

Stop Palm Oil – Czech Palm Oil Free Navigator – s.p.oil



Essay | HEN634 Environmental NGOs and society

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Introduction – Fire in Indonesia

In the light of a huge environmental disaster of today – fire in Indonesian rainforests (The Guardian, 2015), an issue that opened eyes to mainstream world media and contribute to awareness of public in the field of palm oil production industry, we want to reduce palm oil consumption in Europe, namely in the Czech Republic. We suggest that only reliable action in the battle with huge food industry who try to poison us with cheap unhealthy palm oil is to change consumer behaviour. We know we will be not the only one who try to solve this problem, but it is necessarily to try it. Sale reduce is something that greedy traders are afraid of.

Why is Palm oil so controversial?

The global palm oil industry is expanding fast. We can find it in hundreds of food products (from margarine and chocolate to cream cheese and oven chips) it is also used in cosmetic products and is increasing for use in biofuels like biodiesel. Compared to levels in 2000, demand is predicted to more than double by 2030 and to triple by 2050. Over 70 per cent ends up in food, but, as we said before, the biofuels industry is expanding rapidly. Indonesia already has 6 million hectares of oil palm plantations, but has plans for another 4 million by 2015 dedicated to biofuel production alone.

To feed this demand, tropical rainforest and peatlands in South East Asia are being torn up to provide land for oil palm plantations. Palm plantations encroach further and further into forested areas. This is traduced in an indiscriminate logging and loss of habitats and biodiversity. One example is the decrease of orangutan population in Sumatra.

The exploitation of palm oil leads to social problems too. Big companies have pressured small farmers to leave their houses and lands in order to extend their palm plantations. One way to achieve that is the intentioned fires.

The use of biofuels is supposed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The irony is that these attempts to reduce the impact of climate change could actually make things worse because clearing

forests and draining and burning peatlands to grow palm oil will release more carbon emissions than burning fossil fuels.

In relation with the health in its most natural form, palm oil has nutritional value, such as antioxidants. However, after been processed to be introduced into packaged food it lost his benefits. His consumption is relation with heart diseases, insulin resistance and obesity.

How do we find palm oil?

As it was outlined at the previous paragraph, palm oil is present in many industry products. Some NGOs are saying that best for this situation is not to buy anything industrial processed and only cook at home all of our foods. We all know it is nonsense. It is possible at some point but our lives are so hectic and complex so nobody can live as a hermit and grow all day and night all food by himself.

It is easier to find palm oil at food because from 13th of December 2014 (Liga proti palmovému oleji, 2015) producers have to write down on labels contains of vegetable oils they use in products. Worse situation is with cosmetics. As you can see list down below, about 45 names palm oil can be hiding behind. (Greenpeace, 2014). Worst situation is with biofuels. At this field we can do nothing as consumers, because many farmers use subsidized biofuels as they produce our food or many public transport companies use fuels with biofuel components. At this field only way is via governments and petitions – namely European Parliament and European Council.

Palm oil in cosmetics:

- arachamide mea
- capric triglyceride
- caprylic triglyceride
- caprylyl glycol
- cetyl alcohol
- elaeis guineensis
- emulsifier (*emulgátor – některé mohou být odvozeny z palmového oleje*)
- epoxidized palm oil (*UV vytvrzované nátěrové hmoty*)
- ethylene glycol monostearate
- ethylhexyl palmitate
- fatty alcohol sulphates

- glyceryl stearate
- isopropyl isostearate
- isopropyl palmitate
- mono-glycerides of fatty acids
- myristoyl
- octyl palmitate
- oleyl betaine
- palm kernel oil (palmojádrový olej)
- palm oil (palmový olej)
- palm olein
- palm stearine
- palmitoyl oxostearamide
- palmitoyl tetrapeptide-3
- peg-100 stearate
- peptide complex
- saponified elaeis guineensis
- sleareth
- sls
- sodium laurel
- sodium laureth sulfate
- sodium laureth sulphate
- sodium lauroyl lactylate
- sodium lauryl
- sodium lauryl sulfate
- sodium lauryl sulfoacetate
- sodium lauryl sulphate

