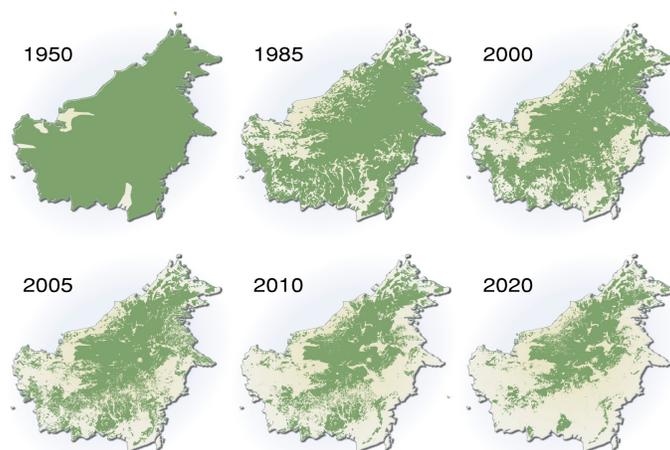


## Deforestation: we're paying for it

We may not know it, but we are partly to blame for deforestation. The products of deforestation are in many of the every-day things we buy. Palm oil appears in dozens of consumer products from skin cream to burgers. Look at the list of ingredients when you buy your next box of soap or tube of hand cream. Chances are, it will include some palm oil derivative. And that means you're adding to the demand side that makes deforestation profitable. Unfortunately the answers to deforestation aren't aren't like trying to reduce your carbon footprint. It's not as easy as switching off your lights or unplugging your phone charger. We have to change the way we live.

To address deforestation we need to understand the fundamental cause of destruction: socioeconomic policies which fail to value natural resources – or value them only in terms of short-term financial profit. Measures designed to address these issues and stop deforestation requires a fundamental shift in thinking and in our interaction with nature. Without such a shift, conservation of rainforest and biodiversity will fail. We are on a path to disaster unless we educate society to adopt an ecosystem approach to life.

The answer will not come in the form of a silver bullet, solving deforestation whilst allowing us to continue as before. It requires more effort than that. In the long run, it requires sustainable education. But we should start now by asking ourselves some fundamental questions: how should we live our lives and think about others? How can we be responsible to future generations? What must I do today to live sustainably? If we forget to ask ourselves these questions, we are like dried leaves in the wind, blown around by forces out of our control. And that will be all that is left of the last natural rainforest on the planet.



*Map of Deforestation Actual & Projected, Borneo 1950–2020*

*Radday, M, WWF Germany. 2007.*