

HELP STOP THE LARGEST GOVERNMENT SPONSORED DESTRUCTION OF THE AMAZON IN BRAZILIAN HISTORY

THE NEW BRAZILIAN FOREST CODE – WHAT IS IT?

The New Brazilian Forest Code is a set of laws that regulate the conservation of the natural environment in Brazil and is ready to be voted by the Senate. If approved, it will forgive environmental crimes perpetrated during the last 3 years and will allow the deforestation of an area equivalent to 220,000 km² (two hundred thousand square km – half the size of California). The current legal reserve (forest area that must be kept within a property) will be drastically reduced and riverside forests will lose its current protection. As a consequence, this would mean more draughts in dry regions and more floods in wet regions. Greenhouse emissions will increase 17-fold (!) compared to the current national emission.

MAIN FLAWS: The main argument to defend the new legislation is that this is a necessary measure for increasing food production. By forgiving the current million dollar debt owed by environmental criminals, precious federal resources that could be applied in improving food production would be lost and more deforestation is not the solution to the global food crisis. Forest areas increase food production because it increases seed distribution and helps control plagues. Forests also decrease the costs in reducing water contamination (it may cost 150 times more to control river contamination when forests are absent). Intact forests can yield food in a sustainable manner, so food production can be increased as long as the right food choices are made. The sole beneficiaries of the new forest code are large farms and it leaves no privileges for small properties.

DESTRUCTION OF ECOSYSTEMS, PLANTS, AND ANIMALS

The New Forest Code will directly cause the **extinction** of 100,000 (one hundred thousand) animal species including fish, reptiles, amphibians and insects. The New forest Code will allow the destruction of 60 percent of the Amazon Rainforest! Other ecosystems would also be destroyed. The scientific community was completely ignored as to the impact studies and Congress has already approved the new legislation. By the way, more than half of Congress representatives are directly or indirectly related to cattle farming (so they push for more cleared land on the properties they already own).

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT: There has been increasing popular pressure to demand that this legislation does not pass with national street protests, but the media has ignored the issue as it continues on its path as planned (street protests coordinated in several cities gathering over 3,000 participants in some cities have been reported as a mere one hundred participants). It is now up to the Senate and President Dilma (the recently elected first Brazilian female president) to veto the legislation. In an unprecedented event, all former environmental secretaries alive have signed a document repudiating the new

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legislation, but those politicians currently in office are not opposing it. **Building international pressure** is very important, especially as it concerns the destruction of an ecosystem that has global impact and may be destroyed in a way it an irreversible way. Please get in touch via brazilforests@gmail.com if you wish to build mobilization in your region.

BELO MONTE DAM HIDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT

WHAT IS IT AND COSTS: The project was recently approved by President Dilma and is the 3rd largest hydroelectric power plant in the world. It will cost nearly **19 billion US dollars** (if social and environmental costs are accounted for, estimated to be 25 billion US dollars) and will produce a mere two percent of the countries energy needs. The main destination for this energy are the mining companies which will bring more destruction to the Amazon region of Xingu, one of the most untouched areas deep in the in the Amazon Rainforest! **13,000 indigenous people** from several indigenous tribes that preserve millenary cultures in their natural habitat are being expelled from their land.

SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: The area to be flooded is 516 square km (larger than state of California) and an even larger area will be affected by the draught that will be caused down the river stream. The decomposition of the flooded forests will cause methane emissions that surpass the current national emissions and may continue to do so for more than 40 years. Thousands of animal species that are endemic to the region of Xingu will be extinct and billions of individual non human animals will die.

The people that are being expelled from their land live isolated from mainstream society and survive on the provisions of their natural environment. With Belo Monte, they will be forced to move to cities to live a degraded life which is alien to their culture and which they have not chosen to live.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: The *Brazil for Life in the Forests Movement* has been carrying a series of actions countrywide (in Brazil) gaining the support of tens of thousands of people, hundreds of NGOs and a few celebrities. Despite of that, the interests of the government and large corporations (who are the real beneficiaries of these destruction projects) add up to nearly a hundred billions US\$ and therefore the national media has been working as to suppress the progresses of our movement. To help bypass that , we are creating an international network of collaborators who can mobilize locally in large cities worldwide by protesting and denouncing at consulates, embassies and business fairs, mobilizing the local media and governments to watch the Brazilian government's policies as they destroy the environment, non-human animals, and indigenous populations. More about these issues that are already affecting the lives of millions of sentient beings, please access our blog (using an automatic translator for now, sorry): <http://brasilpelasflorestas.blogspot.com>

IF YOU WISH TO TAKE PART ON THIS **INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION NETWORK**, let us know at brazilforests@gmail.com. Get involved, organize in your locality. Visit <http://veddas.org.br/forests> for materials and resources.

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