



LETTER WRITING KIT

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Sample Letters

Here are some sample letters. We suggest you don't copy them but use your own words to explain your concerns, whilst incorporating the key points. Add any additional content you would like to include but BRIEF is better. In general, start by stating your concern e.g. I am very concerned about the effects of non-sustainable palm oil production on orangutans/wildlife/rainforests/climate change in Indonesia/Malaysia/Papua New Guinea.....

Companies who label as palm oil

Thankyou for labelling the palm oil in your product_____.

I am very concerned about the use of palm oil because of the serious environmental consequences associated with new palm oil plantations in Indonesia and Malaysia where primary rainforest is being cleared destroying the habitat of highly endangered orangutans. Not only this, the peat swaps on which the forest grows is often drained, thereby releasing methane into the atmosphere, and then burnt, releasing carbon. Indonesia is the world's third largest carbon emitter because of these fires. Papua New Guinea ecosystems and communities are also threatened by oil palm plantation development.

Please help to take action on this. It is your responsibility as a corporate citizen. I would appreciate it if you could answer the following questions for me:

- Which of your products contain Palm Oil?
- Are you in a position to verify the country of origin of this oil?
- Are you able to verify whether the oil comes from sustainable sources, including providing details of the importer, wholesaler and plantations involved in your supply chain?
- Can you be sure that these companies are not also involved in oil palm plantation expansion elsewhere
- Would you be prepared to look for alternative oil which is less damaging to health and the environment?
- Are you a member of the RSPO? If not, please join immediately and take an active role in promoting sustainable palm oil.

I understand that your palm oil supplier may be a member of the RSPO however this in no way means that the palm oil is being produced sustainably. This needs to be demanded NOW. The situation for orangutans and our world's climate is URGENT so please take action on this immediately.

Companies who label as vegetable oil

I am aware that your product, _____ contains vegetable oil and also saturated fat. I understand, therefore, that it is likely that the oil contained in this product is palm oil.

I am very concerned about the use of palm oil because of the serious environmental consequences associated with new palm oil plantations in Indo and Malaysia where primary rainforest is being cleared destroying the habitat of highly endangered orangutans. Not only this, the peat swamps on which the forest grows is often drained, thereby releasing methane into the atmosphere, and then burnt, releasing carbon. Indonesia is the world's third largest carbon emitter because of these fires. Papua New Guinea ecosystems and communities are also threatened by oil palm plantation development.

Please help to take action on this. It is your responsibility as a corporate citizen. I would appreciate it if you could answer the following questions for me :

- Which of your products contain palm oil
- How is it labelled?
- Would you be prepared to label it as palm oil?
- Are you in a position to verify the country of origin of this oil?
- Are you able to verify whether the oil comes from sustainable sources, including providing details of the importer, wholesaler and plantations involved in your supply chain?
- Can you be sure that these companies are not also involved in oil palm plantation expansion elsewhere
- Would you be prepared to look for an alternative oil which is less damaging to health and the environment
- Are you a member of the RSPO? If not, please join immediately and take an active role in promoting sustainable palm oil.

I understand that your palm oil supplier may be a member of the RSPO however this in no way means that the palm oil is being produced sustainably. This needs to be demanded NOW. The situation for orangutans and our world's climate is URGENT.

Politicians – labelling

Labelling – this issue is best addressed to the Minister of Health

I am writing as I am very concerned about the use of palm oil because of the serious environmental consequences associated with new palm oil plantations in Indonesia and Malaysia where primary rainforest is being cleared destroying the habitat of highly endangered orangutans. Not only this, the peat swamps on which the forest grows is often drained, thereby releasing methane into the atmosphere, and then burnt, releasing carbon. Indonesia is the world's third largest carbon emitter because of these fires. Papua New Guinea ecosystems and communities are also threatened by oil palm plantation development.

I am also concerned about the health consequences of consuming palm oil which is high in saturated fat.

My biggest concern, however, is that often I do not know if I am consuming palm oil because it may be labelled only as vegetable oil. Regulatory Objectives of the Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) state that regulations must provide for

- the protection of public health and safety; and
 - the provision of adequate information relating to food to enable consumers to make informed choices;
- and

In developing food regulatory measures and variations of food regulatory measures, FSANZ must also have regard to the following:

- the promotion of fair trading in food.

Currently, with regard to palm oil, I feel these objectives are not being met. I believe palm oil should be labelled as such because, in direct relation to the above points:

(a) It is high in saturated fat, therefore I want to know if I am consuming it, thereby protecting my own health and safety.

(b) I am not able to make an informed choice about consuming a product containing palm oil if it is only labelled as vegetable oil therefore the information on the label is inadequate

(c) Social advocacy groups in Indonesia report that human rights abuses are being perpetrated by oil palm plantation developers and palm oil processing mills are highly polluting, damaging ecosystems and the wellbeing of people who live in the area. The fair trading of this commodity starts with landowners, therefore by not requiring palm oil labelling FSANZ robs consumers of the choice to avoid a substance which is not 'fair trade', and fails to meet its own objectives.