- sodium palm kernelate
- sodium palmate
- sodium stearate
- stearamidopropyl dimethylamine
- steareth-2
- steareth-20
- steareth-21
- stearic acid

(source - Greenpeace, 2014)

Czech NGO in the field of palm oil

In the Czech Republic there are a lot of NGOs which highlighting the problem. Some of them have this issue as secondary theme – for example Greenpeace has a campaign about Saving Rainforests and Palm oil is an issue that is discussed (Greenpeace, 2014), Most important is, that in the Czech Republic exists umbrella organisation on this issue – Liga proti palovému oleji (LPO), which is supported by 51 Czech NGOs and many more experts from all kind of fields.

LPO is making an big campaign about palm oil. It has 6 main campaign goals –

- Ensure communication and coordinated action ... to limit the consumption of palm oil,
- Inform consumers about negative impact of the cultivation, production and distribution of oil palm on the environment ... and human health,
- Inform about alternative products without palm oil,
- Inform about companies that use palm oil,
- Communicate with individual producers and companies on compensation of palm oil fats.
- Manage the web and operate the web www.stoppalmovemuoleji.cz,
- Communicate with media, prominent personalities and other partners. (Liga proti palmovému oleji, 2014)

LPO is focusing on education of public., petition, medialisation, communication with politicians, expertise. LPO has a section on their web sites with gallery of products with and without palm oil, but is not well replete. Searching in the gallery is neither simple nor quick. This is point where we can cooperate with LPO and offer our capacity to work on common goal.

Our vision

We see our contribution to this issue in the availability fast and clear information about palm oil. We focus on Czech consumers and their consumption behaviour. It is without doubt that modern people are overworked, nervous and tired and do not have time to read all the labels of food they buy. Of course, it is nice EU force food industry to write down composition of oils of product on labels, but it is only consumer time spend on riding down these labels or finding information about it. And people have no time to do that, for multiple reasons. Our vision is to facilitate this through modern techniques.

Our concept

Our concept is to simplify consumers deciding about buying or avoiding of products with palm oil through mobile app. Many people these days are using smartphones with internet connection. They download lots of application to their smartphones and using them at daily basis. We try to develop a new mobile application that can simply recognise several of goods (through scanning its ean-codes, photos of packaging or container) and have a database with a lot of search tools. Application have to be connected with Facebook, our web pages, but it is important that can be used also offline.

There are a few problems which must be solved. First - our app must be very modern, with good design so nobody (not even teenagers) could be ashamed of and using it proudly. Best scenario is that it becomes new fashion. Second – intern data have to be well protected so nobody else (especially food industry) should get these information. Third – it have to be easy handle, especially in the search tool bar. Fourth – packaging of goods are changing really fast. We must have a team of people who take care of updates.

Our target group

Our target group is consumers in the first place, so all of us. People have lack of information on what to buy and why is it so important. Another NGOs try to educate them but we suggest that without modernisation of educational techniques not many people join in the „palm oil avoidance movement“. Environmentalists, ecologists, people with nature sentiment and other alternative groups are already convinced and well educated. Of course there is a lot of people who will ignore it at any form but when massive part of consumers change even a little bit their behaviour, food industry respond. Latest proof of this is an issue of Czech biscuits called Piškoty, when people get angry and stops buy it when foreign company who bought Czech national company Opavia changed recipe of Piškoty to get cheaper production.

Financing

Because our NGO is conceived as very small, also our budget is unpretending. For the work of our NGO are needed only three people. But it is the minimal number of staff. Our NGO needs minimally one person for programming and administration, one person for web design and graphic design and one for management and accountancy. This is the most important part which divides budget design into two branches.

In the first one are these three people **paid workforce**, in another branch they work voluntarily. If we will make a design of NGO with staff (three paid people), we need to count in three times average Czech salary. Average salary is now (2015) about 25.000,- Kč, so it's extra 75.000,- Kč per month on the expenditure side of our budget. In the case of employment people living in a "voluntary simplicity" mode it can be less. Less demanding alternate of budget doesn't count with staff, just with volunteers.

