

Environmental Governance at Risk

Recent deforestation cases in Mato Grosso's soy supply chain

Mato Grosso is the largest soybean producer among Brazilian states, accounting for approximately 28% of total production, with an estimated production of 51 million tons in 2025/2026 crop year¹. Based on data from the United States Department of Agriculture and Embrapa, it is estimated that Mato Grosso was responsible for approximately 12% of the global soybean supply in the 2025/2026². The state was responsible for 35% of Brazil's soybean exports between January and May 2026, according to data from the Foreign Trade Secretariat³.

According to the [MapBiomass Platform](#), the total soybean cultivated area in Mato Grosso nearly doubled between 2008 and 2024, increasing from 5.8 million to 10.6 million hectares. Based on ICV analyses, rural properties located in the Mato Grosso Amazon with at least 25 hectares of soybean cultivation accounted for approximately 4.6 million hectares of planted soybeans in 2023. Most of this area (97.5%) lies on land deforested before August 2008. In 2023, only 115,625 hectares of soybeans were cultivated in areas that had been cleared after August 2008 in the Amazon biome in the state.

Recognized as one of the main initiatives to combat deforestation in the soybean supply chain, the Soy Moratorium, created in 2006, highly contributed to this outcome. In this voluntary multi-stakeholder agreement, signatory companies committed not to purchase or finance soybeans grown on land in the Amazon that was deforested after July 22, 2008.

Despite its success and international recognition, the Soy Moratorium has recently been the target of criticism and attacks. Different analysis shows that eliminating the Soy Moratorium could lead to increased deforestation in the Amazon biome, whether directly or indirectly. In order to monitor the on-the-ground effects of the Soy Moratorium's weakening, this bulletin provides a systematization of deforestation events⁴ whose characteristics indicate land use for agriculture and/or soybeans, based on the predominant surrounding land use. Deforestation events were qualified by considering overlap with deforestation authorizations, embargoes on rural properties, and the identification of subsequent crop cultivation. The presence of major trader silos near the deforested areas was also analyzed.

¹ <https://portaldeinformacoes.conab.gov.br/produtos-360.html>. Accessed on: 11/06/2026.

² <https://www.embrapa.br/soja/cultivos/soja1/dados-economicos>. Accessed on: 03/06/2026.

³ <https://comexstat.mdic.gov.br/pt/comex-vis/4/22299111>. Accessed on: 11/06/2026.

⁴ The analyses were based on deforestation identified by the [Monitoring of the Andes Amazon Programme \(MAAP\)](#).

Box 1. Key Figures – Soy in Mato Grosso

In 2023, 47.5% of Mato Grosso's soybean production was located within the Amazon Biome, spanning 11,677 rural properties with at least 25 hectares of soybean cultivation. Large properties (over 1,500 ha) accounted for 59% of the soybean area, while medium-sized (400–1,500 ha) and small properties (under 400 ha) accounted for 24% and 17%, respectively. Only 2.5% of the soybean area was on land deforested after August 2008.

