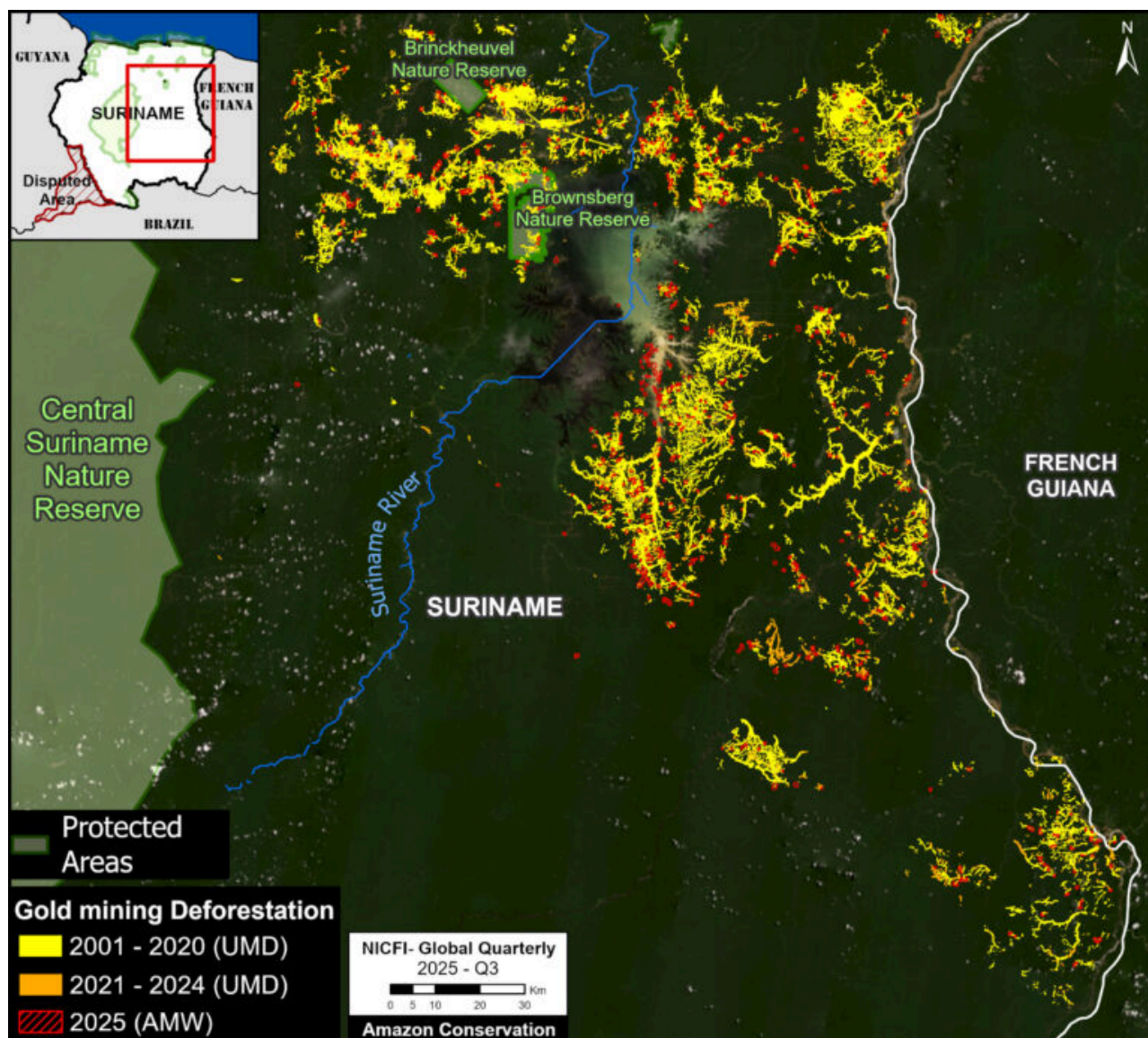


# MAAP #237: Gold Mining Deforestation in Suriname: Current State & Expansion into Protected Areas

February 1, 2026

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Base Map. Suriname Gold Mining Deforestation. Data: Amazon Conservation/MAAP, AMW, UMD, GONINI

In previous Amazon-level reports (MAAP #235 (<https://www.maaprogram.org/amazon-gold-mining-2025/>), MAAP #226 (<https://www.maaprogram.org/amazon-mining-2024/>), MAAP #197

(<https://www.maaprogram.org/illegal-gold-mining-amazon/>)), we have indicated extensive **gold mining deforestation in Suriname**, located in the northeast part of the Amazon biome.

