



WHEREAS:

Mondelēz International’s environmental policy states the company “is committed to reducing the environmental impact of our activities, preventing pollution and promoting the sustainability of the natural resources upon which we depend...” yet a significant amount of brand product packaging is not recyclable and new studies suggest plastic packaging that reaches the ocean is toxic to marine animals and potentially to humans.

Mondelēz’ iconic brands like Oreo and Chips Ahoy are increasingly packaged in flexible film or other plastic packaging, such as pouches, that are not recyclable. Using non-recyclable packaging when recyclable alternatives are available wastes valuable resources that could be recycled many times over. Instead, many billions of discarded package wrappers and pouches representing significant amounts of embedded energy are incinerated or lie buried in landfills. Many of these brands could be sold in recyclable fiber or plastic packaging.

Non-recyclable packaging is more likely to be littered and carried into waterways. Millions of plastic wrappers are swept into waterways annually. A recent assessment of marine debris by a panel of the Global Environment Facility concluded that an underlying cause of debris entering oceans is unsustainable production and consumption patterns including “design and marketing of products internationally without appropriate regard to their environmental fate or ability to be recycled in the locations where sold...”

California spends nearly \$500 million annually preventing trash, much of it packaging, from polluting beaches, rivers, and oceanfront. In the marine environment, plastics break down into small indigestible particles that birds and marine mammals mistake for food, resulting in illness and death. McDonald’s Corp. is replacing plastic foam beverage cups with degradable paper cups due to such concerns.

Further, studies by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 suggest a synergistic effect between persistent, bioaccumulative, toxic chemicals and plastic debris. Plastics concentrate and transfer toxic chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyls and dioxins from the ocean into the marine food web and potentially to human diets, essentially forming a “toxic cocktail” increasing the risk of adverse effects to wildlife and humans. One study of fish from various parts of the North Pacific found one or more plastic chemicals in all fish tested, independent of location and species.

Making all packaging recyclable, if possible, is the first step to reduce the threat posed by ocean debris. Companies who aspire to corporate sustainability yet use these risky materials must explain why they market non-recyclable instead of recyclable packaging. Companies must also work with recyclers and municipalities to assure that recyclable packaging actually gets collected and recycled.

BE IT RESOLVED:

Shareowners of Mondelez International request the Board to issue a report at reasonable cost, omitting confidential information, by October 1, 2016 assessing the environmental impacts of continuing to use non-recyclable brand packaging.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT:

Proponents believe the report should include an assessment of the reputational, financial, and operational risks associated with continuing to use non-recyclable brand packaging and, to the extent possible, goals and a timeline to phase out non-recyclable packaging.