

## FACT SHEET

# YOU'VE HEARD CHARMIN'S SPIN; NOW HERE ARE THE FACTS:

## Procter & Gamble's Charmin Turns Canada's Boreal Forest From This... ..To This

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**THE BOTTOM LINE:** P&G's greenwashing myths are hiding the devastating impacts of its tissue brands like Charmin on the climate-critical Canadian boreal forest. By driving a tree-to-toilet pipeline, P&G is needlessly jeopardizing some of the world's last intact forests and the global climate.

**P&G'S CLAIM:** *P&G is a leader in innovation and sustainability.*<sup>1</sup>

**THE REALITY:** P&G is lagging behind other major tissue companies, like Seventh Generation, in both innovation and sustainability by not using any recycled content or sustainable alternative fibers in its tissue products. Even P&G's competitor Kimberly-Clark has surpassed P&G by making commitments to reduce its use of virgin wood fiber and better account for the carbon footprint of its products.<sup>2</sup>

**P&G'S CLAIM:** *P&G cares about the plants, animals and communities that depend on forests.*<sup>3</sup>

**THE REALITY:** P&G's tissue pulp sourcing is driving the clearcutting of critical boreal caribou habitat,<sup>4</sup> despite scientists' warnings that this disturbance is pushing herds to extinction.<sup>5</sup> P&G's impacts on boreal caribou can be devastating for Indigenous Peoples whose ways of life depend on the species.

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**P&G'S CLAIM:** *P&G is helping address climate change.*<sup>6</sup>

**THE REALITY:** Using virgin wood fiber to create throwaway tissue products produces three times the greenhouse gas emissions of using recycled content.<sup>7</sup> Yet Charmin continues to rely on 100 percent virgin wood fiber, eroding climate-critical forests. If P&G were to increase the recycled content in Charmin and its other tissue brands by even 50 percent, it could cut its annual emissions by 5.3 million metric tons of carbon dioxide.<sup>8</sup> By not committing to do so, P&G is complicit in helping drive the climate crisis.

**P&G'S CLAIM:** *Charmin is sourced from responsibly managed forests.*<sup>9</sup>

**THE REALITY:** FSC is the only third-party forestry certification body that requires essential human rights and species protections.<sup>10</sup> However, much of Charmin's pulp comes from forests that lack FSC certification, meaning P&G sources from logging operations that do not uphold internationally recognized Indigenous rights or necessary protections for threatened species habitat.

**P&G'S CLAIM:** *For every tree Charmin uses, at least one is regrown.*<sup>11</sup>

**THE REALITY:** An old-growth forest cannot simply be replanted and replaced. A forest releases massive amounts of climate-altering carbon when clearcut, and it can take centuries for the forest to regain its previous value for the climate.<sup>12</sup> Further, in many areas of the Canadian boreal, the forests aren't growing back at all, with stretches remaining barren even decades after harvesting.<sup>13</sup>

**In the face of P&G's failure to curb its forest and climate impacts, a growing movement is demanding change. Please visit [on.nrdc.org/2Z7EoGn](https://on.nrdc.org/2Z7EoGn) to learn more.**



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Clearcutting, the dominant logging practice across the Canadian boreal, releases vast carbon stores.



© Hesselink/Wildlands League

Even 20 to 30 years after harvesting, leftover slash piles from industrial-scale logging inhibit forest regeneration.

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 Procter & Gamble, *2019 Citizenship Report*, <https://us.pg.com/citizenship2019/>.
- 2 Kimberly-Clark, "2030 Ambition", <https://www.kimberly-clark.com/esg/2030-ambition>.
- 3 Procter & Gamble, *2019 Citizenship Report*.
- 4 According to conversations with P&G representatives and market research, Charmin suppliers include Aditya Birla's AV Terrace Bay mill, Domtar's Dryden mill, and Resolute Forest Products' Thunder Bay mill. Based on the most recent available Forest Management Unit (FMU) annual reports, these mills receive pulp from the following FMUs: Black Spruce Forest, English River Forest, Lac Seul Forest, Lake Nipigon Forest, Kenogami Forest, Red Lake Forest, Trout Lake Forest, and Whiskey Jack Forest. According to each of the Ontario Integrated Range Assessment Reports, these FMUs overlap with the Berens, Brightsand, Nipigon, and Sydney boreal caribou ranges. The *Amended Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou* concludes each of these ranges are declining. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, "Electronic Forest Management Plans," April 2020, <https://www.efmp.lrc.gov.on.ca/eFMP/home.do>. Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Forestry, "Caribou (Boreal population)," <https://www.ontario.ca/page/caribou-boreal-population>. Environment and Climate Change Canada, *Amended Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou (Rangifer tarandus caribou), Boreal population, in Canada 2019*, 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/recovery-strategies/woodland-caribou-boreal-2019.html>.
- 5 Justina Ray, "At Risk of Extinction," *Canadian Geographic*, October 31, 2018, <https://www.canadiangeographic.ca/article/risk-extinction>.
- 6 Procter & Gamble, *2019 Citizenship Report*.
- 7 Tobias Schultz and Aditi Suresh, *Life Cycle Impact Assessment Methodology for Environmental Paper Network Paper Calculator v4.0*, SCS Global Services, 2018, 51, <https://c.environmentalpaper.org/pdf/SCS-EPN-PC-Methods.pdf>.
- 8 Calculation is based on P&G's annual purchased pulp volume of 1.3 million metric tons, as reported in P&G's *2019 Citizenship Report*. Decreasing that amount by half would be a reduction of 650,000 metric tons of virgin fiber. Using Environmental Paper Network's Paper Calculator 4.0, we found that if P&G used recycled content instead, that would yield a reduction of 5.3 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions. Environmental Paper Network, "Calculate Your Impact," <https://c.environmentalpaper.org/> (accessed February 3, 2020).
- 9 Procter & Gamble, *2019 Citizenship Report*.
- 10 Courtenay Lewis, "FSC Canada Pulls Even Further Ahead of the Pack," NRDC, June 3, 2019, <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/courtenay-lewis/fsc-canada-pulls-even-further-ahead-pack>.
- 11 Procter & Gamble, *2019 Citizenship Report*.
- 12 Joshua Axelrod, *Pandora's Box: Clearcutting in the Canadian Boreal Unleashes Millions of Tons of Previously Uncounted Carbon Dioxide Emissions*, NRDC, updated March 2018, <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/pandoras-box-clearcutting-boreal-carbon-dioxide-emissions-ip.pdf>.
- 13 Trevor Hesselink, *Boreal Logging Scars*, Wildlands League, December 2019, 4, <https://loggingcars.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/MyUploads/LOGGING-SCARS-PROJECT-REPORT-FINAL-Dec2019-Summary-LR.pdf>.