Here, we take a closer look at the current situation in Suriname.

The **Base Map** illustrates the gold mining deforestation across Suriname, from 2001 to 2025. Note that historically (2001-2024), the gold mining deforestation (indicated in yellow and orange) is concentrated in the northeast part of the country, along the border with French Guiana.

Across this area, we estimate the gold mining deforestation to be around **89,000 hectares**. Of that total, around **25,000 hectares** (28%) occurred in the last four years of 2021-2024.

In addition, new data from Amazon Mining Watch indicates the most recent deforestation of **2,800 hectares in 2025** (indicated in red).

The Base Map also shows that **Brownsberg Nature Park** is the most impacted conservation area by mining, while **Brinckheuvel Nature Reserve** is starting to experience a mining invasion.

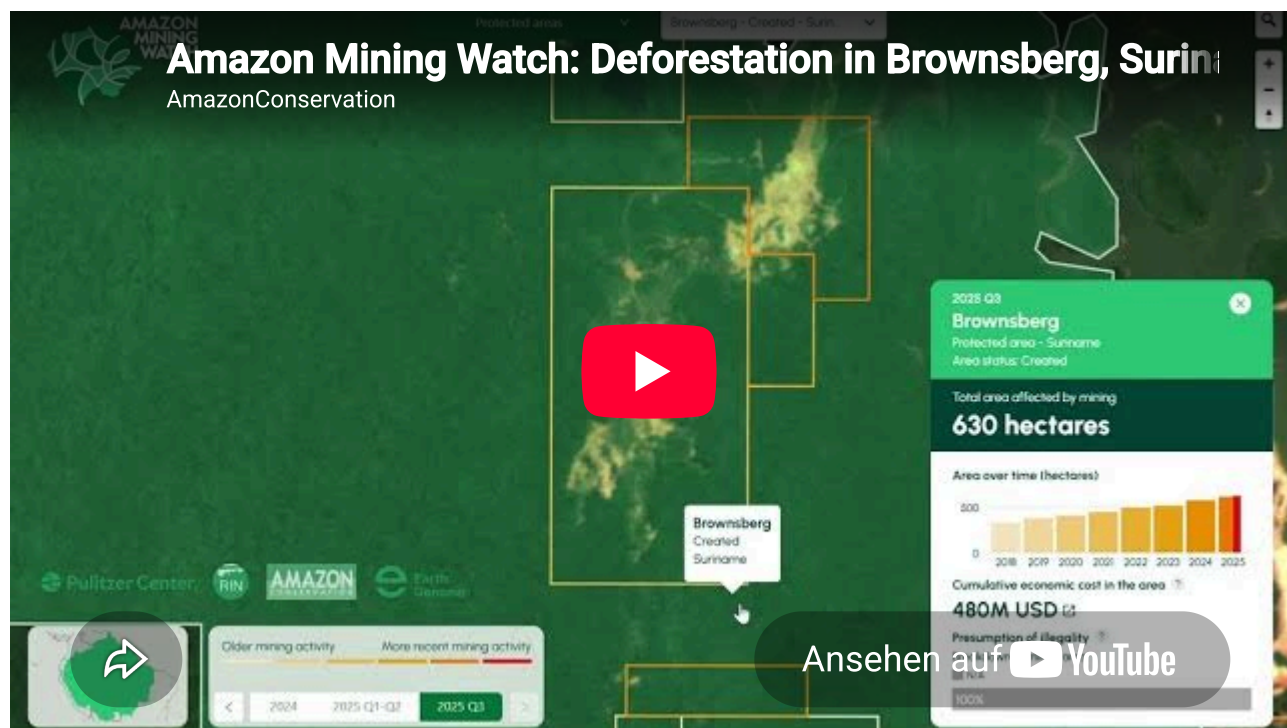
Below, we detail the current gold-mining deforestation situation in both of these conservation areas, highlighting how to use the near-real-time online dashboard Amazon Mining Watch.

