



**WWF** for a living planet®

**WWF International**  
Office of the Director General  
Avenue du Mont-Blanc  
1196 Gland  
Switzerland  
Direct: +41 22 364 9071  
Fax: +41 22 364 5468

[www.panda.org](http://www.panda.org)

H.E. Dilma Vana Rousseff  
President of the Republic of Brazil

**24 November 2011**

Your Excellency, Madam President,

Brazil has been a regional and world leader in natural resource management. Many governments have been inspired by its vision and dedication to the protection of its forests, and its decision to invest in sustainable development.

It is with sadness and concern that, just as we approach the Rio+20 conference, I observe Brazil's reputation being put in question – a solid reputation carefully built on combating deforestation and reducing carbon emissions while surging forward with stable economic growth, alleviating poverty and increasing biodiversity protection.

The proposed changes to Brazil's landmark forest legislation, if approved, would not only jeopardise the future of countless Brazilian forest-based communities, but also significantly increase the risk of large-scale deforestation and related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. By effectively destroying Brazil's world-class forest conservation system, the proposed reform would open the door to massive and uncontrolled deforestation. The potential impact of this on the global climate would be of serious detriment to us all, and to countless present and future generations.

I can only express my deepest concern, and the concern of the whole WWF global network. This proposed new version of Brazil's forest law has been rushed through both the House and Senate with an alarming disregard for input from critical sectors.

Madam President, I strongly urge you to veto the reform as it currently stands, including specifically the provisions that would offer amnesty to those who violated the law prior to 2008; that would allow large businesses to have the same Legal Reserve benefits as small family producers; and that would permit states and municipalities to create exceptions to the federal regulatory framework. Millions of citizens in Brazil and around the world, amongst them WWF members, will support you.

We look forward to a forest law revision that addresses legitimate concerns of local communities and interest groups – family farmers, scientists, social groups – for improving the economic prospects of the rural poor, without removing essential environmental protection. We are sure that is also your aspiration.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

**Yolanda Kakabadse**

President, WWF International