



BRAZIL: WATER FOR LIFE, WATER FOR ALL



With a programme that extends from the Amazon to Rio de Janeiro, WWF is working to increase the range of protected wetlands in Brazil, educate local people on the importance of water as a resource, and strengthen the laws to control water use.



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Conserving a global freshwater haven

Brazil is home to 14 per cent of the world's freshwater, the vast majority of which flows down the mighty Amazon river. The country is also host to the planet's largest continental wetland – the Pantanal. Yet Brazil has a water crisis. Almost nine million families have no access to drinkable water and around 70 per cent of all hospital admissions are caused by water-related diseases.

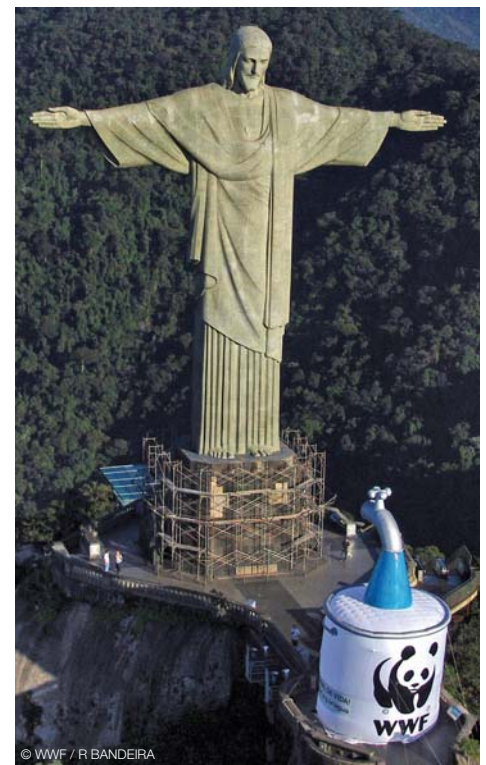
WWF's programme in Brazil, supported for five years by HSBC's £3.5 million investment, extends from the Amazon to Rio de Janeiro. Through this work WWF is increasing the range of protected wetlands, educating local people on how to manage their precious water resources, and strengthening local and national laws that cover freshwater use.



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Lake Ituqui

In Lake Ituqui, part of the Várzea floodplain region of the Amazon, communities now manage their fishing resources sustainably. A long-term education programme has helped demonstrate that simple measures, such as closing areas to fishing during the breeding season, lead fishing communities to increase their productivity by 60 per cent. The programme is also helping local fishermen to increase their income by marketing their sustainably managed fish, which attract a premium price. The success story in Ituqui has provided a model for freshwater fisheries management that is now being copied by communities in other areas of the Amazon.



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Sao João river basin

Located in the densely populated area in Rio de Janeiro state, the Sao João river basin is another freshwater region where the programme is working. The area suffers high levels of pollution from agriculture and sewage. The WWF programme aims to encourage and empower local communities to reduce pollution so that the people of Rio de Janeiro will receive cleaner water.

Water for Life campaigns

Through campaigning, WWF is helping people to understand the importance of water resource issues and how to solve them, and is catalysing them to take action.

A national campaign is showing the importance of protecting the forests at the headwaters of Brazil's rivers, increasing the availability of clean drinking water and basic sanitation, and reducing water waste. This is being alternated with two themed campaigns which are focusing on improving the management of headwaters in the capital, Brasilia, and reducing the impacts of sewage and sanitation on the environment. WWF is also working with church and government to prepare and distribute educational material to schools and youth groups.



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