“He was killed because he tried to tell the world what was happening to the rainforest and its inhabitants... The story must be told.”

Sian Phillips, Dom Phillips’ sister, speaking at his funeral

This exhibition honours Dom Phillips, Bruno Pereira and others who have lost their lives while fighting to protect the Amazon rainforest.

It aims to continue Dom’s work to expose the destruction happening in the Amazon and the violence perpetrated against its people. It also amplifies Dom’s message of hope that there are sustainable and just solutions to these problems, and that many of these come from Indigenous people.

Fiona Frank, who came up with the idea for this exhibition, was inspired by the words of Dom’s sister, Sian, when she spoke at his funeral, and by this tweet by Chico Pinheiro and this poem by Judy Ling Wong.

The destruction of the Amazon impacts us all through its effect on climate and biodiversity loss. Much of this destruction is driven by consumer demand in the global North, for food, minerals, illegal drugs, and other products. So, we ask you to think about how you can make a difference.

A poem for Dom, for Bruno, for the Rainforest

Because you are no longer here
I am cast into darkness
My sun has set in shame and grief

May the trees bend their boughs heavy
With all the imprints of your steps
Marking each path of your journey

May the birds sing their heart-deep songs
Mark each moment of the fading
Of the light of defiant eyes

May all of nature dance for you
As you melt to join with the Earth
Embracing from whence you had come

I grieve
I grieve

Judy Ling Wong,
Black Environment Network
Dom Phillips was a versatile journalist, and passionate about social justice. Brazil, his adopted home since 2007, fascinated him with both its natural wonders and its people, who he described as ‘musical and fluid’.

Dom’s keenness to highlight social injustices led him to the favelas, protests, and the Amazon. His interest in environmental issues increased, and he covered stories on mining, dam collapses, and the destruction of the Amazon rainforest. He became very concerned about the subsequent destruction of Indigenous communities in the rainforest, and the violence they faced, and this prompted numerous expeditions into the Amazon.

Dom’s first trip to the Javari Valley with his friend, Indigenous expert Bruno Pereira, was in 2018. At the same time, Jair Bolsonaro was elected president of Brazil and environmental devastation rose rapidly. Dom reported extensively on these instances and, in 2019, set out to write ‘How to Save the Amazon’, part travelogue, part guidebook highlighting political and social issues contributing to the crisis of the Amazon and offering solutions, often based on Indigenous knowledge.

On 5 June 2022, Dom and Bruno were murdered by illegal fisherman during the final research trip for his book. ‘How to Save the Amazon’ is being completed by a combination of journalists and environment experts.

"Among the nuts things I saw was a logging truck, laden with huge trees, totally illegal, no number plate – like something out of Mad Max – rumbling late afternoon out of the reserve, broad daylight.”

Dom Phillips, writing to his nieces, Domonique and Rhiannon Davies

“There is a war on nature. Dom Phillips was killed trying to warn you about it.”

Jonathan Watts, The Guardian
Bruno Pereira

Bruno Pereira devoted his life to protecting Brazil’s Indigenous population and their lands. Close contact with nature from childhood prompted him to take up a position with FUNAI, Brazil’s state Indigenous agency.

Bruno was drawn to working with remote tribes that had little to no contact with white society. This led him to move to the town of Atalaia de Norte in the Javari Valley in 2010 as Funai’s regional coordinator. Bruno formed an incredibly strong bond with the Indigenous communities, joining with them for spiritual ceremonies and learning five Indigenous languages.

From 2019, under the Bolsonaro regime, protecting and preserving Indigenous tribes became increasingly difficult and dangerous. As destructive actions - like illegal logging and mining, and deforestation - grew, so did invasions and violence within Indigenous territories.

Bruno was forced out of FUNAI by the Bolsonaro regime, and instead worked with UNIVAJA\(^1\), an Indigenous organisation and with OPI\(^2\), a human rights organisation which he helped to set up. He continued protecting Indigenous communities and also raised money to enable them to purchase equipment to help them deal with the increasing challenges of living in the Javari Valley.

On 5 June 2022, Bruno was murdered alongside his friend, journalist Dom Phillips, by illegal fishermen during the final research trip for Dom’s book.

“We hope .... the invaders, the criminals get punished... This is what we expect: that illegal logging comes to an end; that those who set fire to the forest go to jail; that the government closes the roads that give access to logging in Indigenous land; that a new economic perspective is brought to the region.”  

