

Ryanair DAC  
For the attention of Mr. O'Leary  
PO Box 11451 Swords  
Co Dublin, Ireland



Zoetermeer, 4 November 2019

Dear Mr. O'Leary,

### **Boycotting palm oil is not the answer to saving rainforests and orangutans**

In the summer edition of your inflight magazine 'Run Way Retail' you are advertising the fact that Ryanair has reduced palm oil usage in its on board café 'by a further 42%'. A palm-free logo flags the absence of palm oil in products such as sandwiches and snacks and even water, coffee, and wine.

Firstly, we want to stress that certain products (water and wine for instance) never contain palm oil at all, which makes the inclusion of a palm-free logo not only confusing for consumers, but is also in violation of article 7 of the Food Information to Consumers (FIC) - legislation of the European Commission which is on fair information practices. In several cases companies who used this misleading way of communication were officially requested to withdraw this communication. We hope we do not need to start any official complaint about misleading communication against Ryanair.

Ryanair's on-board communication is confusing for consumers, because it creates conflicting messages around sustainable palm oil for all stakeholders in the palm oil supply chain, including consumers who would like to make a responsible decision and protect rainforests.

Secondly, we consider this communication detrimental to environmental campaigns that focus on solutions for serious issues such as deforestation and biodiversity loss. In this opinion we are supported by many civil society organizations and environmental and nature NGOs (like WWF, IUCN, Greenpeace, Solidaridad, OxfamNovib)

Boycotting palm oil will not lead to less deforestation. By advertising for palm-free products and ignoring the possibility to create a global move towards sustainable palm oil, Ryanair positions itself outside the solution that is already being supported by the majority of palm oil supply chain, civil society and governments. While all stakeholders are increasing their efforts, Ryanair, by boycotting all palm oil, including sustainable palm oil, is heading in the wrong direction.

Several organisation have done in-depth research to dispute a boycott. A report by the [International Union for the Conservation of Nature](#), concluded that boycotting palm oil would displace - not halt - biodiversity loss. That is because palm oil, the most productive oil crop, would have to be replaced with other vegetable oils. This [EU Commission's report](#) states palm oil currently occupies the least land out of all oil crops, and that if we replace palm oil with other oils, we'll need 5 - 8 times larger areas of land.

#### **European Palm Oil Alliance (EPOA)**

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Sustainably-produced palm oil follows the [RSPO's Principles and Criteria](#), delivering maximum positive impact to communities, with minimal negative impact to the environment. The principles forbid deforestation, new planting on peat and exploitation of people or communities.

As the largest carrier of aircraft passengers Ryanair is amongst the greenest and cleanest of the airlines operating in Europe. In line of this policy we call upon Ryanair to implement an informed and comprehensive policy not diminishing the use of palm oil but using sustainable palm oil instead.

If you want more information on this issue, please contact me. I am looking forward to your earliest reply.

Yours sincerely,

Frans Claassen  
Chair of the European Palm Oil Alliance - EPOA

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Sources:

- <https://www.iucn.org/news/secretariat/201806/saying-no-palm-oil-would-likely-displace-not-halt-biodiversity-loss---iucn-report>
- [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/palm\\_oil\\_study\\_kh0218208enn\\_new.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/pdf/palm_oil_study_kh0218208enn_new.pdf)
- <https://rspo.org/resources/certification/rspo-principles-criteria-certification>

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