



eChapter 5

Money & the Environment

Money is a form of stored energy. Depending on how money is used, it can contribute to environmental problems or to their solution, or both.

Spending Money

Conscientious consumers are thoughtful about everything they purchase – including product origin (materials, labor, transportation), product-life-cycle, and the post-consumer fate of the products when no longer useful for their original purpose.

Let's start by considering product origin. For example, if you want to help save the rainforests, and you understand that indigenous peoples need sustainable sources of income, then you might want to buy eco-friendly products that provide jobs and income to the native people who live in the rainforest.

FACT: One-and-a-half acres of rainforest disappear every second. At current rates of deforestation, the last rainforests will disappear in 40 years. [\[source\]](#)

Among high-profile examples of rainforest friendly products are:

- [Ben & Jerry's](#) Rainforest Crunch ice cream, made with Brazil nuts reportedly harvested by natives in the Amazon. Introduced a decade ago, Rainforest Crunch raised awareness among millions of consumers. Even if the economic benefits to rainforest native peoples were minimal – at least Ben & Jerry tried!
- [The Body Shop](#) international chain of retail stores offers [rainforest-friendly personal care](#) products made from Brazil nuts harvested by natives (so they can earn a living without clear-cutting the rainforest). Every bit helps.