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Brazil: Government Plans To Extend Amazonian Highway Despite Negative Environmental Impact

by Barbara Khol
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According to Philip Fearnside, director of the National Amazon Research Institute (INPA), the government is committed to extending highway BR-364 through Peru to the Pacific Ocean, despite colossal damage to the environment already caused by the roadway in Mato Grosso, Rondonia, Acre and Amazonas states. Fearnside said the government would be making a big mistake if plans for the expansion are pushed forward before completion of an environmental impact study on the existing highway. Brasilia is currently seeking financing for the expansion, and has carried out engineering studies of the two most promising routes, through the Peruvian cities of Trujillo and Callao. Opponents to the highway expansion project include Environmental Secretary Jose Lutzemberger, the Brazilian Environment and Renewable Natural Resources Institute (IBAMA), National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) and the National Rubber Tappers Council (CNS). [Basic data from Jornal do Brasil, Spanish news service EFE, 03/17/92]

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