code and the Amazon Soy Moratorium are rightly recognised for the difference they made in reducing deforestation. As a result, businesses have preferentially sourced from the Brazilian Amazon thanks to the strong standards in place across the region, giving confidence to consumers.

Over the last couple of years, however, deforestation has increased at alarming rates, most recently documented by INPE. Without doubt, this is confirming that an adequate capacity of national government agencies to monitor these developments and enforce the respective laws is crucial. We are deeply concerned about this trend and its negative effects inter alia on the sustainable development options in Brazil, on the livelihood options for indigenous peoples and local communities and on primary forests and biodiversity within and outside forests.

The countries meeting under the Amsterdam Declarations Partnership share the increasing number of concerns raised by European consumers, businesses, investors and civil society about the ongoing deforestation in Brazil. In Europe, there is legitimate interest that products and food on offer are produced in a fair, environmentally sound and sustainable way. Business actors like suppliers, traders and investors are responding by better reflecting this interest in their own corporate strategies.

Our collective efforts to generate greater financial investment in sustainable, agricultural production and improve market access for sustainable sourced products could also support Brazilian economic growth. However, while European efforts are aiming at achieving deforestation-free supply chains the current trend of rising deforestation in Brazil is making it increasingly difficult for businesses and investors to meet their environmental, social and governance criteria.

Brazilian and European governments have long and very closely worked together to our mutual benefit and that of our citizens. We jointly found solutions for sustainable development that strengthen Brazil's economy, respect its sovereignty and protect areas of high conservation value, such as primary forests in the Amazon. A steady focus of our collaboration has always been involving all relevant stakeholders and respecting people's rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

¹ The Amsterdam Declarations Partnership consists of seven European countries committed to remove deforestation from agricultural supply chains to Europe: Germany (current chair), Denmark, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom; Belgium associates itself with the open letter.

In the past, Brazil has demonstrated that it can expand agricultural production while at the same time reducing deforestation. The countries meeting under the Amsterdam Declarations Partnership would expect a renewed and firm political commitment from the Brazilian government to reduce deforestation being reflected in current and real action.

The Amsterdam Declarations Partnership is specifically committed to achieving sustainable and deforestation-free agricultural commodity supply chains to our countries – which we see as supportive to our individual bilateral and other important multilateral initiatives for upscaling efforts to conserve, restore and sustainably manage forests globally. We stand ready to intensify dialogue with actors along the agricultural commodity supply chains, including producers, traders, importers and further relevant stakeholders, including policy makers, civil society, indigenous peoples and scientists, on how to reach sustainable and deforestation-free agro-commodity supply chains and long-term demand for sustainably produced goods. This will also support a thriving and sustainable Brazilian agricultural sector.

We would welcome the opportunity to jointly discuss this challenge with you through our diplomatic representatives, in the hope that we can work on a common agenda, together with other European partners, to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our people, environment and climate.

Germany on behalf of all European countries meeting under the Amsterdam Declarations Partnership

With highest considerations,

Julia Klöckner



Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture

Dr. Gerd Müller



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



**Amsterdam
Declarations
Partnership**

Towards deforestation-free
sustainable commodities