We are aware that these two designs of NGO budget are a bit extreme. Another way is kind of a middle way. People can work part-time, or as brigade-workers with lower salary. Anyway, human work won't be probably for free, neither it won't cost 75.000,- Kč per month. Cost for human work will be by estimation somewhere between these two numbers.

Expenditure side of the budget doesn't contain just labor costs. The NGO will also need money for propagation over Facebook, Twitter and Google, web page hosting and domain registration, charges for software developer programs or printing promotional material.

Propagation over **social networks** is very crucial for our NGO, so we will spend a lot of money (in the context of our NGO) for this. We will use **Facebook Advertising** system with daily budget of \$3. This is approximately a total amount of \$91.5 per month. In case of **Twitter** we will use Twitter Promoted Tweets and Twitter Promoted Account. Twitter is a little tricky because of "payment for engagement" system. The maximum Twitter expenditure range should be also about \$100 per month. This money we are going to divide between Promoted Account and promoting tweets according to their importance. Another big advertising provider will be **Google** with their Google AdWords program. Also here we can choose maximum range of the budget. It should be 100, - Kč per day.

Among other charges we have to include **web page hosting and domain name registration**. In case of Czech domain name it will cost 151,- Kč per year and web hosting will cost us 363,- Kč per year. These costs are based on information from the Wedos Company which we considered as reliable and low-cost partner for us.

The last part of the expenditure side of the budget consists of charges for **mobile application developer programs**. We will have to pay a charge of \$99 per year for Apple Developer Program, one-time payment of \$25 for Google Play Developer Console and annual payment of \$19 per year for Microsoft Developer account.

To summarize maximal annual expenditures of our NGO we made a table and chart showed below.

people (salaries + expenses)	~ 75.000,- Kč
web (domain + hosting)	514,- Kč
mobile application (developer programs)	\$99 + \$25 ¹ + \$19 = \$143 = 3.600,- Kč
advertising (Facebook, Twitter, Google)	96.500,- Kč
TOTAL	175.614,- Kč

