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## Amazon summit in Brazil aims to tackle deforestation



Brazil's disappearing rainforests have been a concern for decades

**Brazil is hosting a regional summit to discuss climate change and ways of tackling deforestation in the Amazon.**

Delegates from eight nations who share the Amazon basin, as well as France which has an overseas department there, will hold the talks in Manaus.

They will be discussing Brazil's plan on slowing deforestation with the financial help from rich nations.

The meeting comes ahead of a global summit on climate change in Copenhagen, Denmark, next month.

### 'Ambitious message'

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will be chairing the one-day talks, which will be attended by delegates from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Venezuela and Surinam.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy will also be in the Amazon city of Manaus, representing French Guiana.

Mr Lula's spokesman said the Brazilian leader hopes that the talks will yield "an ambitious message on issues of great relevance to the region".

"Brazil believes it is crucial for the (Amazon) region to have a converging and co-operative participation," AFP news agency quoted the spokesman as saying.

Earlier this month, Brazil's government said the rate of deforestation in the Amazon had dropped by 45% - and was the lowest on record since monitoring began 21 years ago.

It said that just over 7,000 sq km (2,700 square miles) had been destroyed between July 2008 and August 2009. Brazil is seeking an 80% reduction in the deforestation rate by 2020.

The environmental group Greenpeace has welcomed the latest drop but says there is still too

much destruction in the rainforest.

Mr Lula will view the latest figures as a boost to Brazil's green credentials coming just before the Copenhagen summit, the BBC's Gary Duffy in Sao Paulo says.

At the summit, the Brazilian government seems certain to present its efforts to reduce destruction in the Amazon as a key part of its strategy to combat climate change, our correspondent adds.

Earlier this month, Brazil said it aimed to cut its carbon emissions by at least 36% below 1990 levels by 2020.