

5. EU regulations regarding labelling of food products in respect to palm oil

Colombia, Indonesia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Thailand and Malaysia questioned a new labelling requirement in the European Union concerning products that contain palm oil. The labels in question indicate products which do not contain palm oil ("palm oil free"), which is seen by those members raising this issue as stigmatizing products that contain palm oil – in effect turning this into a so-called "negative labelling requirement". It was also argued that the requirement lacks scientific evidence that palm oil is harmful for health and the environment.

The European Union explained that this is a voluntary label, and is not regulated or required under EU legislation on food information to consumers. Moreover, "palm oil free" was not considered a nutritional claim in the EU.