Bruno Pereira, interviewed for the film Guarding the Forest

---

\(^1\) UNIVAJA: União dos Povos Indígenas do Vale do Javari - Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley

\(^2\) OPI: Observatório dos Direitos Humanos dos Povos Indígenas Isolados e de Recente Contato - Observatory for the Human Rights of Isolated and Recent Contact Indigenous Peoples
Remembering the murdered defenders of the Amazon

“Close to our village there is a white man who promised to kill me ... because I defend the forest ... They don’t arrest loggers, but they want to arrest the guardians ... We feel very alone here with no help.”

Paulo Paulino Guajajara, 10 months before he was murdered

As well as Dom and Bruno, there are thousands of other environmental and land defenders who have been threatened, attacked and killed for protecting our environment.

More than 1,700 were murdered globally between 2012 and 2021, with Brazil and Colombia being amongst the deadliest countries. The figure is probably an underestimate.1 Disputes over mining and extractive industries, logging and agribusiness were the most common motives for a murder when a cause was known. Paramilitary groups and other criminal organisations involved in illegal activities are often implicated.

Since 2009, there have been more than 300 deaths2 related to land conflicts in the Brazilian Amazon, with the murder rate rising 69% in 2021. The Bolsonaro Government is accused of turning a blind eye. Just 14 of those killings, or 5%, were brought to court.3

Indigenous peoples are most at risk, comprising only 6% of the world population yet making up almost a third of all human rights defenders killed globally.4 The killings continue. Here are the stories of just a few of those murdered in the Brazilian Amazon in the past few years.

---


Photos: Maxciel Pereira Santos – Personal Archive (Globo.com); Paulo Paulinho Guajajara – Sarah Shenker; Ari ... Marcio Rosa Moreira – social media (Primeirapagina.com); Gustavo Silva da Conceicao – Personal archive, SIMI (Mongabay)
The Amazon in crisis

Indigenous lands have lower rates of deforestation and fewer wildfires than Government protected areas.

UN Food & Agriculture Organisation/Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean

At 7 million kms, the Amazon is the world’s largest tropical forest, extending into nine countries. It contains one in ten known animal species and its plant life is the most biodiverse on the planet, with many species still undocumented.

Amazonia also has incredible cultural diversity, containing 30 million people from 350 different ethnic groups. There are hundreds of Indigenous and traditional groups, including isolated societies and those recently contacted.

It plays a critical role in regulating the global climate and mitigating climate change. Up to 17% of the rainforest has already been lost due to agriculture, cattle ranching, logging, mining, drug production and urbanisation.

Deforestation escalated dramatically in Brazil when Jair Bolsonaro became president in 2019 and encouraged development in the Amazon. In 2022, 336 trees are cut down each minute, a 40% increase on the previous year. The Brazilian Amazon now emits more carbon than it absorbs.

Climate change is leading to both unpredictable rains and flooding, and hotter dryer weather, making the forest more flammable. Wildfires are increasing, releasing huge amounts of carbon and destroying habitat. This exacerbates the damage done to already fragile ecosystems. Amazonian forests should not burn – wildfires were rare events in the past and so species haven’t adapted to cope with them.

In 2021, the Science Panel for the Amazon estimated that more than 10,000 species of plants and animals are at high risk of extinction. Latin America and the Caribbean, including the Amazon, has lost 94% of its wildlife population since 1970.

Indigenous peoples, who depend on the forest for their food and livelihood, are suffering. They are the best defenders of the forest.

Alarmingly, scientists have recently warned that 75% of the Amazon is reaching a ‘tipping point’ at which it may no longer be able to recover. This could result in swathes of the rainforest turning to savannah.
Endangered fish and endangered lives

The Amazon contains 20% of the planet’s freshwater. It is home to over 2700 species of freshwater fish, nearly 65 times those found in British rivers, with hundreds of species still undocumented. They are a vital source of food and income for the 30 million people living there, providing a major portion of their diet.

Endangered fish like pirarucu – the ‘Amazon Giant’ - are highly prized and can fetch many hundreds of dollars. It is believed that the illegal fishers accused of murdering Bruno and Dom were after pirarucu.

Fishing regulations are strict in Brazil. It is illegal to fish in nature reserves or Indigenous territories (except for local Indigenous people), or to fish outside the fishing season. Catch and fish sizes are limited for at risk species. But regulation is weakly enforced; illegal fishing is the second most common illegal activity inside protected areas.¹

Violence against those trying to prevent illegal fishing is common and often linked to organised crime: drugs have been smuggled across borders hidden in pirarucu.

