

## Auckland Zoo says Buy Palm Oil Free

### What is palm oil?

Palm oil comes from the oil palm plant, native to West Africa. It is now found in at least one out of every 10 supermarket products, including food, cosmetics, cleaning and bath products. Such is the demand, the world's consumption of palm oil is doubling every 10 years.

### What's the problem?

In Indonesia and Malaysia where 85% of the world's palm oil is produced, virgin rainforests and peat swamp forests are being logged, cleared and burned to plant oil palm plantations. While non-forested land is available, the majority of companies choose to first log virgin rainforest and make additional profit from selling the rainforest timber. The ongoing destruction of these rainforest and peat swamp forest ecosystems is threatening the survival of the orangutan, as well as the Sumatran tiger, Asian rhino, Asian elephant, and hundreds of other species.

### What Auckland Zoo is doing

As advocates for wildlife, Auckland Zoo believes the only way to save these species and forest habitats and slow the uncontrolled expansion of oil palm plantations is to reduce palm oil consumption, and therefore demand for palm oil.

Auckland Zoo is committed to avoiding or minimising the use or sale of products that contain palm oil, and is working towards its ultimate goal - to be palm oil-free.

Through the Auckland Zoo Conservation Fund, Auckland Zoo supports wildlife conservation projects in Sumatra that help protect and conserve the Sumatran orangutan, Sumatra tiger, Asian rhino, Asian elephant and a range of other species and their habitats. Current projects include The Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme (SOCP), 21st Century Tiger (Kerinci Seblat National Park) and the Asian Rhino Project.

### Join us!

As consumers, Auckland Zoo believes the power is in the hands of everyone to help save these animals and habitats. In New Zealand we are consuming 20,000 tonnes of palm oil a year - mostly without knowing it! We invite all New Zealand consumers to join us in avoiding or minimising the use of products that contain palm oil. Start by choosing just one product and you will make a difference.

#### Easy ways you can help:

- Use our Palm Oil Free Shopping Guide and Buy Palm Oil Free wallet card to help you reduce your palm oil consumption. Visit [www.aucklandzoo.co.nz](http://www.aucklandzoo.co.nz)
- Donate to our Auckland Zoo Conservation Fund – supporting the conservation of endangered animals in the wild, including the Sumatran orangutan, Sumatran tiger, Asian rhino, Asian elephant, and their habitats
- Use our online template letters to write to your local MP and supermarket expressing your concern about the lack of palm oil labelling in New Zealand. (Currently in New Zealand there is no legal requirement for palm oil or its derivatives to be labelled on product packaging)

Auckland Zoo wants to see compulsory labelling of palm oil and its derivatives in New Zealand so that all New Zealand consumers can make an informed choice about whether or not they want to buy products that contain palm oil.

**BUY PALM OIL  
FREE**



## The problem with palm oil

### Loss of forest habitat

- Nearly half of Sumatra's forests disappeared between 1985 and 2007  
In the last decade, nearly 80% of deforestation in Sumatra's peat swamp forests (highest orangutan density) was driven by the expansion of oil palm plantations<sup>1</sup>
- In Indonesia alone 3,400km<sup>2</sup> (340,000ha) of forest is converted into oil palm annually. That's 54 rugby fields every hour!<sup>2</sup>
- Given the current rate of deforestation, it is predicted that 98% of lowland forest in Indonesia may be destroyed by 2022<sup>3</sup>
- An estimated 73 – 88% of all timber logged in Indonesia is illegal<sup>4</sup>
- Every year for the past two decades, 3,800km<sup>2</sup> (380,000ha) of forest in Sumatra has been lost to illegal logging<sup>5</sup>



*The race to save animals and their habitats is the race to save ourselves.*

### Loss of animal species

- Less than 6,600 Sumatran orangutans remain in the wild today. It is predicted this Critically Endangered primate could be the first of the great apes living today to go extinct in the wild – with local populations in parts of Sumatra disappearing as early as 2015<sup>6</sup>
- The IUCN Red List of threatened species lists the Sumatran orangutan as Critically Endangered and the Bornean orangutan as Endangered. "If forest conversion for oil palm continues, the palm oil industry will be significantly contributing to the extinction of both species of orangutan"<sup>7</sup>
- Orangutans share their forests with hundreds of other threatened and ecologically important species including the including the Critically Endangered Sumatran tiger, Critically Endangered Sumatran rhino and Javan rhino, and the forest-dwelling sub-species of Asian elephant, also now Endangered.<sup>8</sup>
- A September 2011 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report requested by the Republic of Indonesia, states that conserving key rainforests in Indonesia could generate revenues three times greater than felling them for palm oil plantations. This would deliver Green Economy benefits while throwing a lifeline to the remaining populations of Sumatran orangutans.<sup>10</sup>

#### References:

- **1** September 2011 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report: Orangutans And The Economics Of Sustainable Forest Management in Sumatra <http://www.grida.no/publications/organgutans-sumatra/>
- **2** March 2009 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) report: <http://www.pecad.fas.usda.gov/highlights/2009/03/Indonesia/>
- **3** UNEP 2007 report: Last Stand Of The Orangutan <http://www.grida.no/publications/rr/orangutan/>
- **4** UNEP 2007 report: Last Stand Of The Orangutan <http://www.grida.no/publications/rr/orangutan/>
- **5** UNEP September 2011 report: Orangutans And The Economics of Sustainable Forest Management In Sumatra <http://www.grida.no/publications/organgutans-sumatra/>
- **6** UNEP September 2011 report: Orangutans And The Economics of Sustainable Forest Management In Sumatra <http://www.grida.no/publications/organgutans-sumatra/>
- **7** September 2005 report "The oil for ape scandal; how palm oil is threatening orangutan survival" [www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/oil\\_for\\_ape\\_summary.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/oil_for_ape_summary.pdf)
- **8** 2007 report: Last Stand Of The Orangutan, 'An irreplaceable habitat' – page 6 <http://www.grida.no/publications/rr/orangutan/page/1269.aspx>
- **9** September 2011 UNEP report: Orangutans And The Economics Of Sustainable Forest Management In Sumatra <http://www.grida.no/publications/organgutans-sumatra/>
- **10** September 2011 UNEP report: Orangutans And The Economics Of Sustainable Forest Management in Sumatra <http://www.grida.no/publications/organgutans-sumatra/>

**BUY PALM OIL  
FREE**

