

Avaaz statement - vote of Bill 490/07 in the Brazilian Congress (Lower House)

Tonight, the agribusiness and extractive lobby is pushing Brazil into a dark period for the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and for Brazil's environment and the rule of law. The world expects Brazil to show leadership on human rights, environment and a fair and sustainable economy, not a colonial, genocidal and anachronic economy that compromises the dignity of peoples and threatens life on Earth.

Bill 490/07 sets rules and a framework for the recognition of Indigenous lands in Brazil, establishing the thesis of the so-called temporal "milestone" (marco-temporal), defended by landowners and the agribusiness sector.

The new law, which is yet to be confirmed in a Senate vote, will in practice, stop all land demarcation in the country, while bulldozing sacred lands and opening them up for even further destruction. If not rejected by the Senate, it puts into question Brazil's ability to fight climate change, given the fact that Indigenous lands are de facto more effective in conserving major carbon sinks in the country that benefit the whole world.

While much is often said regarding the US Congress delaying global climate action, tonight the Brazilian Congress members held the planet hostage, with Indigenous peoples as their main target. Avaaz will continue working with its community in Brazil and elsewhere to advocate against Bill 490/07 and for strong environmental protections in Brazil alongside Indigenous communities and civil society.

Avaaz Campaign Director, Diego Casaes, said:

"Tonight, the fate of Indigenous peoples and our environment hangs in the balance, as the agribusiness and extractive lobby exert their influence onto the Brazilian Congress, passing Bill 490/07 to change land demarcation rules in the country, and pave the way for the desecration of Indigenous lands. The Avaaz community in Brazil will keep fighting alongside Indigenous communities, as we navigate the Senate vote. The world will bear the consequences. There's no climate future without Indigenous peoples, and the sacred lands that they protect."

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