

Question for written answer E-000988/2021/rev.1

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 138

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Subject: Brazil – EU Ambassador statements regarding the Bolsonaro Government

Speaking in Brasilia on 10 February 2021, the EU Ambassador to Brazil, Ignacio Ybáñez, rejected the idea of sanctions being imposed on that country for failing to meet environmental targets, stressing that there had been a 'positive change in attitude' from the Bolsonaro Government.

In April 2020, however, Environment Minister Ricardo Salles hinted that the pandemic could be used to quietly push through environmental deregulation measures. This was followed by a flurry of communications announcing an amnesty for loggers in the Atlantic Forest. From January to September 2020, the Ministry for the Environment spent only 0.4% of the annual budget earmarked for the protection of biodiversity and measures to combat climate change, and in September 2020, two resolutions seeking to contain deforestation activities and protect native vegetation in environmental conservation areas were rejected. That same month, Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis and Ignacio Ybáñez said that the EU-Mercosur agreement would only be ratified if Brazil made a firm commitment to the environment and took clear steps towards reducing deforestation in the Amazon.

Five months down the line, what evidence has emerged of a positive change in attitude from the Bolsonaro Government and what specific environmental conservation measures has it taken? Who took the decision to reject sanctions against Brazil?