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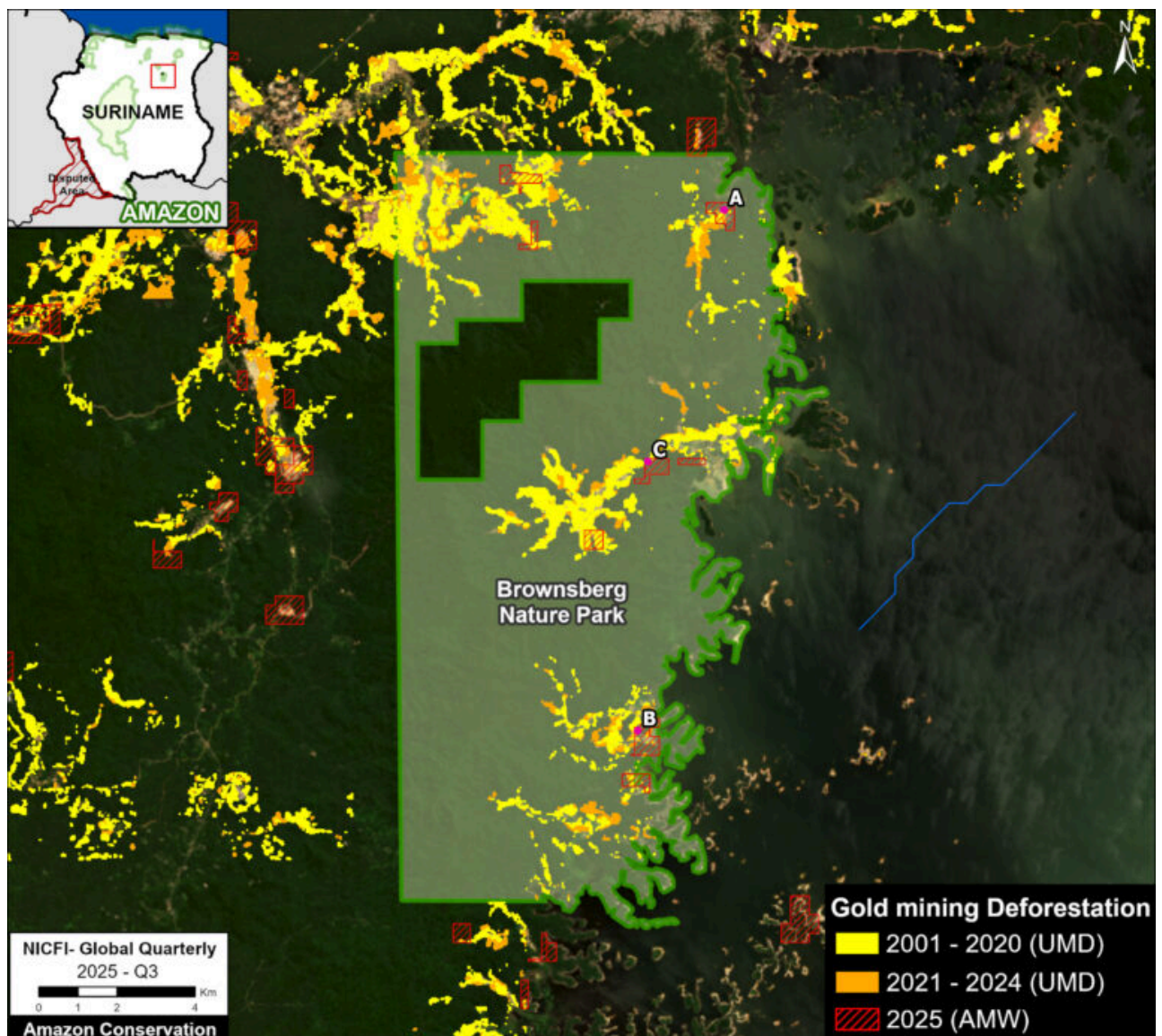
## Amazon Mining Watch

**Amazon Mining Watch** (a partnership between Amazon Conservation, Earth Genome, and the Pulitzer Centre) is an online tool that uses machine learning to automate the analysis of satellite imagery and identify areas affected by mining across the entire Amazon. Importantly, it now provides **systematic near-real-time** (quarterly) gold mining detection alerts.

The video shows how to use Amazon Mining Watch to detect the latest cases of mining-related deforestation, in this case, quarters 2 and 3 of 2025. Note the fresh mining deforestation alerts in the northeast, central, and southeast parts of Brownsberg Nature Park.



