

# Amazon fires: Brazil indigenous reserve blazes contained

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The fires have burned some 2,000sq km of the reserve, or the equivalent of 190,000 football pitches

Brazilian officials have managed to contain several forest fires that have destroyed half of an indigenous reserve in the Amazon region.

Some 12,000 indigenous people live in the Arariboia reserve, in the state of Maranhao.

Their leaders say the fires were started more than a month ago by hostile loggers and farmers who want exploit the area's natural resources.

Hundreds of firefighters and soldiers had been trying to put out the blazes.

Their work has been helped by recent heavy rains, which extinguished 90% of the fires in the state, a local official told the AFP news agency.

An additional 10% of fires were under control, said Luciano Evaristo, regional director of the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama).



Demarcated indigenous land amounts to 12% of the Brazilian territory

Loggers started the fires to intimidate the tribes and undermine their projects to boost surveillance programmes in the Arariboia reserve, said environmental group Greenpeace.

Some 12,000 ethnic Guajajara indigenous people live in the area.

Among them is a small vulnerable group of about 80 members of the Awa-Guaja tribe, who have chosen to live in isolation deep in the forest.

Brazilian environmental officials say there has been a record number of fires throughout the Amazon as the result of exceptionally dry weather.

More than 13,000 forest fires have been recorded in the Brazilian Amazon since the beginning of the year.