

# Correspondence

## Vaccination: Brazil fails Indigenous peoples again with two-tier scheme

Brazil included Indigenous people in its first vaccination group against COVID-19 because of their greater vulnerability to infection (see [go.nature.com/3uigjgu](https://go.nature.com/3uigjgu)). However, only those living on legally demarcated territories were vaccinated. The Supreme Federal Court later extended immunization to the 500,000 or so Indigenous people living elsewhere (see [go.nature.com/3wj8fkt](https://go.nature.com/3wj8fkt)). In practice, many in that group were excluded because they did not have access to the country's unified health system.

This vaccination scheme is another example of the dearth of meaningful public-health policies aimed at the Indigenous population (see also R. Santunes *et al. Nature* **584**, 524; 2020; E. Benites *et al. Nature* **591**, 369; 2021). It exposes a lack of coordination between the government entities that drafted it. And it stokes discrimination and segregation.

The Brazilian constitution mandates the special protection of Indigenous peoples by the state. There is therefore an urgent need for a more robust vaccination plan that is tailored to the health and social determinants of these people.

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## Deploy international satellite monitoring to safeguard forests

I contend that an internationally coordinated satellite monitoring system is urgently needed to safeguard forests against governments that deny climate change. Earth-observation and image-processing techniques have improved since the move was proposed eight years ago (J. Lynch *et al. Nature* **496**, 293–294; 2013). Moreover, the cost of remote-sensing missions is falling.

Many international institutions and countries, including Australia, Brazil, China and India, have modern systems for monitoring forests. However, there are no agreed protocols on how forest data should be produced, verified, stored and made freely available. Neither is there an international warning system for illegal deforestation and forest degradation.

Such a system would need to be effective, comprehensive and properly coordinated and supervised. It could use a real-time early-warning mechanism, such as that of the Brazilian satellite-based DETER, for environmental monitoring and law enforcement (S. J. Goetz *et al. Environ. Res. Lett.* **10**, 123001; 2015). DETER led to a decline in Amazon deforestation: the rate fell from more than 27,000 square kilometres in 2004 to about 10,000 square kilometres in 2019 (see [go.nature.com/3fbhkys](https://go.nature.com/3fbhkys)).

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## EU forest strategy: adapt, innovate, employ

European forests are crucial to achieving the European Green Deal – a socially and territorially fair transition to a circular bioeconomy, in which resources are renewable, biologically based, sustainably managed and reused whenever possible (M. Palahí *et al. https://doi.org/10.36333/k2a02*; 2020). The European Union Forest Strategy currently being drawn up needs actionable vision as climate change and natural disturbances erode forests' capacity to provide key ecosystem services. It could also generate a range of renewable options to replace fossil-based products.

In my view, we should increase the ecological, economic and social value of EU forests simultaneously. The Forest Strategy needs to catalyse a deal that is rooted in interconnected plans for adaptation–restoration, innovation and employment.

The adaptation–restoration plan would implement dynamic conservation and integrated management to foster biodiversity at different spatial scales (see [go.nature.com/2ryt](https://go.nature.com/2ryt)). The innovation plan would use forest resources to stimulate new business models that decarbonize important industrial sectors, such as textiles, construction and packaging. And the employment plan would ensure a green transition that is fair by investing in upgrading the skills of new and existing workers based in forests.

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## Trade resolution further threatens Brazil's amphibians

In March, Brazil's Ministry of Agriculture took an alarming step to boost trade of artisanal animal products across states (see [go.nature.com/3by9](https://go.nature.com/3by9)). It added reptiles and amphibians – already the most threatened vertebrates on Earth – to the list permitting the capture of fishes, crustaceans and molluscs for human consumption.

Brazil has the fastest rate of decline of amphibian populations in South America, owing to habitat loss and infectious diseases (B. C. Scheele *et al. Science* **363**, 1459–1463; 2019). If the policy takes effect in its current form, trade of amphibians will increase – compounding the spread of lethal pathogens such as *Batrachochytrium* species and ranavirus.

We urge the government to align its policy with the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international commitments that are backed by substantial scientific evidence.

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