



22 April, 2010

Community Affairs  
Senate of the Australian Parliament  
Canberra; ACT. 2600

To whom it may concern

Re: support for the Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labelling- Palm Oil) Bill 2009.

I am writing to support the Australian Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labelling- Palm Oil) Bill 2009.

The conversion of lowland forests to oil palm plantations in south-east Asia is one of the greatest threats to the region's biodiversity. This is especially the case in Indonesia and Malaysia, which are the world's two largest producers of palm oil. In Indonesia, the loss of lowland forests is the single greatest threat to orang-utans survival. I have been working in Sabah (Malaysian state located in North Borneo) for the past twelve years to develop innovative ways to conserve orang-utans and biodiversity. The oil palm industry is one of the stakeholders we are collaborating with to ensure a future for the orang-utans.

We recognise that oil palms generate important business income, but this at the expense of both the wildlife and local communities. Moreover, currently the majority of palm oil is not produced sustainably. Currently, consumers in Australia do not know if the product they are purchasing contains palm oil because it is not stated on the product label. This is the core of the Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labelling- Palm Oil) Bill 2009 – to give consumers the choice to decide if they wish to purchase a product that is contributing to the loss of biodiversity in south-east Asia.

Amending the Food Standards legislation will address this and is a very important step towards increased sustainability in palm oil production.

I request that this submission be considered in support of the Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labelling- Palm Oil) Bill 2009, and confirm that it can be made public, including on the web.

Yours sincerely

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KOCOP Director

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