

Bolivia confirms total control of fires in Chiquitania Province



La Paz, October 8 (RHC)-- Bolivian authorities have announced that all the fire hotspots affecting the Chiquitania region have been annihilated, following the worst forest fires the country has experienced in the past decade.

"The intense rains during the past week have pretty much suffocated all the fire hotspots, and now we are moving to control and watch tasks," said the secretary of state of Civil Defense, Oscar Cabrera.

The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Environment confirmed the announcement, with Minister Cinthia Asin praising the hard work of firemen contingents, who contributed to limit the expansion of the fires.

"Our satellite does not register any hotspot of heat, nor active fire," said Asin on Sunday. "The rain has been fundamental to control the active fires."

She added that at least four million hectares of lands and woods - most of them located in protected areas - had been devastated in about two months of intense fires.

At least 40 million trees have died, affecting further the existence and survival of at least 1,200 animal species.

The UN has praised Bolivia's leftist government for the scale of the operations they have mobilized to combat the fires. This includes contracting the world's largest air tanker, the Boeing 747 'Supertanker' to lead efforts to extinguish the fires. Along with sending troops, firefighters and veterinarians to reinforce operations.

Meanwhile, far-right Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has been slammed for inaction in the face of the devastating fires.

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