Alongside overfishing, habitat loss is also a major threat to fish stocks. Large dams block migration routes and change river ecology. Urbanisation, agriculture and mining pollute rivers and destroy floodplains, where fish feed and breed. And global demand for ornamental fish adds yet more pressure.

¹ Kauano et al (2017), PeerJ; Illegal use of protected resources in federal protected areas of the Brazilian Amazon.
Illegal mining blights lives

A monitoring overflight carried out in 2021 by Greenpeace Brazil caught scenes of destruction caused by illegal mining inside the Munduruku and Sai Cinza Indigenous Lands, in Pará, a state in northern Brazil. Since 2016, illegal mining has already destroyed at least 632 miles of rivers within the two territories, endangering wildlife and the Indigenous communities who rely on rivers for water and food.

The Amazon rainforest has large quantities of copper, tin, nickel, bauxite, manganese, iron ore and gold. Mining concessions now cover 18% of the Amazon, threatening the health and livelihoods of people living across 450,000 square kms. Mining causes damage, even when it is legal, polluting land and rivers, and reducing habitat for wildlife. About 10% of deforestation in the Amazon is due to mining.

Nine mining conglomerates have submitted thousands of applications to Brazil’s National Mining Agency (ANM) to prospect in areas that overlap with fully protected Indigenous reserves and conservation areas in the Amazon. Though mining in reserves is prohibited under Brazil’s Constitution, the Bolsonaro Government encouraged illegal mining, leading to an increase in violence perpetrated against Indigenous communities.¹

Destroying trees for livestock

“Many of those starting fires (in the Amazon) are illegal land grabbers...They are burning forests to clear land for other uses, such as cattle ranching, growing animal feed or illegal logging.”

Greenpeace

Industrialised agriculture is the biggest cause of deforestation in the Amazon and is especially destructive in places like Brazil. Livestock farming is a major culprit: large swathes of the forest have been cleared for cattle ranching and vast areas planted with soybean - around 80% of soya produced in the Amazon is fed to livestock.¹

Fire is often used to clear land illegally, which can get out of control and cause wildfires, destroying millions of hectares of the forest. In August 2022, there were 33,116 illegal fires registered in the Amazon, the highest number in 12 years.²

Brazilian agriculture also relies heavily on pesticides, having amongst the highest pesticide use in the world, including highly toxic pesticides banned in the UK.

Recent increases in global demand for meat, dairy and fish has increased the expansion of crops grown to feed cattle, pigs, poultry and farmed fish. This destroys habitats, threatening wildlife and biodiversity. It contaminates water and soil, and damages the livelihoods and wellbeing of local people.

In Britain, we eat twice as much meat and three times more dairy than the global average. More than half of the soya we import for animal feed comes from Brazil,³ and we also import meat, fruit, vegetables and other products from the Amazon.

Farming animals for meat is inefficient, wasting huge amounts of land and crops that could otherwise feed people directly, making more space for nature - so we need to be moving towards a mainly plant-based diet.
Under President Bolsonaro, government institutions responsible for safeguarding Indigenous lands have been starved of funds and stripped of political backing. Illegal loggers have felt they can enter and exploit these territories, and attack and kill Indigenous people, with impunity. Rates of illegal logging and the destruction it brings have skyrocketed.

Indigenous peoples across Brazil are fighting back in many ways, including by setting up or boosting groups of Indigenous Forest Guardians. In the Arariboia Indigenous Territory, the Javari Valley Indigenous territory, and several others, the Guardians are patrolling their forests, identifying logging activity and stopping the loggers. This is crucial for the survival of their families and also of their neighbours: uncontacted tribes, the most vulnerable peoples on the planet.

Before the Guajajara Guardians in Arariboia started their work a decade ago, there were 72 illegal logging roads into their territory. Now, there are five. Bandit loggers now struggle to operate in Arariboia. Without the Guardians’ work, the uncontacted Awá people with whom they share their territory, would almost certainly no longer be alive.

But the Guardians’ work is dangerous. In recent years, six Guajajara Guardians have been assassinated. They, and many other Indigenous peoples, urgently need outside support, and for the Brazilian government to abide by its constitution and international law by effectively monitoring the borders of Indigenous territories and keeping outsiders away.

Survival International has provided communications equipment and campaigning support to the Guardians so they can conduct their work and denounce illegal invasions even more effectively.