Please urgently address the issue of palm oil labelling. I would appreciate an explanation as to why FSANZ is not meeting its own objectives in the above cases.

Sample letter to companies already using sustainable palm oil

I am writing to thank you for using sustainable palm oil in your products, and to ask you to consider changing your product labels.

(Optional but not necessary - any additional content you would like to include, BRIEF is better, see other letters)

Since you have switched to sustainable palm oil, please consider labelling your products accordingly – example: dolphin-safe tuna is labelled as such.

If you have not already – please join the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil to help move the entire palm oil industry to adopt ecologically sound practices.

Thank you for your efforts toward more environmentally friendly practices.

Food retailers/supermarkets

I have become aware that many food products contain palm oil. The development of new oil palm plantations is devastating life-supporting eco systems across the tropical world, including the habitat of the last remaining highly endangered orangutans in Indonesia and the Queen Alexandra Birdwing, the largest butterfly in the world in Papua New Guinea. Not only this, the fires burning to clear land for plantations in Indonesia are contributing huge amounts of methane and carbon to the atmosphere, fuelling global warming.

As an important player in the food supply chain, I urge you to stop stocking products containing palm oil, unless your supplier can assure you that they only use sustainably grown palm oil. Please ask your buyers to contact all their suppliers immediately to do an audit of the extent of the problem. We suspect you will be surprised at how many of your products are involved. When you have done this process you can tell me and your customers that you only stock products which contain palm oil that is 'orangutan friendly'.

Please, orangutans are on the very edge of extinction. Take some responsibility and don't have their blood on your hands.

Please inform me of the outlet's position on palm oil as soon as possible.

I urge you to join the RSPO and take a proactive position on this issue.

KFC

I am aware that in KFC kitchens your product is fried in palm oil. I have concerns about this because, not only is palm oil high in saturated fats and therefore linked to cardiovascular disease, there are some serious environmental concerns currently linked to its production in Indonesia, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea. The development of new oil palm plantations is devastating life supporting eco systems across the tropical world, including the habitat of the last remaining highly endangered orangutans in Indonesia and the Queen Alexandra Birdwing, the largest butterfly in the world in Papua New Guinea. Not only this, the fires burning to clear land for plantations in Indonesia are contributing huge amounts of methane and carbon to the atmosphere, fuelling global warming.

- Are you in a position to verify the country of origin of palm oil that you use?
- Are you able to confirm whether the oil comes from sustainable sources? If so, can you verify this including providing details of the importer, wholesaler and plantations involved in your supply chain?
- Can you be sure that these companies are not also involved in oil palm plantation expansion elsewhere into remote parts of Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea where precious ecosystems are being irrevocably destroyed?
- Would you be prepared to look for alternative oil which is less damaging to health and the environment?
- Are you a member of the RSPO? If not, please join immediately and take an active role in promoting sustainable palm oil.

Politicians – Biofuel

This letter is best addressed to the Minister for Climate Change, and Environment

I am writing to ask you to urgently introduce legislation to stop the importation of palm oil for use as a biofuel.

Until such time as there is evidence that palm oil can be produced on a genuinely sustainable basis our country must not be party to the destruction of primary rainforest, orangutan habitat, and the huge amounts of methane and carbon emissions which are resulting from the draining and burning of peat swamps in tropical countries to prepare land for oil palm plantations.

I ask you to put an immediate moratorium in place to stop or prevent our involvement with this. The greenhouse gas equations in relation to biofuel must be thoroughly analysed before we proceed with embracing this technology.

Please could you inform me as to the present situation with regards to using palm oil as a biofuel in this country, and what measures your government will be taking to ensure this does not further contribute to environmental problems?

cafes/restaurants/takeaway outlets:

I have become aware that many food products contain palm oil. The development of new oil palm plantations is devastating life-supporting eco systems across the tropical world, including the habitat of the last remaining highly endangered orangutans in Indonesia and the Queen Alexandra Birdwing, the largest butterfly in the world in Papua New Guinea. Not only this, the fires burning to clear land for plantations in Indonesia are contributing huge amounts of methane and carbon to the atmosphere, fuelling global warming.

