

Assignment #2: tragedy of the commons

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Illegal Logging as a Tragedy of the Commons Illegal logging is a case of tragedy of the commons, because it benefits only one or few individuals. In addition, this practice is detrimental to the environment, and despite the fact that only the illegal loggers benefit from this, the larger human population is exposed to the environmental risks this practice brings. Before engaging in illegal logging, an individual or a group of people will make their own silent decisions, which will not be made known to other people. First, this is because illegal logging is illegal, therefore, if exposed, these risk prosecution. In addition, illegal logging harms the environment; therefore, if one discloses their desire of logging, people who know the impact of this practice will probably stop them. Therefore, illegal loggers will decide on their own, without involving anyone else.

Illegal loggers will sneak into national parks and other protected areas, as they lack permission to be there. Most of these employ child labour, while others have slaves to help them execute their mission, and this saves them the labour cost. Illegal logging therefore, benefits the loggers, and has become a profitable business to most of them today. Illegal loggers do not pay taxes, as they evade this. They also process the wood in faraway places, creating jobs there, at the expense of the local communities from where they got the timber. Illegal logging also makes it hard for the legal timber companies to compete favourable in the market, as these go by the state rules, which is costly (Ravenel, Granoff and Magee 56).

Illegal logging has negative consequences on the environment and on a country's economy. First, it leads to devastation of forests, as the loggers harvest many trees. Once forests are devastated, wildlife also suffers, and is

devastated too, as most animals lack shelter and food for survival. Globally, it is estimated that illegal loggers clear approximately 30 million acres of tropical rainforest. Countries that have been greatly affected by illegal logging include Papua New Guinea and Indonesia (“Rey” Web).

To address this problem, more governments should enact laws against illegal logging and develop harsh sanctions for the practice. In addition, a ban and prohibition should be placed on importing or trading illegal timber and wood products. This responsibility calls for collective action, and should not be left to the government alone. Therefore, individuals should also take the responsibility of reporting suspected instances of illegal logging, creating awareness about effects of illegal logging, and belonging to an environmental group to learn more about illegal logging, its effects, and solutions.

Works Cited

Ravenel, Ramsay, Granoff, Ilmi and Magee, Carrie. “Illegal Logging in the Tropics: Strategies

For Cutting Crime.” London: Routledge, 2004

Rey, Mark. “Lessons from the US: stopping illegal logging benefits both sides of politics.” The

Conversation. 14 September 2012. Retrieved

Oil Drilling

Oil drilling is a practice that has faced controversy, especially in the USA.

Offshore oil drilling was banned during the presidency of both Clinton and Bush. This is because of the negative effects this practice is believed to have on the environment. It is true that oil drilling has detrimental effects on the

environment. For instance, offshore drilling may result in oil spills, which pose a danger to the organisms in affected water bodies. On the other hand, in order to start drilling for oil, some situations require clearing of land, including cutting trees for easy accessibility to the oil source. Cutting down trees is a negative action that leads to environmental degradation. In relation to the tragedy of the commons, oil drilling is not classified as a tragedy to the commons because of its nature and use in society.

Most oil sources are owned by nations, therefore, it is hard for an individual to make their own independent decision to drill oil. In the case of tragedy of the commons, an individual or a group may make a decision to exploit the environment for their own benefits, but putting the whole world population at a risk. Oil, unlike other natural resources, cannot be personalized. This is drilled, and purified for industrial use, among other uses. Therefore, it may not be possible for one person to drill and keep the oil for their own personalized use. Oil obtained from oil drilling is beneficial to a large population, since this is used in industries, and in the transport and communication, which is mass consumption (Fridell 43).

Although oil drilling is detrimental to the environment, the effects are not as immense as those involved in the harvesting of other natural resources. Most of the oil in the world is found in the Middle East. A larger part of this area is a desert with little vegetation. Since most oil occurs in the open fields, drilling will not result in cutting of trees to clear land for easy access to the oil. Therefore, its effects are not as intense as those of other practices (Hunter 31).

Finally, oil is an important product to the human population, and the whole

global economy. Therefore, this is a necessity, which must be obtained. Since the other alternatives of oil are limited, the available oil has to be extracted to meet the different needs in the global economy. In addition, the alternatives of oil may not be sufficient to sustain the demands of the whole world, and most of them are unreliable. Since oil is available and reliable, oil drilling will continue, as long as governments come up with strategies to minimize its negative impacts on the environment. After all, these negative environmental effects will affect all those who enjoyed the consumption of oil in various ways.

Works Cited

- Fridell, Ron. "Environmental Issues." London: Marshall Cavendish, 2006. Print.
- Hunter, Nick. "Off-Shore Oil Drilling." New Jersey: Raintree, 2012. Print.