Survival works with the Amazon Guardians and Indigenous peoples across Brazil to ensure international visibility for their fight, and to build the growing groundswell of international public opinion to push the Brazilian government to protect the territories of uncontacted tribes, and to stop Brazil’s genocide.
In 2021 Dom Phillips visited the Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve in Brazil to witness how community-based fish management can offer a solution to overfishing. The pirarucu (‘Amazonian Giant’ fish) weighs up to 200 kg and reaches 3m in length. It can fetch large sums, but stocks were at serious risk of extinction during the 2000s. Fishing restrictions and bans did little to help, and instead encouraged an illegal trade. So local fishers and scientists in the Mamirauá Reserve worked together to develop a community-based solution.

Pirarucu go to the lake surface to breathe air, and local fishers have long exploited this to locate them and estimate their body size. This local knowledge was transformed into a standardised method to estimate fish populations and develop quotas, which allow 30% of adults under 150cm to be caught. Local fishers police protected lakes to prevent illegal fishing from outsiders, and in the low-water season return with their harpoons to reap the benefits!

“I think all of our lives changed after pirarucu management. Fishing families have televisions, they have phones, in every house. We are harvesting what we sowed.”

Jorge de Souza Carvalho (Tapioca), fisher

This community-based approach has been so successful that it is now being used in over 500 fishing communities. Pirarucu populations benefit after just a few years, with up to 30-fold increases in some protected lakes. Pirarucu sales and local profits have skyrocketed, benefitting thousands of local people.
Good mines are hard to find

There are few examples of very good mining practice. The Responsible Mining Index found that, on a set of 15 basic environmental, social, and corporate governance criteria, 94% of the (legal) mine sites they assessed worldwide scored an average of less than 20%. This means they show little evidence of disclosure and engagement on issues such as local procurement, air and water management, occupational health and safety, and grievances. Only two mines do better than 30%. A few mine sites do show better practices on individual issues.  

The best hope currently seems to lie in Government action.

In 2022, Ecuador’s Indigenous movement and the Government agreed a temporary moratorium on all new oil and mining concessions on Indigenous land until a law ensuring free, prior, and informed consultation is adopted. It also restricts new environmental permits for mining activities until comprehensive environmental legislation is passed.  

In 2019 the Peruvian government launched Operation Mercury in the south of the country to arrest illegal gold miners and destroy mining camps. This resulted in a 92% decrease in deforestation caused by illegal gold mining in the region.

We need to do our bit. Demand for minerals in the global north – for consumer goods and the switch to renewable energy – is fuelling mining pressure. We must reduce our consumption, buy from ethical sources, and use energy wisely.

---

### Overall results of the mine site assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% to 9%</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% to 19%</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20% to 29%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30% to 49%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% or more</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Giving cash without conditions

Less than 1%¹ of the $600 billion+ invested² to fight the climate crisis trickles down to Indigenous peoples and local communities. When money does reach them, they are often told what to do with it by people thousands of miles away from their rainforest homes.

In 2008, Cool Earth was first approached by an Indigenous village in the Peruvian Amazon to help them fend off a group of loggers. The charity gave the villagers cash to stay on their territory and keep their resources.

“The grant we’re receiving from Cool Earth is a big help for everyone in the community including all the children because the funds are used for education, health and emergencies”

Adelaida Bustamante

Since then, Cool Earth has been providing cash to rainforest people. This has shown that whether it is used to improve communal infrastructure, enhance individual wellbeing or respond to emergencies such as the coronavirus pandemic, it ultimately enables Indigenous peoples to continue living in and shaping their lands.

In 2023, Cool Earth is going a step further to give more choice and dignity to people living in the rainforest by launching the first basic income pilot of its kind with an Indigenous village in the Peruvian Amazon. Everyone in the community, including children, will be paid cash every month, without having to justify what they do with it. The aim is to assess whether provision of money with truly no strings attached enables people to remain on their ancestral lands and to conceive their own vision of a sustainable and thriving future in the rainforest.

What you can do to help save the Amazon

The destruction of the Amazon can seem very far away, but the impact of harmful activities there affects all species across the globe. So, what can you do to help? Below are some pointers:

- **Learn about the issues and harmful activities going on in the Amazon.** The QR codes throughout this exhibition will take you to more resources.

- **Write to your MP** asking the Government to pressure Brazil to put policies in place to protect the Amazon. In 2020, the UK government pledged to support the protection of the Amazon rainforest. Hold them to this pledge.

  commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2021-0219

- **Look into your pensions and investments.** Do they have a readily available sustainability charter? If not, write to them and ask why.