Recent deforestation

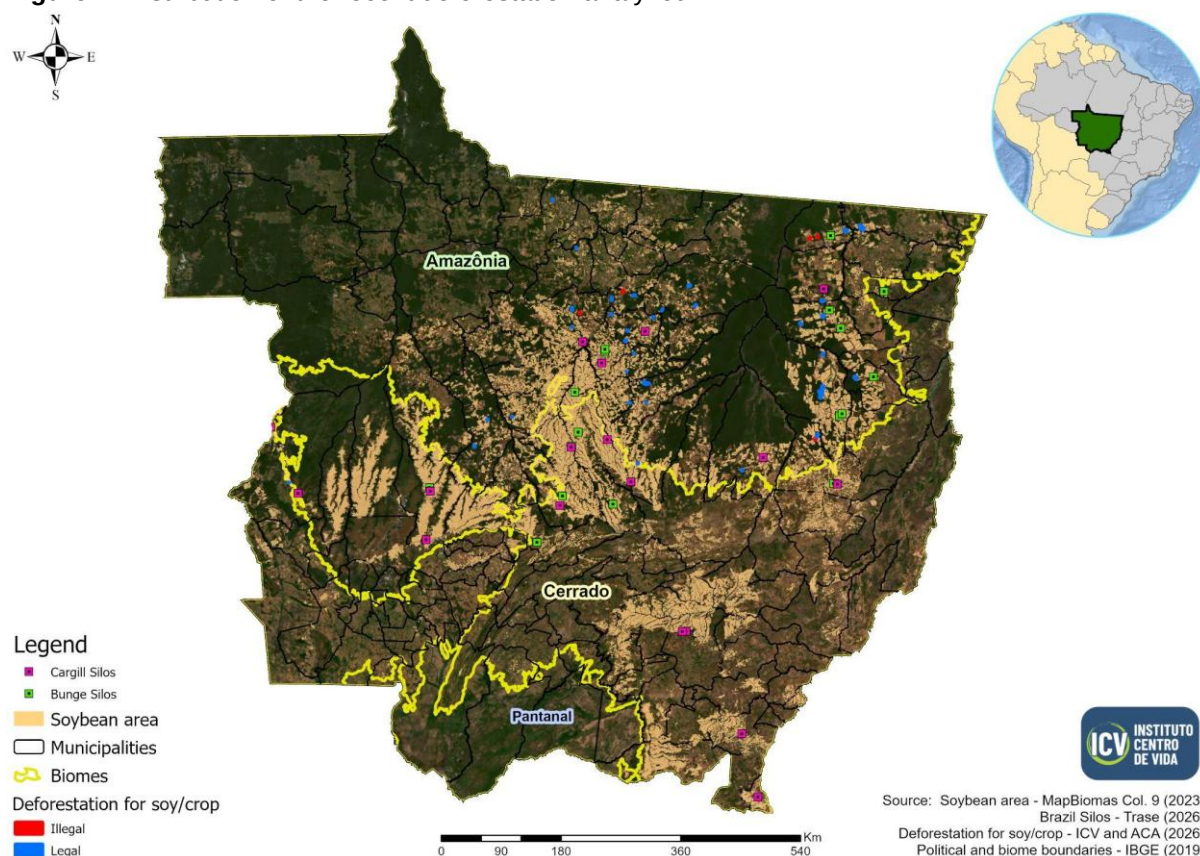
A new collaboration between ICV and Mighty Earth monitored and qualified 41 agriculture-driven deforestation events that occurred between 2023 and 2025 and totalled 16,869 hectares. These areas are located within 50 km of silos belonging to major soybean traders (ADM, Amaggi, Bunge, Cargill, and COFCO).

Out of the total records, 36 have deforestation permits, totaling approximately 16.1 thousand hectares, with 3 of these areas inside properties with some type of embargo (1,705 hectares). For 5 alerts, no permits were identified, and 1 of them show an environmental embargo on the property (138 hectares).

Table 1. Deforestation alerts related to crop and soy, within 50 km of major traders' silos.

Year	Number of alerts	Area (ha)
2023	18	9,696.1
2024	7	2,833.2
2025	16	4,339.4
Total	41	16,868.9

Figure 1. Distribution of the recent deforestation analyzed.



In 12 cases, it was possible to observe, via high-resolution satellite imagery, agriculture established in 2025/2026 within the deforested area — all of which had permits (Table 2). The municipalities of Feliz Natal and Querência accounted for the largest deforested areas analyzed. According to [Trase Platform](#), both are listed as sources of soy exported to the European Union. Querência is the second-largest municipality in Brazil in terms of soy export volume to the EU in 2022, accounting for 3.1% of the total.

Table 2. Deforested areas with evidence of crop use in 2025/2026.

Municipality	N. of deforested areas	Area (ha)
Feliz Natal	3	1,377.5
Querência	1	992.6
Marcelândia	2	887.3
Itaúba	2	800.5
São Félix do Araguaia	1	333.0
Cláudia	1	205.0
Alta Floresta	1	172.7
Nova Canaã do Norte	1	120.6
Total	12	4,889.1

These 12 cases are located near silos owned by Cargill, Bunge, Amaggi, Cofco, and ADM, indicating a higher risk exposure of sourcing grains from areas with recent deforestation.