## Brownsberg Nature Park



Brownsberg Nature Park was established in 1969 and is managed by the Foundation for Nature Conservation in Suriname (STINASU).

Within the park, we estimate that gold mining deforestation amounted to **1,274 hectares** from 2001 to 2024 (**Figure 1**).

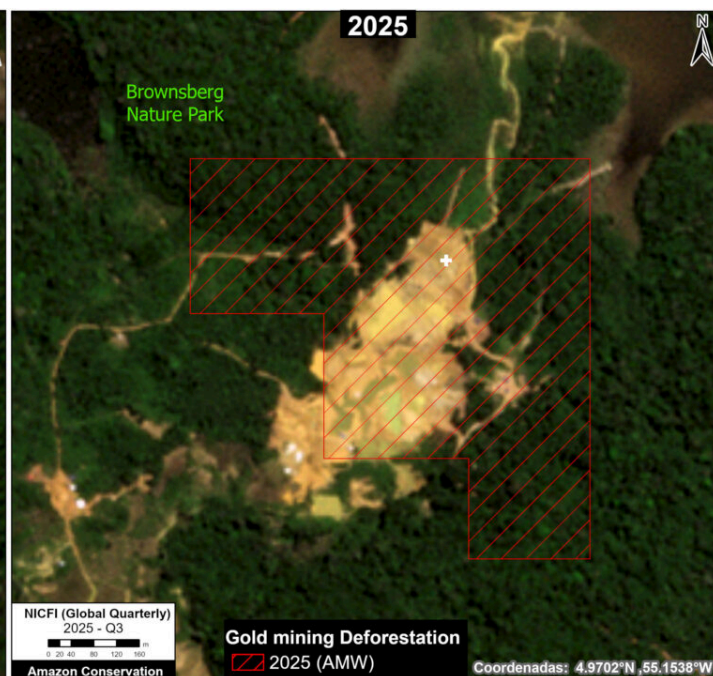
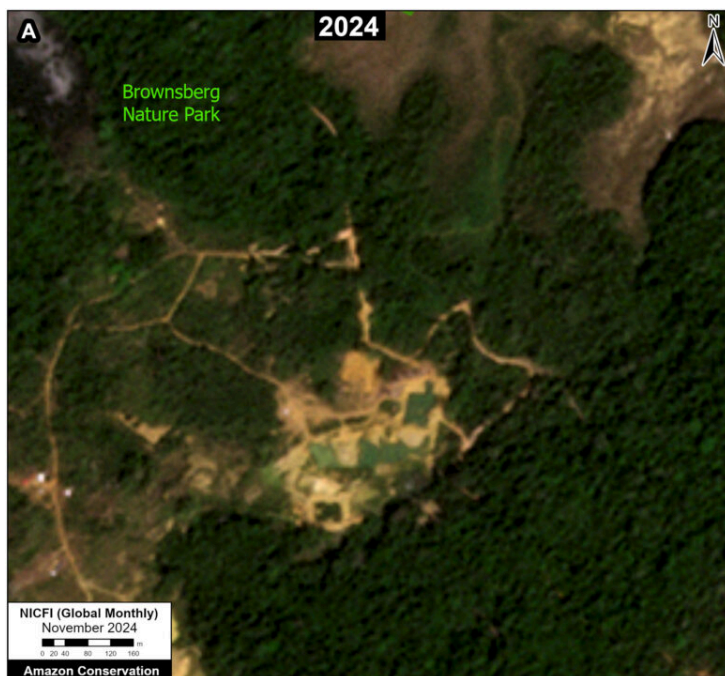
This mining deforestation has impacted **8.8%** of Brownsberg Nature Park's total area (14,560 hectares).

Of this total, **315 hectares** (26%) occurred in the last four years of 2021-2024 (indicated in orange). Note that this recent expansion is occurring in multiple sites across the park.

In addition, new data from Amazon Mining Watch indicates the most recent deforestation of **56 hectares in 2025** (indicated in red).

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**Panels A-C** zoom in on three specific cases of recent (2025) mining deforestation in Brownsberg Nature Park. In each panel, we compare high-resolution satellite imagery from 2024 (left) and 2025 (right). In each of the right panels, we also include the detected mining area data from Amazon Mining Watch.





