



## Trading the Great Forests for a Mountain of Beans

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During the same period China has lost more than 6m hectares of arable land to cities, factories, roads and deserts. Self-sufficient in most food and energy commodities 15 years ago, China must now import millions of kilocalories to fuel its workers just as it needs lakes of international oil to keep its production lines running. Most of the protein comes in the form of soya beans from Brazil, which are used to fatten pigs, poultry and fish that end up on the dinner tables of the world's most populous country....

As in China, the losers of modernisation are local farmers, who are priced or pushed off their land. Maria dos Santos, of the smallholders union in Santarem, said 500 families had been relocated, a fifth of them by force. Benoit Jean of a French NGO, Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques, said people were being shot and homes burned in the drive to secure land for soya. "It has created a climate of fear in which people are afraid to talk."