Table 3. Traders' silos and deforested areas between 2023 and 2025 showing evidence of crop, within a 50-kilometer radius from the 12 farms with soy/crop use evidence.

Company (50 kilometer radius)	N. of deforested areas	Area (ha)
COFCO INTERNATIONAL BRASIL S.A	6	1,981.1
AMAGGI	3	1,377.5
ADM DO BRASIL LTDA	1	992.6
BUNGE ALIMENTOS S/A	1	333.0
CARGILL AGRICOLA S A	1	205.0
Total	12	4,889.1

Figure 2. Area with recent deforestation and with evidence of crop, near a Cargill silo (within 50 km).



Figure 3. Area with recent deforestation and with evidence of crop, near a Bunge silo (within 50 km).

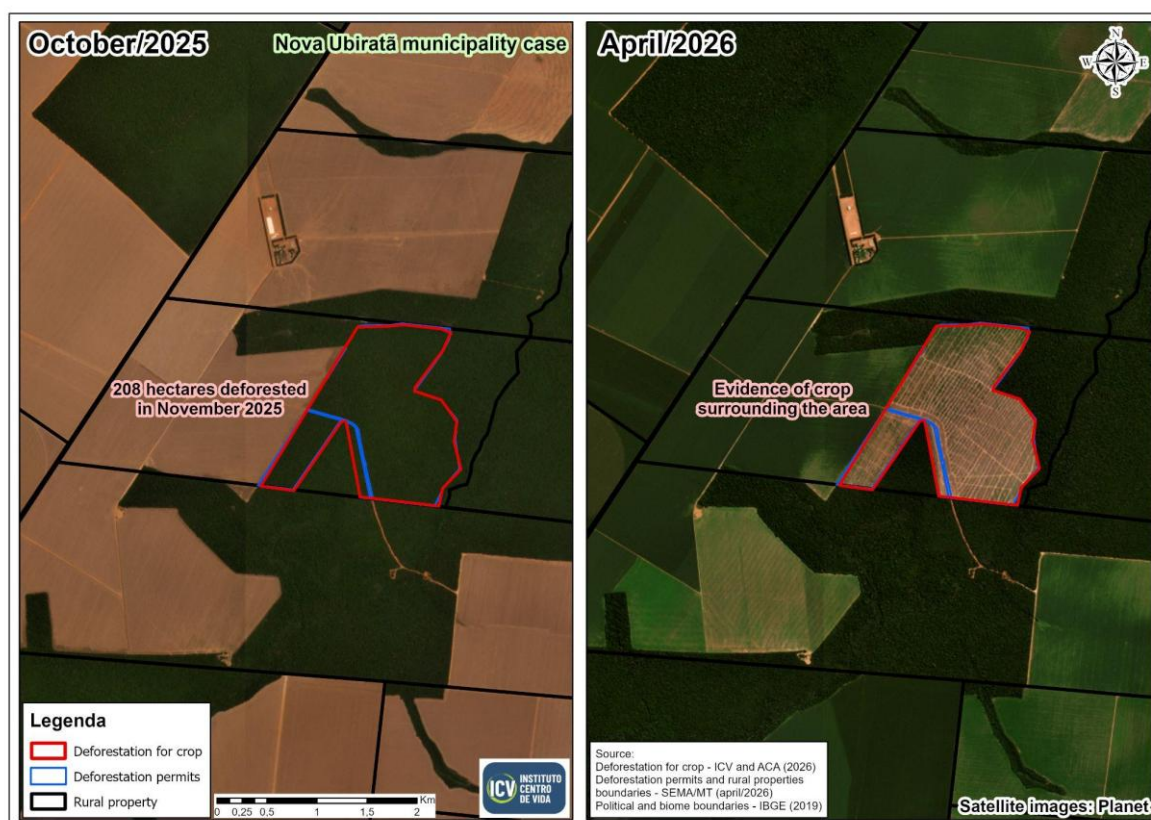


In another six farms with recent deforestation, 2,663 hectares were cleared (230 ha without authorization). Although the cleared areas are not yet in use, the properties already cultivated 5,263 hectares of soy in 2023. ADM, Cargill, or Bunge silos are located within a 50km radius of these farms.

