



## **Atlantic Rainforest #SOS**

South America's other species-rich tropical assemblage, the Atlantic Rainforest, is in dire shape.

This priceless hotbed of life has mostly been razed, four out of every five trees are gone.

Five hundred years ago, this coastal and inland masterpiece was almost two times the area of New South Wales. The brunt of this remaining biome exists in Brazil (92%) with two slivers shared by Paraguay (6%) and Argentina (2%).



There are thousands of bird species, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and endangered jaguars, golden lion tamarins, woolly spider monkeys, maned three-toed sloths, redtailed parrots and others.

My colleagues estimate that the Atlantic Rainforest has ~5,000 kinds of trees with 1,000 species yet to be examined. Astoundingly, there are ~450 different types of trees within one stupendous hectare.

Rapacious logging, Chinese Belt Road-funded [illegal](#) roads, transnational organised crime ([ipê mafias](#)), and [agriculture](#) have [smashed](#) and simplified this **Majesty** to oblivion. Its spellbinding daily raincloud-making ability has been compromised. Rather, it's drier, fragmented and prone to climate fires and droughts. Most of it is cutover. And as far as the eye can see, former rainforests were sentenced to monocrop fields (soy, corn), [dripping](#) with nerve poisons (neonicotinoids) and glyphosate (RoundUp) toxifying wildlife, soils, groundwater and all life therein.

[Bank-funded](#), fossil-fuelled climate [heatwaves](#), [firestorms](#) and a South American [megadrought](#) are hurrying rainforest collapse and the mass extinction.

As many as 25,000 kinds of trees in the Atlantic, Amazon and other tropical rainforests globally are now facing [extinction](#), or, one-third of all the planet's tree species!

The Amazon and Atlantic rainforests [irrigate](#) Argentina, western and central United States and northern Mexico's breadbaskets – 500 million people's daily food.

These complex self-organised networks of cooperative biological communities are Earth's indispensable thermostat. Incessant combustion heat has exhausted and paralysed these all-important rainforests. They are parched, tinderbox dry and [fatally](#) wounded. Currently, we are rapidly [losing](#) vast regions and nearing a critical continental tipping point. When these rainforests perish en masse, and it's coming quickly, civilisation will collapse.

Knowing these irrefutable rainforest [facts](#) (and make no mistake, scientists and policy makers are aware of the worldwide forthcoming agony), why would 195 countries accelerate burning more fossil fuels, subsidise cash-flush corporations \$7 trillion annually, and greenlight searching for more reserves, instead of protecting earthly life by choosing a fossil fuel-free world by 2035?

We have [all](#) the technologies to walk away from fossil fuels. There are no miracles needed. Quite simply: We lack courageous, authentic world leaders willing to save the only known ***meaningful island*** in a sea of 400 billion other suns.

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