

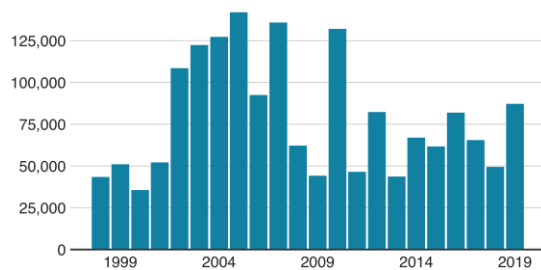
Announced Topic 2019: Brazil and the Amazon Rain Forest Fires

Summer 2019 has witnessed a spike in wildfires burning across the Amazon rainforest. Measured January to August, there is a 76% increase in the number of fires compared to the same period 2018. Numbering about 87,000 separate forest fires, it is the highest number of fires there since 2010.

While some fires are naturally occurring, and the number typically spikes during the dry season July-October, policymakers have expressed alarm about the extent of the fires and the potentially exacerbating role of the tree-clearing policies of populist Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

This year has seen the highest number of fires in Brazil since 2010

Total number of fires, 1 January - 29 August (1998-2019)



Source: National Institute for Space Research

BBC

In late August, states attending the G7 summit announced a pledged funding package of \$22 million to Brazil to combat the fires, citing the Amazon as vital for the world environment. Brazil announced quickly that they would refuse the aid offer, accusing Western leaders of wanting something in return and having a “colonialist mindset.”

From the perspective of a Brazilian **delegate**, be prepared to answer questions concerning the position toward the G7 offer and Brazil’s response. What is Brazil’s official position on the aid offer, and conditions related to accepting aid from abroad? What is the state of Brazilian relations-- before and after this episode-- with France, the USA and other G7 countries? What does Brazil propose to deal with rainforest fires and their effects on the environment, including endangered species in harm’s way due to the fires?

In preparing for this exercise, consult national and international news sources, and any other sources you feel is appropriate. In your interview, you will role-play a Brazilian delegate facing similar questions from the interview panel.

Sources:

“The Amazon in Brazil is on Fire – How Bad is it?” *BBC*, August 30, 2019

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

Whithnall, Adam. “Brazil to reject G7 aid.” *Independent*, August 27, 2019.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/brazil-amazon-fires-g7-aid-offer-bolsonaro-macron-summit-a9079831.html>