



Arlenheim / Schwäbisch Gmünd, February 18th 2016

Statement on the use of palm oil in Weleda products

Weleda is aware of the issues surrounding palm oil plantations, including their frequent involvement in the destruction of the rain forest. For this reason, we were among the first companies to switch to sustainable and organic cultivation for products in which we use pure palm oil. The palm oil sourced by Weleda is certified organic and derives exclusively from non-destructive cultivation, under fair working conditions and with guaranteed traceability.

As a manufacturer of certified true natural and organic cosmetics, Weleda must often rely on emulsifiers and tensides of natural origin that may partly derive from palm oil and palm kernel oil. With such derivatives, we also take pains to ensure that the relevant raw materials are sourced exclusively from environmentally friendly and socially responsible cultivation. However, a persistent lack of transparency within the market for processed raw materials continues to make it difficult for us to achieve this aim. In the case of derivatives, especially, there is often no separation between certified and conventional starting materials along the supply chain.

We have been working to find a solution to this problem on a number of levels for the past few years. This includes our strict internal guidelines on the sourcing of processed raw materials, which aim to progressively improve their traceability. For Weleda, membership in the Roundtable for Sustainable Palmoil (RSPO) is insufficient on its own for suppliers to meet our sourcing criteria. At minimum, we require certification of all raw materials used.

At the same time, we continuously investigate opportunities for replacing ingredients based on palm oil and palm kernel oil with sustainable alternatives. At present, however, to replace all palm-based ingredients with other substances would likely contribute to further deforestation. This is because the yield of an oil palm is five times greater than soybean (0,77 t/ha), four times greater than sunflower (0,86 t/ha) and three times greater than rapeseed (1,33 t/ha).¹ It is therefore all the more important to us that we exert an influence on palm oil cultivation.

Whether or not this can be done effectively, is highly dependent on market demand for sustainably cultivated, palm-based raw materials. Worldwide demand remains very low. For this reason, in 2013, Weleda became a member of the Forum for Sustainable Palmoil (FONAP) and as of 2015, is represented on its Steering Committee. Our membership provides us with a stronger voice in regard to the cultivating countries; it allows us to press for improvements of the sustainability criteria prescribed by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO); and it enables us to work across industry- and organizational boundaries to improve conditions for both nature and the human being.

¹ [World Wide Fund for Nature \(WWF\)](#), September 4th 2013



Only when a sufficiently strong demand for sustainable and certified palm oil, palm kernel oil and derivatives has been created, can an enduring change in cultivation and processing be achieved.

Sincerely,

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