



November 30, 2015

Dr. Jim Yong Kim, President
 The World Bank Group
 1818 H Street N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20433 USA

Ref: **Encouraging a World Bank Zero Deforestation Pledge**

Dear Dr. Kim,

We, representing civil society organizations (CSOs) working to promote the conservation and sustainable use of forests and other natural ecosystems, to ensure the protection of rights for forest-dependent people, and to address the imminent threats of climate change, are writing to request the World Bank Group to make a **commitment to zero deforestation** in its lending portfolio.

Ending deforestation is essential to addressing the World Bank's twin goals of eliminating extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity. An estimated 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihoods which provide clean and abundant water, food and medicinal plants. Additionally, forests nourish the agriculture of nearly half the population of the developing world and provide critical mitigation and adaptation to climate change, which disproportionately impacts the world's poorest people.

Accompanying this letter is a **“Declaration on Zero Deforestation in International Finance and Development”** developed by the undersigned civil society organizations to guide the timing and implementation of such a commitment. The declaration includes ten goals to be reached over the next several years, including commitments related to ending illegal deforestation; availability of finance to support existing international commitments related to forests; measurement and reporting on forest impacts; community management of forest resources and community land rights; zero net deforestation; and zero financing of deforestation for a subset of sensitive forest habitats.

Given the unquestionable importance of forests in achieving climate and other goals, additional Bank actions we encourage the Bank to undertake to advance forests’ contribution include:

- 1) a high-level Bank announcement supporting forests during COP21,**
- 2) a progressive Forest Action Plan document, and**
- 3) far stronger language on forests in the new Environmental and Social Framework.**

To position the Bank as a global leader in climate change and forests, we encourage you to underscore at COP21 and beyond the importance of forests in climate change and poverty alleviation, and ideally commit to a zero deforestation goal in the World Bank Group’s portfolio.

The Forest Action Plan currently under development by the World Bank to guide forest investments during FY2016-2020 represents a timely opportunity for the Bank to articulate a progressive agenda in forests, as a key resource for ending extreme poverty and achieving shared prosperity of rural communities, and we encourage the Bank to articulate ambitious goals, including zero deforestation, in this document. We welcome the FAP’s inclusion of impacts on forests from other sectors at the Bank, as well as the incorporation of the crosscutting themes of climate, governance and rights.

Finally, we want to reiterate our serious concerns regarding the elimination of the Forests safeguard in the ongoing safeguard review process as well as the extremely limited requirements related to forests in the current draft ESS6 or Environmental and Social Framework.

We thank you in advance for considering these issues and would be very pleased to discuss the above requests further with you.

Sincerely,

Peter Seligmann, Chairman & CEO, Conservation International

Matt Daggett, Global Campaign Leader - Forests, Greenpeace International

Chad Dobson, Executive Director, Bank Information Center

Randy Hayes, Executive Director, Foundation Earth

Cyril Kormos, Vice President for Policy, Wild Foundation

Lars Løvold, Director, Rainforest Foundation Norway

Iván Zúñiga, Coordinador del Programa de Incidencia en Políticas Públicas, Consejo Civil Mexicano para la Silvicultura Sostenible

César Gamboa Balbín, Executive Director, Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

Dr. Tint Lwin Thaug, Executive Director, RECOFTC- The Center for People and Forests

Brett Byers, President and Founding Pledger, Million Acre Pledge

Paul Salaman, Chief Executive Officer, Rainforest Trust

Jonas Holmqvist, Director, Fivas - The Association for International Water Studies

Kriton Arsenis, Founder, RoadFree

Paul Hawken, Co-founder and Director, Project Drawdown

Hannah Stutzman, Executive Director, Amazon Conservation Association

Maurice Ouma Odhiambo, Executive Director, Jamaa Resource Initiatives

Jonathan Baillie, Director of Conservation Programmes, Zoological Society of London (ZSL)

Supporting Academic, Individual, and Private Company Signatories

William Laurance, Director, TESS— the Centre for Tropical Environmental and Sustainability Science

William Laurance, Director, ALERT— the Alliance of Leading Environmental Researchers & Thinkers

Gregory P. Asner, Carnegie Institution for Science

Sean Foley, The Samdhana Institute

Mike Korchinsky, CEO and Founder, Wildlife Works

Cc: Laura Tuck, Paula Caballero, Kyle Peters, Carole Megevand, John Roome, James Close, Simon Whitehouse, Camille Funnell, Laura Ivers, Ellysar Baroudy, Gerhard Dieterle, Flore Martinant de Preneuf, Glenn Morgan, Vikram Widge, Juergen Voegele, Anita George, Junaid Ahmad, John Donnelly