

Dear Committee Secretary,

The fact that the Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labeling – Palm Oil) Bill 2009 even exists shows that Australia is a progressive country at the forefront of proactive changes to create a better future. Even though I am not a resident of Australia, I am a biologist and conservationist, and one of the species I care most about is the orangutan. Destruction of rainforests because of palm oil plantations is all too real and has negative impacts on a multitude of species, including our own. The orangutan, however, is an excellent example of an intelligent, sentient, and beautiful animal that we could lose very soon if the palm oil industry is allowed to continue unimpeded. The Truth in Labeling bill is great because it is a small, relatively easy-to-implement system that will begin to put pressure on the Palm Oil industry. Australian citizens will be able to vote with their dollars about what practices they wish to support, and this is a very important part of human choice. It seems unfair and wrong to allow products into stores that consumers assume have come from ethical sources when this is not the reality. We deserve to know what we are buying. I strongly suggest passing this bill.

Sincerely,
Christine Cassella