- **Be mindful of what you buy.** Food, clothes, furniture, cleaning and other products can have links to destructive activities like large scale soy production, cattle ranching, illegal logging or mining. Stand.earth has some great information on which companies are involved in ecologically destructive supply chains in Brazil. Ethical Consumer publishes shopping guides which help you to avoid unethical products and companies.

  stand.earth/forest-conservation/amazon-forest-protection
  ethicalconsumer.org

- **Eat less meat, dairy and farmed fish.** We need to be moving towards a diet that is mainly plant-based to reduce pressure on the rainforest.

- **Get savvy with your tech.** Avoid the cycle of replacing your gadgets with the next best model. Instead, look for ways to improve the longevity of what you already have, and if you need to replace anything, opt for refurbished items before buying new. This way, you’ll help to reduce the need for new materials sourced from mining.

- **Talk about these issues** with your friends and family. If one person learns something new about what is going on in the Amazon, they can then also pass it on to others.

- **Look out for Dom Phillips’ book,** ‘How to Save the Amazon - Ask the People Who Know’, to be published with Bonnier Books when completed. It will be a great source of information.

- **Support the campaigning organisations** who work to protect the Amazon and its communities. This article by Global Citizen lists seven organisations you can support to project the Amazon Rainforest.

  globalcitizen.org/en/content/organizations-donate-amazon-rainforest
Thank you

Thanks to the many people who donated their time, resources, money and expertise to produce this exhibition.

Produced by: FIONA FRANK.

Compiled, curated and edited by: ALISON CAHN (Halton Mill), DOMONIQUE and RHIANNON DAVIES (Dom’s nieces).

Supporting text and images by: SIAN PHILLIPS (Dom’s sister); BEATRIZ MATOS (Bruno’s widow); ALESSANDRA SAMPAIO (Dom’s widow); SHAILINI VORA and SARAH SHENKER (Survival International); HANNAH PECK and MARTIN SIMONNEAU (Cool Earth); GREENPEACE; WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF); MATT FINER and DYLAN MCFARLAND (Amazon Conservation/ MAAP); KEVIN FREA (Ecological Emergency UK); DR JULIANA SILVEIRA, DR JOS BARLOW and DR CECILIA GONTIJO-LEAL (Lancaster University Environment Centre); SINDSEF-SP (Sindicato dos Trabalhadores no Serviço Público Federal do Estado de São Paulo); DR DANIEL TREGIDGO (Mamirauá Sustainable Development Institute); TOM PHILLIPS, JONATHAN WATTS and ANDREW DOWNIE (The Guardian); MAX BARING; GINA FRAUSIN; MONGABAY; JO LYON; JUDY LING WONG

Design and materials by: MOONLOFT (moonloft.com); SIGNS EXPRESS (signsexpress.co.uk/lancaster); AMARI PLASTICS (Manchester); and METAMARK (Lancaster).

Donations by: GREEN ELEPHANT COOPERATIVE (haltonmill.org.uk); MINE TECH SERVICES (minetechservices.com), LUNE VALLEY VOICES; MANDY BLACKWELL RECRUITMENT (mandyblackwellrecruitment.co.uk); CONTINUING LEARNING GROUP; COMPLETE HOMEOPATHY (dawnkeyse.co.uk); TRYBOOKING (trybooking.com); HANNAH FRANK ART SALES (hannahfrank.org.uk); LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL; and three anonymous donors.

Campaigning organisations working in the field for you to follow and support:

SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL
The global movement for tribal and Indigenous peoples, working to stop loggers, miners, oil companies and others from destroying their lands, lives and livelihoods. (survivalinternational.org/events/takeactionbrazil)

GREENPEACE
Greenpeace is passionate about defending the natural world from destruction. Its vision is a greener, healthier and more peaceful planet, one that can sustain life for generations to come. (greenpeace.org.uk)

COOL EARTH
Cool Earth backs people to protect rainforest and fight the climate crisis. Join the people-first rainforest protection revolution. (coolearth.org)

WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE
WWF is the world’s leading independent conservation organisation. Its mission is to create a world where people and wildlife can thrive together. (wwf.org.uk)

GLOBAL WITNESS
Global Witness challenges abuses of power to protect human rights, the environment and secure the future of our planet. (globalwitness.org/en)

MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP
MRG works to secure rights for ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and Indigenous peoples around the world. (minorityrights.org)

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS
Reporters without Borders promotes and defends the freedom to be informed and to inform others throughout the world. (rsf.org/en)

If you’d like to study these panels at your leisure and follow up all the references and more, visit the Halton Mill website: haltonmill.org.uk/DomBruno