

Brazil Says More Heads Might Be Cut Due to Amazon Logging Scandal

Contributed by Stênio Ribeiro
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Brazil's Minister of Environment, Marina Silva, said, yesterday, that combatting deforestation in the Amazon is an absolute priority of the Ibama (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources).

This, in spite of accusations of involvement by members of the organ in illicit logging activities.

Silva took part in the commemorations of World Environment Day in Brasília's City Park.

In her speech, when she referred to corruption in the sector, brought to light by the Federal Police and the Public Interest Defense Ministry in Operation Curupira, she affirmed that she will not yield in this fight and will cut off as many heads as necessary.

Applauded by the crowd attending the commemorations in the park, the Minister said that the operation began with a decision by the Ministry of Environment itself.

The investigations started in 2003, when it was suspected the existence of an internal scheme of corruption, which, according to the enquiry, has been functioning for 14 years.

The scheme is thought to have been in large part responsible for the increasing deforestation that has left the Amazon in a "lamentable state." According to Silva, 40 career civil servants have already been suspended.

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