



**global witness**

The Minister for Environment and Forests  
Antananarivo  
Madagascar

21 June 2010

**Re: Illegal export of precious timber**

Dear Minister,

We would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister for Environment and Forests, to introduce our organisations and to outline our ongoing work with the support of your Ministry and Madagascar National Parks (MNP). Global Witness and the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA Inc.) were commissioned by MNP to investigate the illegal production, trade and export of precious timber. MNP was commissioned by your predecessor to support our work in Madagascar, along with the Observatoire National de l'Environnement et du Secteur Forestier (ONESF).

Global Witness campaigns to prevent natural resource-related conflict and corruption; in the forest sector, its focus is on illegal logging, conflict timber trading and the use of non-sustainable forests. The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) is an independent organisation which uses innovative investigative methods to protect flora and fauna from environmental crimes and abuses.

In order for you to better understand our mandate with the MNP, we should draw your attention to the report we submitted to them and to your Ministry on the illegal logging, transport and export of precious timber in the SAVA Region. We encourage you to contact MNP for more information on the methodology used, the conclusions made and the recommendations we made after completion of this mission. We are currently drafting a report on the second stage of our investigation aimed at tracing the precious timber trade back to consumer countries.

We would especially like to draw your attention to the recommendations made in the report, most of which have yet to be implemented by your Ministry. Despite the total ban on the exploitation and export of precious timber issued at the end of March, timber is still being exported from Madagascar's ports. Moreover, we have obtained evidence confirming that at least nine rosewood containers have left the port of Tamatave in the last month. We have also learnt that your Prime Minister sent a letter to French shipping company Delmas permitting the transfer of 79 rosewood containers from the port of Tamatave. However last year we made the company aware of its key role in facilitating the destruction of Madagascar's national parks. Having been heavily criticised for its

actions, Delmas asked the French embassy for guidance, and was advised by the French ambassador not to export the timber.

We urge you to do your utmost to ensure all precious wood exports are banned from the ports of Madagascar and to order the destruction of illegal stocks of precious wood to discourage illegal activities.

We would be very grateful if you could let us know what measures you and your administration, as well as other concerned agencies, intend to take in order to bring to an end the looting and destruction of Madagascar's unique forests, protected areas and national parks.

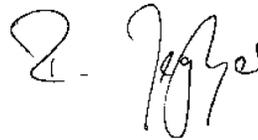
Should you wish to contact us for more information, we would be delighted to provide you with further details on our investigations.

Please be ensured of our ongoing support and close cooperation.

Yours respectfully,



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