Table 4. Recent deforestation and soy cultivation in properties near traders' silos.

Company (50-kilometer radius)	Nº	Area deforested (ha)	Soy in the property (ha)
ADM DO BRASIL LTDA	2	415.9	1,073.0
BUNGE ALIMENTOS S/A	2	1,993.5	3,396.5
CARGILL AGRICOLA S A	2	253.8	793.4
Total	6	2,663.2	5,262.9

Figure 4. Area with recent deforestation and with soy in the property, near a Cargill silo (within 50 km).

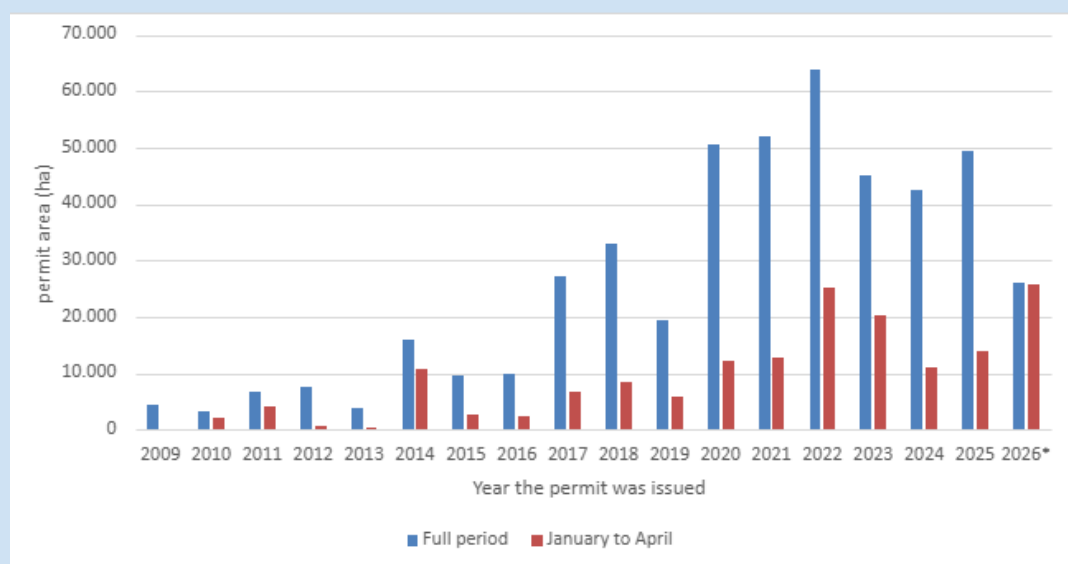


The soy traders potentially linked to the farms identified in this analysis (ADM, Amaggi, Bunge, Cargill and Cofco) were contacted by Mighty Earth for a Right of Reply to clarify on past or current commercial relationships with these properties. Only ADM, Amaggi and COFCO replied ([click here to read the full answers](#)). All the three denied supplying soy from these farms, reinforced their public sustainability commitments, monitoring tools and purchasing criteria. Bunge and Cargill did not respond.

Box 2. Deforestation Permits in Mato Grosso

Data on deforestation permits issued by the Mato Grosso State Secretariat of Environment (SEMA-MT) show an increase in the authorized area over the last decade, signaling growing pressure on the forest. The end of the Amazon Soy Moratorium could further accelerate this trend. According to ICV's analysis, Mato Grosso has 1 million hectares of surplus legal reserve land in the Amazon that is eligible for authorization.

Figure 5. Deforestation permits issued in the Amazon biome in Mato Grosso by SEMA-MT, between 2009 and April 2026. Source: [Geoportal, 2026](#).



The Soy Moratorium acted as a market barrier, blocking the sale of soy from any recently deforested area regardless of its legal status. In practice, however, it primarily restrained illegal deforestation. An analyses by Abiove found that only 2.3% of properties violating the moratorium in the Mato Grosso Amazon region actually held a deforestation permit.