## Brinckheuvel Nature Reserve

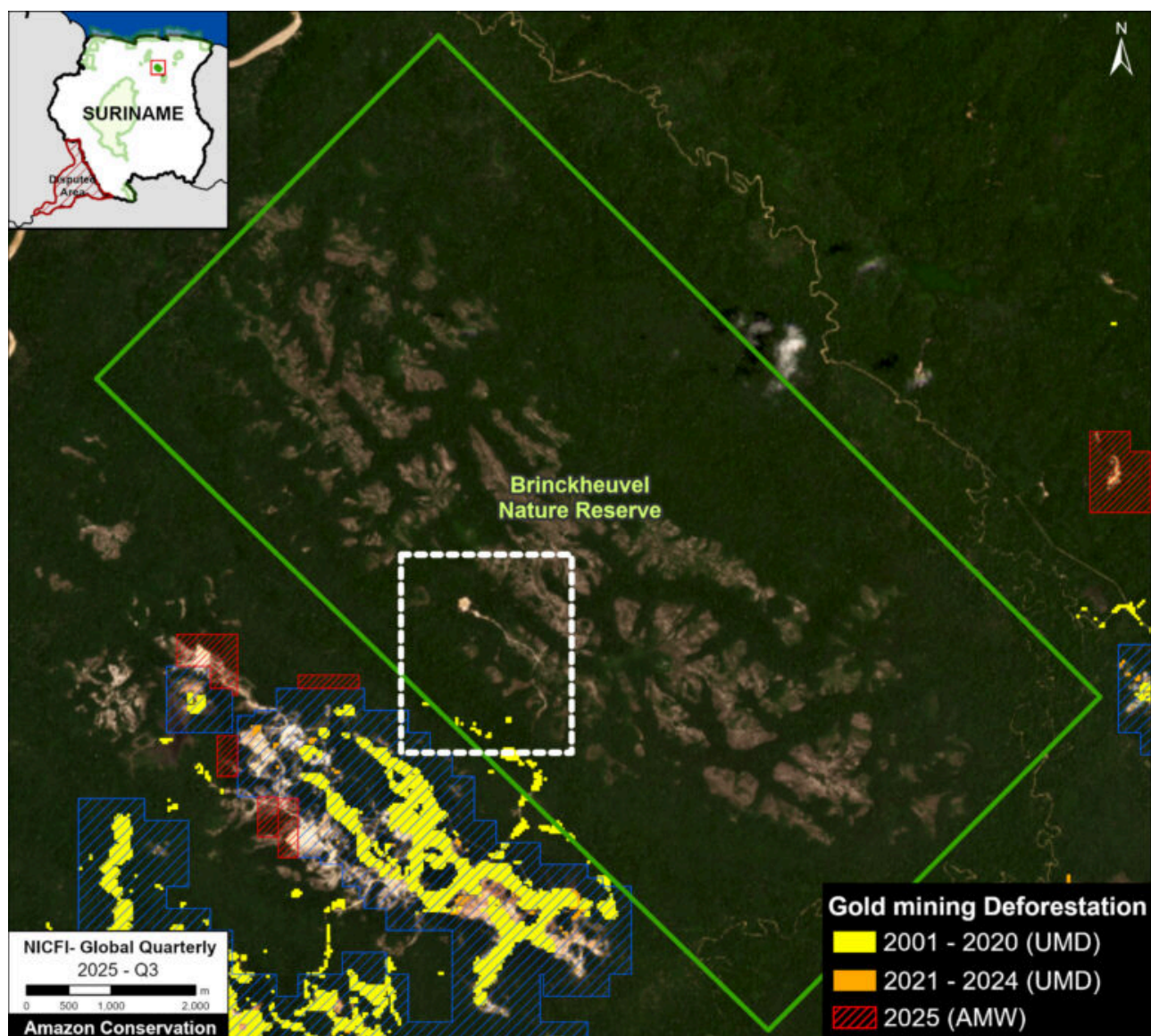
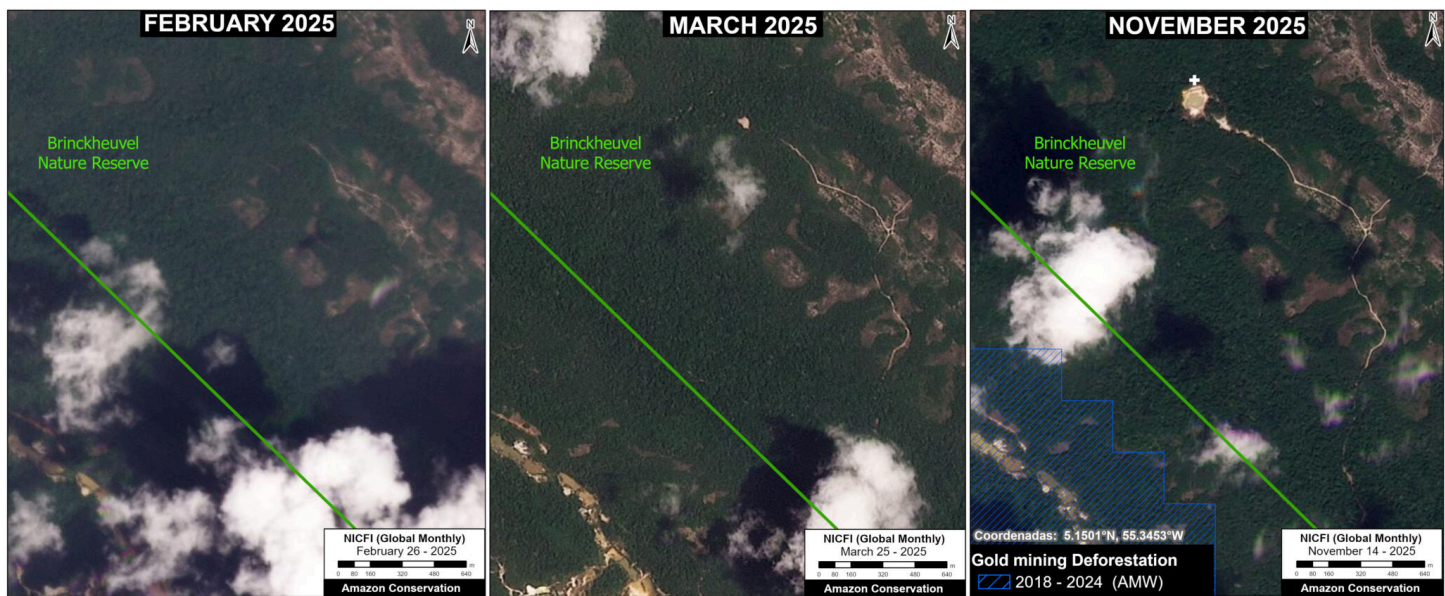


