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Headline: Brands refusing to reveal palm oil sources, says Greenpeace

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In this Sept. 29, 2012, file photo, a man pushes his motorbike at a palm oil plantation in Nagan Raya, Aceh province, Indonesia. Greenpeace said Monday, March 19, 2018 household brands including PepsiCo and Johnson & Johnson are refusing to disclose where they get their palm oil from despite vows to stop buying from companies that cut down tropical forests to grow the widely used commodity. The environmental group said that in January it asked 16 major brands to reveal their suppliers of palm oil, which is mainly grown in Indonesia and Malaysia and used in a slew of consumer products from snacks to cosmetics. Image: AP/Dita Alangkara

In this Sept. 29, 2012, file photo, a man pushes his motorbike at a palm oil plantation in Nagan Raya, Aceh province, Indonesia. Greenpeace said Monday, March 19, 2018 household brands including PepsiCo and Johnson & Johnson are refusing to disclose where they get their palm oil from despite vows to stop buying from companies that cut down tropical forests to grow the widely used commodity. The environmental group said that in January it asked 16 major brands to reveal their suppliers of palm oil, which is mainly grown in Indonesia and Malaysia and used in a slew of consumer products from snacks to cosmetics. Image: AP/Dita Alangkara

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Greenpeace says household brands including PepsiCo and Johnson & Johnson are refusing to disclose where they get their palm oil from despite vows to stop buying from companies that cut down tropical forests to grow the widely used commodity.

The environmental group said Monday that in January it asked 16 major brands to reveal their suppliers of palm oil, which is mainly grown in Indonesia and Malaysia and used in a slew of consumer products from snacks to cosmetics. It said eight disclosed the information and eight refused.

Greenpeace said that adds to concerns international consumer goods companies are “way off track” in meeting a 2010 commitment to remove deforestation-linked palm oil from their supply chains by 2020.

“Corporate commitments and policies have proliferated, but companies have largely failed to implement them,” it said.

Colgate-Palmolive, General Mills, Mars, Mondelez, Nestle, Procter & Gamble, Reckitt Benckiser and Unilever agreed to publicly disclose the mills that produce the palm oil they buy and the names of groups that control the mills. Ferrero, Hershey, Kellogg's, Kraft Heinz, Johnson & Johnson, PepsiCo, PZ Cussons and Smucker refused to provide the information, according to Greenpeace.

Globally, four industries — palm oil, soya, logging and cattle rearing — are the biggest destroyers of the virgin forests that are a crucial buffer against the rise in global temperatures.

Indonesia, which has overtaken Brazil as the country cutting down its forests at the fastest rate, lost 24 million hectares of rainforest between 1990 and 2015, Greenpeace said citing government data.

“Alarmingly, the destruction of Indonesia’s rainforests for palm oil shows no signs of slowing down,” the group said.

Groups representing the palm oil industry in Indonesia and Malaysia contend that much of the opposition to palm oil is a protectionist effort by rival industries in Western nations.

They point to an initiative known as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil as evidence they are taking conservation and other commitments seriously.

But Greenpeace said neither the industry initiative nor governments can be relied on to prevent palm oil producers from clearing forests.

“Palm oil traders, typically corporations that also have plantation interests, continue to allow oil from rainforest destroyers into their mills, refineries and distribution systems,” it said. CC

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