



## WORLD RAINFOREST MOVEMENT

## MOVIMIENTO MUNDIAL POR LOS BOSQUES TROPICALES

International Secretariat  
Winfriidus Overbeek (Coordinator)  
Maldonado 1858  
Montevideo 11200 - Uruguay

Ph: +598 2413 2989  
Fax: +598 2410 0985  
e-mail: [wrm@wrm.org.uy](mailto:wrm@wrm.org.uy)  
web site: <http://www.wrm.org.uy>

July 2014

### **To whom it may concern,**

The World Rainforest Movement (WRM) is an international organization that, through its work on forest and plantation related issues, contributes to achieving broad recognition and respect for local peoples' rights over their forests and territories. WRM is also an active participant in a global movement for social change that aims to ensure social justice, respect for human rights, and conservation of the natural environment.

WRM works to help secure forest peoples' lands and livelihoods, and supports their efforts to defend their forests from industrial logging, monoculture tree plantations, dam construction, mining, shrimp farms and other harmful activities that threaten them. These include more recent trends such as REDD, which are opening the door to further exploitation of people's forests as financial commodities in global markets; and more generally, through payment for and trade in environmental services, or 'environmental offsets' in order to justify projects that cause harm to ecosystems and the loss of biodiversity through destructive land-use change.

Exposing the impacts of large-scale industrial tree plantations is the work for which WRM has become best known. For more than two decades, WRM has studied, documented and exposed the negative impacts of industrial tree plantations, which many governments and the United Nations still wrongly define as 'planted forests'. In 1998 WRM started a permanent campaign against industrial tree plantations. The focus of this work has been on eucalyptus and pine tree plantations for pulp production and more recently oil palm plantations. Since 1998 WRM has had a good working relationship with the Timberwatch Coalition in South Africa; which has included joint activities at international conferences, organising meetings and workshops in South Africa, and collaborative research projects in South Africa and Swaziland.

We are aware that the fourteenth World Forestry Congress (WFC14) will be held in Durban, South Africa, in September 2015, and that Timberwatch, which is also based in Durban, has plans to help co-ordinate NGO and civil society participation both in and on the fringes of the WFC conference. We strongly support Timberwatch's proposal to help provide the co-ordination of and arrangements for an 'alternative' Civil Society Conference to be held in parallel to the WFC event at an accessible venue in Durban, near to the WFC.

Given our experience from WRM's participation at the last WFC, which was held in 2009 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, it is extremely important that civil society organizations and social movements should have free access to the necessary conditions - including meeting facilities and logistical support services, in order that their voices may also be heard at the WFC.

Your support for the provision of logistical services, or sponsorship of an item or part of the programme of activities at this event, will make an important contribution towards ensuring the inclusion of local communities, indigenous peoples and other affected groups that would otherwise have been marginalised and excluded.

Sincerely.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature is cursive and reads "W. Overbeek". Below the signature is a horizontal line. The signature is positioned above a pink rectangular area.

Winfridus Overbeek

International coordinator