

**Question for written answer E-002787/2019  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Carmen Avram (S&D)**

**Subject:** Amazon fires and the Mercosur deal - How can EU citizens trust that the Commission is seriously committed to respecting and enforcing environmental laws and the precautionary principle?

Thousands of fires are ravaging the Amazon rainforest in Brazil<sup>1</sup>. The official figures show that more than 87 000 forest fires were recorded in Brazil in the first eight months of the year – the highest number since 2010. Satellite data published by the National Institute for Space research shows an increase of 85 % in fires across Brazil this year, most of them in the Amazon region<sup>2</sup>.

The largest rainforest in the world, the Amazon is a vital carbon store that slows down the pace of global warming<sup>3</sup>.

The EU has signed the Mercosur deal and insists that it does not lower environmental standards. It also insists that the 'precautionary principle' ensures that the EU and the Mercosur countries can continue to protect the environment even if this affects trade<sup>4</sup>, including in situations where scientific information is not conclusive<sup>5</sup>.

President Macron has declared<sup>6</sup> that President Bolsonaro has lied<sup>7</sup> and that France does not support the Mercosur deal.

1. The EU maintains that it is legally committed to respecting the environment and biodiversity in this trade deal, so will it suspend the deal until the fires have stopped and the investigations into the causes have been concluded?
2. If burning the largest rainforest in the world is not considered serious enough, what will it take for the EU to stop a trade deal and respect the deal's sustainability chapter?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-49433767>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/1ba48b1a-cd69-11e9-b018-ca4456540ea6>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/1ba48b1a-cd69-11e9-b018-ca4456540ea6>

<sup>4</sup> [https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/june/tradoc\\_157957.pdf](https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/june/tradoc_157957.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/mercosur/>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2019/08/23/macron-accuse-bolsonaro-d-avoir-menti-sur-le-climat-et-s-oppose-au-traite-entre-l-union-europeenne-et-le-mercosur\\_5502068\\_3210.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2019/08/23/macron-accuse-bolsonaro-d-avoir-menti-sur-le-climat-et-s-oppose-au-traite-entre-l-union-europeenne-et-le-mercosur_5502068_3210.html)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-49433437>