Table 1: Annual NGO expenditures

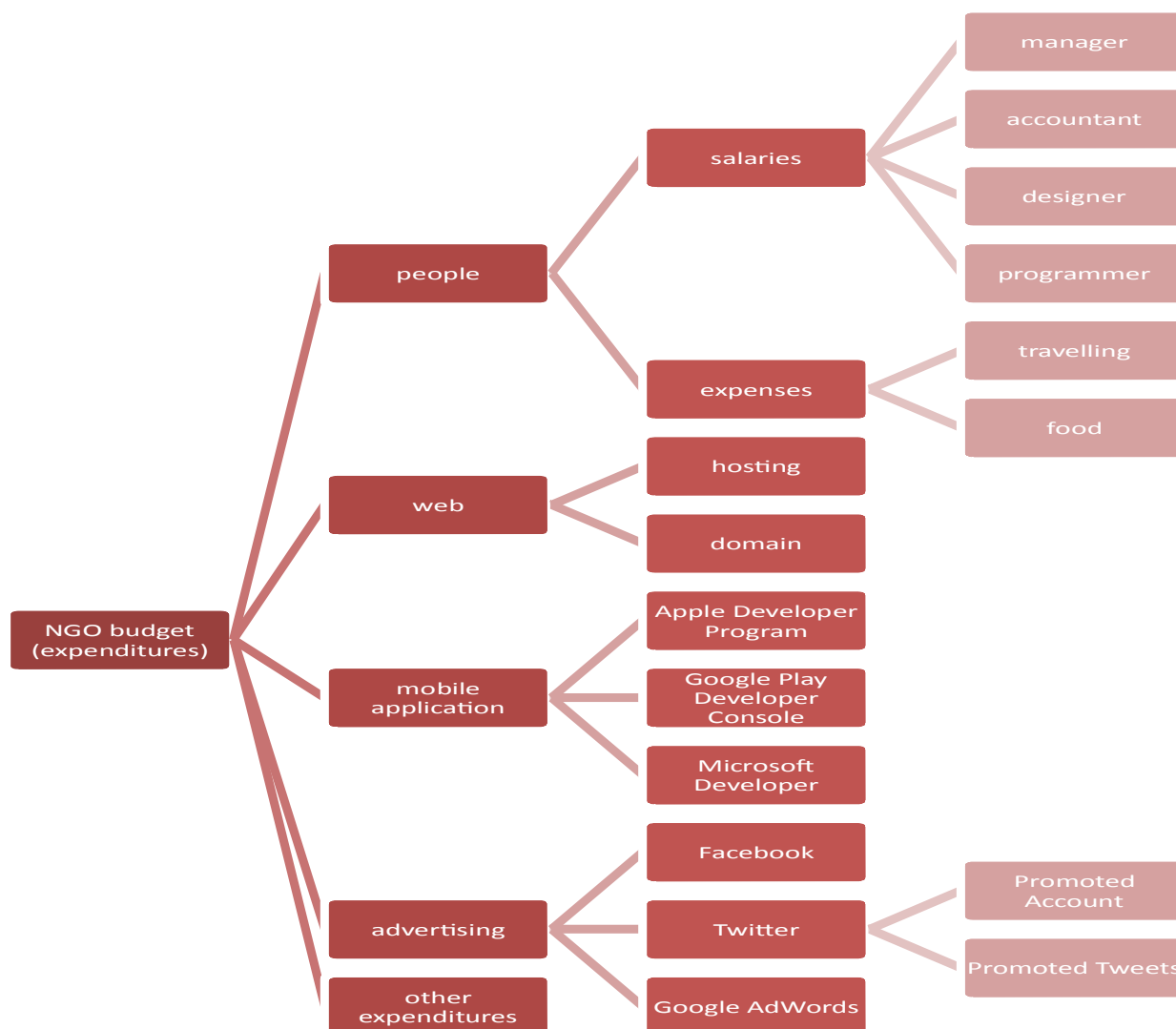


Chart 1: Annual NGO expenditures

On the revenue side of the budget we take into account especially membership and sponsorship, because we are going to offer our services for free.

¹ Just in the first year.

Membership means that every member/employee/volunteer of the NGO should pay an annual member fee.

Another important part of the revenue is **sponsorship** which will be offered through our web site and through mobile app. We will decently offer every mobile application user a possibility to contribute money. This way should be easy and fast, because complicated and time consuming ways are dissuasive. We are thinking about using bank online payment gate and PayPal.

Then we are thinking about grants requests, from European Union for example, and state funding, for example from the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic. In these spheres we are less experienced so we won't to specify more these revenues.



Chart 2: Annual NGO revenues

Campaigning

Campaigning of our NGO we would like to split into two parts – internal and public. In the internal campaigning part we will obtain money for start of our NGO and we will prepare our campaign. The second part is public and it means generally web administration, updates and communication with people.



Blue colored part is internal part of campaigning and red is public part.

For obtaining startup money we are going to use crowdfunding via Kickstarter. We believe that we are able to get enough money through this service because many people in the past did that. Then we will prepare webpage, mobile application and product database.

The main idea of the mobile application is that we will offer a free app which is able to scan an EAN or QR code of the product (food, cosmetics...) and the app will show you an entry from the database so you get to know very fast if the product contains palm oil or not. Webpage should be accessible from the very beginning – people need to know our emblem. It should show just the emblem and some simple information like *coming soon*.

Very important is communication and cooperation with other NGOs. We are very small so we want to cooperate and ask other NGOs for cooperation. They can show an advert, demonstrate an app or talk about us.

Somewhere here is the break between internal and public campaigning.

The public part follows. Now it's time to start our webpage, offering a mobile application, communication via social networks, organizing a news conference and obtaining donations for next operation of our NGO.

Future

Once our company works properly in Czech Republic our objective will be to expand to other countries of Europe in order to be able to make aware more people. We will open headquarters in each country which will bring the message in each language to the population.

Also we want to extend our area of work to food education in schools. We want to change the habits of consume of the population. A good habits of feeding since the childhood can make easier achieve this objective.

We want to open a foundation for the reforestation of the damage forest due to the consumption of palm oil. The campaign will consist in propose the people to donate the money that they would expend in buying some product with pal oil, for example a Kit Kat. (This money can be used to repair the damage of reforestation, built a sustainable system of approaching the palm oil or expended in the native people that lost their houses and lands, social waste).

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