

21 April 2010

Community Affairs Office
Victorian Government
Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Sir/Madam

The Truth in Labelling Palm Oil Bill

Palm oil is used widely in a lot of our food and non-food products including makeup and personal care products such as creams. However, I feel strongly that if palm oil is used in any product it should be labelled as such so that consumers know and have a choice whether to buy the product or not. Why? Because palm oil is causing devastating damage to our environment.

Greenhouse Gases

Some argue that planting palm trees is good because it captures carbon dioxide just like the rain forests do. But the actual exercise of cutting down the rain forests causes gas emissions in the form of the machinery that is used. Planting palm trees does NOT offset the destruction of the rain forests.

Destruction of Habitat

Many species of animals are being endangered by cutting down the rain forests so that palm trees can be planted for the oil. Animals such as the Sumatran tiger and orang-utan are particularly endangered. There appears to be no concern for these animals because the booming palm oil industry is seen as so much more important. These same animals are also being deliberately killed when they try to protect and defend their homes.

I am sure that in a very short space of time there will be a lot more in the media about the impact of palm oil and so it would be good to see the Government take a proactive initiative and legislate for all products – both food and non-food – to be labelled if they contain palm oil. This way, the public are informed and will feel in control and the Government will take the kudos for being environmentally responsible.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Clayton