

PRESS RELEASE

UK Food Industry Leaders Call for Urgent Action and Immediate Dialogue to Protect Amazon Forests

Signatories of the UK Soy Manifesto, a group of over 50 leading businesses representing more than 60% of the UK demand for soy, have called for urgent action following the news that global traders and their representative body ABIOVE have withdrawn from the Amazon Soy Moratorium (ASM).

Signatories of the UK Soy Manifesto:

- Call on global shippers to maintain their commitment to the 2008 cut-off date for the Amazon for all soy purchases – direct and indirect - in the Amazon biome and put in place measures to comply with the criteria of the Moratorium on an individual company basis until a longer-term solution is secured.
- Urge all actors within the soy supply chain including governments, financial institutions, farmer representatives, buyers of soy and civil society to commit to a new constructive dialogue to ensure that the achievements of the past 19 years are not lost and Brazil's hard-won reputation for the production and export of deforestation-free soy is maintained.

Jonathan Gorman Secretariat of the UK Soy Manifesto said:

“The UK Soy Manifesto is ready to support this dialogue and to work collaboratively towards a solution that both protects forests and supports and strengthens future soy production in Brazil, for the benefit of soy farmers, international food security and the global climate change crisis.”

The withdrawal of global traders and ABIOVE from the Moratorium has major implications for the future of this voluntary industry agreement that for nearly two decades has helped to protect the forests of the Amazon Biome in Brazil while supporting the Brazilian soy sector to grow and remain competitive in global markets.

The Moratorium has been facing mounting pressures in recent years, including an on-going investigation by the Brazilian competition authority (CADE) into allegations that the Moratorium in its current form violates anti-trust regulations. In addition, new legislation in Mato Grosso state effective from 1st January this year has removed tax subsidies for companies participating in voluntary agreements such as the Moratorium that go beyond national environmental laws.

The Moratorium is an iconic environmental agreement. Estimates show that in its first decade of implementation alone, the Moratorium saved at least 1.8 million hectares of

Amazonian forest¹, an area nearly the size of Wales. By redirecting expansion towards already converted land, the agreement protected forests while supporting soy cultivation, which has grown fourfold in the region according to ABIOVE.² Without the Moratorium, more forests could be at risk, directly and indirectly, from deforestation.

Climate change is already impacting on the Amazon and Cerrado with extreme weather events and reduced rainfall.³ The protection of forests and savannah vegetation in these biomes is critical to maintaining the necessary growing conditions that support long term sustainable soy production and farmer livelihoods in Brazil, as well as being a significant contributor to global efforts to mitigate climate change.

For Signatories of the UK Soy Manifesto and the broader UK market, the Moratorium has long served as a clear, transparent, and credible reference framework for responsible soy sourcing. Since 2006, it has underpinned confidence in Brazilian soy supply chains and supported access to international markets. The security and resilience of these soy supply chains is increasingly critical for international markets including the UK, Europe and China. UK market actors also work in other ways to support forest-positive and resilient landscapes in the Amazon and Cerrado, for example through the Responsible Commodities Facility⁴, and the Sustainable Landscapes Partnership⁵.

Soy – A Key Ingredient in the UK Food Chain

Brazil remains an important source of soy for UK consumption though only a very small proportion of this (less than 10% of UK soy imports) is sourced from and in compliance with the requirements of the Amazon Soy Moratorium. UK consumers may not purchase Brazilian soy directly, but soy is embedded in the food chain as it's a key ingredient in part of feed materials for livestock including chicken, pork, beef, dairy, and prawns.

About the UK Soy Manifesto

The Soy Manifesto is a joint industry pledge to ensure that all soy shipped to the UK is free from deforestation and land conversion. Further information and a full list of signatories and supporters can be found at <https://www.uksoymanifesto.uk/>.

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¹ https://gibbs-lab.wisc.edu/assets/Brazil_s_Amazon_Soy_Moratorium_reduced_deforestation.pdf

² https://abiove.org.br/abiove_content/Abiove/Report-of-Soy-Moratorium_2022-23.pdf

³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X21001972>; <https://zerocarbon-analytics.org/insights/briefings/deforestation-in-brazils-cerrado-reduces-soy-production-and-threatens-supply-chains/>

⁴ <https://sim.finance/responsible-commodities-facility/>

⁵ A partnership of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's Soft Commodities Forum (SCF) and the Forest Positive Coalition of the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF). See [here](#)