

Palm oil giant still linked to Indonesia logging: Greenpeace

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Green groups have long accused palm oil companies of rampant environmental destruction in Indonesia

The world's largest palm oil trader is still linked to deforestation in Indonesia despite committing five years ago to stop logging the

archipelago's vast tracts of jungle, Greenpeace said Monday.

Singapore-listed Wilmar International has close family ties to Gama, a major Indonesian [palm oil](#) plantation company which the environmental group said has destroyed an area of [rainforest](#) twice the size of Paris.

Gama was set up by Wilmar's co-founder and his brother in 2011 and its land concessions are owned and managed by the pair's relatives, according to Greenpeace.

The group claimed mapping and satellite analysis showed Gama had destroyed 21,500 hectares (53,000 acres) of rainforest or peatland since Wilmar's commitment to stop logging in Indonesia.

"For years, Wilmar and Gama have worked together, with Gama doing the dirty work so Wilmar's hands stay clean," said Kiki Taufik, global head of Greenpeace Southeast Asia's Indonesian forests campaign.

"Wilmar must immediately cut off all palm oil suppliers that can't prove they aren't destroying rainforests."

Wilmar did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Greenpeace said that Wilmar denies having any influence over Gama.

Palm oil is a key ingredient in many everyday goods, from biscuits to shampoo and make-up.

Growing demand for the commodity has led to an industry boom in Indonesia, which is the world's top palm oil producer.

Green groups have long accused [palm](#) oil companies of rampant environmental destruction.

Many firms have made "no deforestation" pledges after coming under pressure, but activists say such commitments are hard to monitor and frequently broken.

As well as the destruction of rainforest, clearing peatland—build-up of decayed vegetation—to make way for [palm oil plantations](#) causes enormous environmental damage.

Huge amounts of carbon are released when peat is drained or burnt, exacerbating climate change, according to environmentalists.

Peat fires are also difficult to put out and a key factor in outbreaks of toxic smog which choke Southeast Asia almost every year.

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