
The Brazilian environment minister has promised to publish today the names of the 100 people responsible for the largest acts of illegal deforestation in the Amazon. He promises to step up action to prevent destruction of the world's largest tropical forest. Here's Tim Hirsch:

It's more than eight months since the Brazilian government announced **a package of measures to combat deforestation**, after satellite observations showed the rate of destruction in the Amazon was **picking up** again. So far, there's been little evidence of a slowdown, despite **a string** of raids on illegal **sawmills** and **moves to cut off credit** to farmers operating **outside the law**.

The latest initiative concentrates on the **impunity** with which illegal deforestation is still carried out in Brazil, according to the government's own account. The environment minister Carlos Minc reckons that only one in ten offenders is prosecuted and fewer than one in 200 convicted in the courts.

As well as naming the top 100 deforesters, Mr Minc is planning **to set up a task force** with the prosecuting authorities and environmental enforcement agencies, to ensure that more are **brought to justice**. He's also promised **to step up efforts** to bring greater legality to farming and forestry activities in the regions of the Amazon where most deforestation has taken place.

Tim Hirsch, BBC News, Sao Paulo

Vocabulary and definitions

a package of measures to combat deforestation	a number of specifically designed, co-ordinated actions aimed at slowing down the destruction of forests by people
picking up	growing, becoming faster and more intense
a string	here, a number, a series
sawmills	factories where wood is sawed into planks or boards
moves to cut off credit	steps/measures to stop someone getting money
outside the law	illegally, unlawfully
impunity	absence of punishment, no unpleasant consequences
to set up a task force	to form, or found an organised group of people who will work to achieve a common goal (here, to punish illegal farmers and, as a result, to stop deforestation)
brought to justice	found and punished for their illegal actions
to step up efforts	to do more

More on this story: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/amazon/sites/deforestation/pages/content.shtml>

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2008/09/080929_amazon.shtml