

Dear members of the IFSA council,

We are students at the University of Sao Paulo, enrolled in a course entitled "Economics of Forest Resources". As one of the activities in class, we decided to write an open letter to express our concern with recent threats coming from groups that are trying to weaken important legal regulations that the Brazilian society has developed over the years to mitigate environmental and social impacts of economic growth. As the IUFRO world conference in Curitiba, Brazil, approaches we invite IFSA to support, publicize and promote the debate of the open letter before and during the next IUFRO conference in Brazil.

The above-mentioned instruments intensively debated and improved since the 1930s by public representatives in the Brazilian Congress, are now facing the attack of groups that want to reduce the environmental responsibilities of rural landowners and the socio-environmental function of rural properties. A bill recently proposed in the Brazilian Senate (PL 2362, April/2019), intended to repeal the existence of so-called "legal forested reserve area" provided for in the Brazilian Forest Code, is an example of this type of threat. The Brazilian constitution establishes that the right to property, besides satisfying its owner, is also related to other interests, among which the principle of human dignity, equality, land use for work and ecologically balanced environment. The provisions of the Brazilian Federal Constitution establish that rural property has an environmental function to perform, and the owner must comply with environmental legislation and manage the exploitation of the land in order to improve the quality of life of who live in the area, as well as the inhabitants of the region, with the maintenance of ecological equilibria. The Brazilian Forest Code, therefore, in line with the spirit of the Brazilian Constitution, regulates and expresses the current consensus harshly debated by Brazilian society in recent years to create a regulatory framework that expresses the socio-environmental function of rural properties provided for in the constitution. It is in that sense that the undersigned students, as members of the Brazilian society, repudiate any action that weakens this function.

Hoping to hear from you soon, we look forward to meeting you at the IUFRO Conference in Curitiba.

Best wishes,