As an important player in the food chain, I urge you to check on all food products used within your operation and establish whether palm oil is present. Often palm oil is labelled only as vegetable oil so you will need to ask your suppliers to ascertain whether or not this is in fact palm oil. I suspect you will be surprised at how many of your products are involved. Then I urge you to ask suppliers/manufacturers the following questions:

- Are they in a position to verify the country of origin of this oil?
- Are they able to verify whether the oil comes from sustainable sources, including providing details of the importer, wholesaler and plantations involved in the supply chain?
- Can they be sure that these companies are not also involved in oil palm plantation expansion elsewhere, where primary rainforest is being destroyed
- Would they be prepared to look for alternative oil which is less damaging to health and the environment?
- Are they a member of the RSPO? If not, ask them to join immediately and take an active role in promoting sustainable palm oil. You too can do this.
- If you can't guarantee sustainable palm oil please don't use it. Try another vegetable oil instead.

When you have done this process you can tell me and your other customers that you only stock products which contain palm oil that is 'orangutan friendly', or that you are a 'palm oil free' premises.

Please, orangutans are on the very edge of extinction. Take some responsibility and don't have their blood on your hands.

Please inform me of your outlet's position on palm oil as soon as possible. I urge you to join the RSPO and take a proactive position on this issue.

Indonesian, Malaysian & Papua New Guinea Governments:

Address these letters to the ambassadors of these countries in your country:

The Ambassador His Excellency T.M. Hamzah Thayeb The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia 8 Darwin Avenue, Yarralumla, ACT 2600 AUSTRALIA indonemb@kbri-canberra.org.au indonemb@bigpond.com	The Ambassador His Excellency Amris Hassan Indonesian Embassy kbriwell@ihug.co.nz
The Ambassador Malaysian Embassy	The Ambassador Malaysian Embassy
The Ambassador Embassy	The Ambassador Embassy

Dear Ambassador,

I am very concerned about the destruction of forests to make way for oil palm plantations in your country threatening important ecosystems and therefore the survival of humankind. Please help to stop the serious environmental consequences associated with new palm oil plantations such as rapid loss of species some of which are highly endangered, release of greenhouse gases, loss of huge areas which store carbon and the human rights abuses which may be occurring in relation to land rights and local people's involvement in the industry. Please, I implore you:

- Give no further concessions to palm oil companies to clear High Conservation Value Forest and ensure your policing is strong.
- Ensure the palm oil industry uses already degraded land to grow their crops.
- Restore peatlands which have been drained and degraded.
- Recognise the customary rights of local people.
- Remove plantations from national parks.
- Ensure that members of the RSPO maintain the integrity of its aims and objectives.

Thank you for taking action on this important matter.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND ADDRESSES:

Write to these ministers at the addresses below or use their email address.

<p><u>The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP</u> Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts Postal: Suite MG 40 Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 Email: peter.garrett.mp@aph.gov.au</p>	<p><u>Senator the Hon Penny Wong</u> Minister for Climate Change and Water Postal: Suite MG 60 Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 Email: senator.wong@aph.gov.au</p>
<p><u>The Hon Nicola Roxon MP</u> Minister for Health and Ageing Postal: Suite MG 50 Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 Email: nicola.roxon.mp@aph.gov.au</p>	<p><u>The Hon Tony Burke MP</u> Minister Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry PO Box 6022 House of Representatives Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 Email: tony.burke.mp@aph.gov.au</p>
<p><u>The Hon Stephen Smith MP</u> Minister for Foreign Affairs Postal: Suite M1 46 Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600. Email: Stephen.Smith.MP@aph.gov.au</p>	

IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND ADDRESSES

<p>Yum! Restaurant International (KFC) Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Albert Baladi Locked bag 522 FRENCHS FOREST. NSW 2086 AUSTRALIA www.kfc.com.au</p>	<p>Campbell's Arnott's Mark Alexander President Asia Pacific Locked bag 88, SILVERWATER NSW 2128 AUSTRALIA www.arnotts.com.au</p>
<p>Goodman Fielder Peter Margin Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Sydney: 75 Talavera Road NORTH RYDE NSW 2113 AUSTRALIA Melbourne: Level 9, 564 St Kilda Road MELBOURNE VIC 3004 AUSTRALIA www.goodmanfielder.com.au Email: peter.margin@goodmanfielder.com.au</p>	<p>Unilever Australasia Head Office CEO – Sebastian Lazell 20 Cambridge Street EPPING NSW 2121 AUSTRALIA www.unilever.com.au</p>
<p>Mr Geoff Starr Chairman, Australian Food & Grocery Council. Chief Executive – George Western Foods Limited P.O. Box 5579, WEST CHATSWOOD NSW 2067 AUSTRALIA www.afgc.org.au Email: pam.leamon@gwf.com.au</p>	<p>Richard Goyder CEO, Coles Group Limited G.P.O Box M978 PERTH WA 6000 AUSTRALIA www.coles.com.au Email: estretch@wesfarmers.com.au</p>
<p>James Strong Chairman, Woolworths Limited 1 Woolworths Way BELLA VISTA NSW 2153 AUSTRALIA www.woolworths.com.au email: agrgic@woolworths.com.au</p>	