**Figure 2** shows the area of detected gold mining invasion of Brinckheuvel Nature Reserve (see white inset).

Note that this incursion originates from a known mining zone to the southwest of the reserve.

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This 3-part panel shows a series of satellite images detailing the entry and expansion of this mining area. The left panel is the baseline at February 2025. The middle panel shows the emergence of the new mining area in the reserve in March 2025. The right panel shows the expansion of this mining area to 1.3 hectares. The access road to this new mining area is approximately 2.3 km long.



## Policy Implications

In response to this report and related information, the Suriname government has indicated plans

(<https://www.starnieuws.com/index.php/welcome/index/nieuwsitem/89675>) to tighten its approach to illegal gold mining in **Brownsberg Nature Park**.

Specifically, the government will strengthen cooperation, coordination, and information sharing between the relevant agencies to more effectively and decisively combat illegal gold mining activities in the park. This agreement was reached during a meeting between the Ministry of Land Policy and Forest Management, STINASU, the Suriname Gold Sector Management Board, and the National Forest Service.

The result is expected to be joint enforcement actions against the illegal mining activity in Brownsberg Nature Park. In addition, structural and sustainability measures were also discussed to address the underlying causes of the illegal mining in the area.

Similar efforts are called for to address the invasion of **Brinckheuvel Nature Reserve** and prevent irreversible damage to the area.

Finally, **Amazon Mining Watch** fills a critical regional gap by enabling near-real-time detection of emerging and expanding gold-mining deforestation across the Amazon, including within protected areas. In countries where no official mining-specific detection systems exist, **AMW** provides a free and operational tool for the quarterly identification of new mining activity. It can also be integrated as a complementary data source to existing monitoring approaches, including satellite-based systems and drone-based field verification.

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## Acknowledgments

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