

October 8, 2019

David Taylor
Chairman, President and CEO
The Procter & Gamble Company
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Letter to David Taylor, CEO of Procter & Gamble

We face a climate emergency, and the world is losing biodiversity at unprecedented rates. Fires in the Amazon are raising the public's awareness about just how fragile our forests are, and how critical it is that they remain intact. It is in this context that our 116 organizations representing a wide array of conservation, environmental, consumer and student viewpoints, and more than 8 million members and activists, are writing today to express our deep concern that Charmin and your other flagship brands contain no recycled materials or alternative fibers. This means your company is profiting from a wasteful globally harmful supply chain that is turning trees from some of the world's oldest, largest intact forest stands into throwaway tissue products.

As one of the biggest tissue product companies in the United States and as a company that has made a strong commitment to environmental sustainability, we urge you to substantially increase the use of recycled fibers in your tissue products, especially your post-consumer recycled content. As an interim step, we ask that you commit to displace half of your virgin fiber with recycled and low-impact alternative fiber by 2025.

The lack of recycled content in Charmin and your other flagship tissue brands earned each product a failing grade in the recent report [*The Issue with Tissue: How Americans Are Flushing Forests Down the Toilet*](#) published by NRDC and Stand.earth. Recycled content and alternative fibers are widely available and being used by other leading companies in the United States. In fact, some lower grade recycled fiber ends up in landfills in the U.S., and would be an ideal replacement fiber for material coming from intact forest landscapes. Your decision not to incorporate recycled content causes irreplaceable forests to be clearcut for throwaway products like toilet paper, facial tissue, and paper towels.

You source tissue pulp from one of the last great forests on earth – Canada's boreal forest – which faces widespread clearcut logging. Between 1996 and 2015, more than 28 million acres of boreal forest in Canada was logged. For comparison, that's roughly the size of Ohio, the location of your headquarters and the state many of your employees call home. Clearcut logging in ancient boreal forests threatens Indigenous Peoples' ways of life, risks the future of the boreal caribou and other wildlife, and releases carbon that has been stored in trees and soils for thousands of years.

Furthermore, your reliance on forests for your tissue products takes a devastating toll on the climate. Every year, Procter & Gamble's use of virgin forests for tissue products results in an estimated 17.8 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions,^[1] the equivalent to the emissions of 3.8 million passenger vehicles.^[2] Using recycled content results in less than a third of the emissions of 100% virgin pulp.^[3] If Procter & Gamble replaced half its virgin pulp use with recycled content, the benefit to the global climate would dwarf the company's current climate commitments.^[4]

Solutions exist to create products with a substantial percentage of recycled fiber and low-impact alternative fibers. Other companies featured in NRDC and Stand.earth's report received high grades due to their use of post-consumer recycled content between 50-90 percent and no use of virgin fiber. Transitioning to recycled content products and ecologically sustainable alternative fibers is the only way to reduce demand on the boreal forest and other vulnerable regions that supply these products.

We ask that while you scale up the recycled content in your products, you ensure that the areas from which you do source in Canada's boreal forest have the strongest possible environmental safeguards. We ask you to urge Canada's provinces to implement mandatory, enforceable protections for large areas of intact forest that are critical to the long-term survival of species like the boreal caribou and for stabilizing the global climate. We also ask you to implement voluntary safeguards around your Canadian operations by ensuring the areas supplying your products are Forest Stewardship Council-certified in ways that safeguard species habitat requirements consistent with Canada's Species At Risk Act, and implement Indigenous People's rights to Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

Procter & Gamble has long prided itself on its reputation as a leading American innovator. The company has revolutionized dozens of sectors in its 181-year existence. We are urging you to apply this innovative spirit to create tissue products that are truly sustainable. The global climate and our forests are depending on it.

Sincerely,

[1] <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/josh-axelrod/corporate-honesty-and-climate-change-time-own-and-act>

[2] <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>

[3] <https://c.environmentalpaper.org/pdf/SCS-EPN-PC-Methods.pdf>

[4] <https://c.environmentalpaper.org/>

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