

To whom it may Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the Bill (Truth in Labelling Palm Oil Bill 2009) that is going to the senate to ensure Palm Oil is labelled in food that I purchase. I am 33 years old, pay taxes have a mortgage and never get involved in campaigns, activist groups etc. However, I am extremely frustrated at the lack of action by the Australian government to ensure food is labelled with ALL the ingredients that are used to manufacture the food. This issue has gone on for years without anyone in Canberra doing the right thing. Why? As a consumer I do what I can to ensure that I purchase ethically and organically. I do not want to eat foods smothered in cancerous insecticides NOR do I want to purchase foods that devastate the environment in order to manufacture them.

For years, I have boycotted brands that manufacture with Palm Oil, and have written to companies advising them that I am boycotting them until they do not use Palm Oil. I can only do so much, and it really annoys me that I can not always VOTE with my FEET. If I know that certain companies are using a cheaper but environmentally unfriendly PALM oil to manufacture there food or grocery item then I WILL avoid them. I am happy to pay more to those brands that opt for an alternative that is ethical. GIVE ME THAT CHOICE PLEASE. To be honest, I am completely frustrated and angry that I have to ask for this information.

I am also a member of the Australian Orangutan Project Group, who does what it can to financially support programs to rehabilitate Orangutans that are affected by Palm Oil Plantations. I also sponsor a couple of orangutans that were hacked at by machetes by the palm oil farmers. Orangutans have a few places in the forest that they roam to and call home. They move about these places every few months. Sometimes they go back to their home in the forest to find that it has been burned down. Obviously this has a major affect on the Orangutans as it affects the food available for them to survive and live. But what breaks my heart was that the farmers hack these beautiful creatures to death with machetes in order to protect their precious palm oil plantations. This action often leaves orphans or orangutans without limbs that painfully bleed to death. The "lucky" ones get picked up and put into an Orangutan habitat.....What will be the future of these beautiful creatures? Will I live to see these creatures become extinct why we continue to use products that led to their demise!!!! I want to to be able to make a difference, I want the right to choose what products I purchase in order to make this difference. I want to see PALM OIL on the label, then put that item back on the shelf and choose and alternative brand that actually has an environmental conscience.

I hope that this Bill is passed quickly and implemented as best as possible to ensure that companies are forced to do the right thing.

Kindest Regards,

Louise Courtney