

The best ethical practices and values of greenpeace politics essay



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Greenpeace is a renowned Non-Governmental Organisation founded by Dorothy Stowe, Irving Stowe, Dorothy Metcalfe, Jim Bohlen, and Bob Hunter; to fight for the environmental degradation, since 1971. According to Greenpeace Annual Report 2001, “ Greenpeace is an independent campaigning organisation that uses non-aggression and mediagenic confrontation to expose global environmental issues, and to force solutions which are significant to a greener and peaceful future” (Greenpeace, 2001). The organisation is currently campaigning for the safeguard of the oceans and forests by switching fossil fuels to renewable energies, abolishing the use of toxic chemicals, opposing the use of genetically-engineered organisms, and to discontinue nuclear armament as to make an end of radioactive contamination.

Ethical perplexing situations faced by Greenpeace

Ethical dilemma is a state of” involving difficult of choices between conventions” (Fisher & Lovell, 2003). As we know, ethical dilemma is stressing on the action of preserving a debate problem and to maintain ethical manners rather than looking for an excuse to end the debate. In recent year, Greenpeace is distressing by the ecological issues as stated below:-

Genetic-Engineering

In this 21st century, human population is increasing exceedingly and climate changes have causing the food production to be threatened. This issue has create a dilemma on the population at large, and because of this issue, scientist has come out with a solution of Genetic-Engineering (GE) which is “ creating plants, animals and microorganisms by modifying their genomes”
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(Greenpeace, 2010). Besides that, Genetic-Engineering has create a negative impact on agronomic activities; for example, engineered plants found defenceless towards pests and diseases, and creating genetic contamination spreading uncontrollably through interbreeding with other natural organisms. And because of this case, Greenpeace has taking initiative to prevent the contamination of genetic-engineered genomes to the society at large.

Climate Changes

“ The climate changes is the major threat for global environmental, and based on the report it claimed that the continuing of use of fossil fuels which triggering the climate rapidly change” (Greenpeace, 2002). The climate change has impacts on the agronomic production and creating natural disasters such as erosion, flooding due to the rise of sea level and has risk the population at large and triggering the extinction of the wildlife. Besides that forest devastation also the reason climate change occurred. Greenpeace claimed that one fifth of the global greenhouse gas release due to industrial logging (Greenpeace, 2010).

Nuclear Activities

Since the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan, nuclear activities have growing rapidly even the end of cold war, and besides that, the level of nuclear stockpiled still remain relatively high. In the report of world nuclear stockpile by Ploughshares Fund (2010) mentioned that there are total of 22, 500 nuclear stockpiles in worldwide and over 8, 190 warheads still operational (Ploughshares Fund, 2010), and this issue has concern

Greenpeace since 1976; to fight for the safety of the people and the

environment as to prevent catastrophes of nuclear explosion, warfare, and <https://assignbuster.com/the-best-ethical-practices-and-values-of-greenpeace-politics-essay/>

waste disposal issues. Based on Patrick Moore statement said that “ nuclear power plants are the next nuclear weapon which is the most hazardous devices has ever made” (Moore, 1976). Based on the statement, we knew that Greenpeace never tolerate the uses of nuclear power plant which can convert to nuclear weapon which will harm the people and environment.

Industrial Fisheries

In recent year, the fishing industries have growths rapidly, and almost “ more than 70% of the world fisheries are abused by human” (Greenpeace, 2010). This is because overfishing has become so common in today world besides that this issue has cause a great change in marine ecosystems which might cause extinction of the oceanic creatures in nearer future, In addition to this besides overfishing, by-catching has also creating a severed environmental impacts towards the marine ecologies because all of the by-catch creatures are threw away into the ocean after netted by the fishermen.

The approach used to overcome the ethical issues

The Greenpeace ozone campaign [mid-1980's-1992]

The ozone campaign is to safeguard the ozone layer from being depleted. The depletion of the ozone layer is causing global warming due to the thinning of the ozone layer. The approach used by Greenpeace is public outreach where the organisation informing the public pertaining about the “ urgency of ozone layer depletion, and to catalyse public concern and demand for appropriate action from governments and corporations” (Mate, 2001). Moreover, the materials that used for informing the public are publication of information video, publication of reports, brochures and

leaflets, and public protests based on John Mate; to persuade the world about the danger of ozone depletion and to discourage the public to use substance which might hurt the ozone. Besides that, Greenpeace also involve in the commercial market, to initiate the public to switch to hydrocarbon refrigerator in 1992 from CFC refrigerator.

Based on the case study, Greenpeace is using Kantian ethics. Kantian Ethics is stressing on the “ characteristic of dignity and moral equality of persons provided a principled rationale for resisting the more concerning features of consequentialism” (Tiffany, 2006). The ethical values used by Greenpeace has shown the public that human error has cause the ozone to be depleted, and it is very essential that we (public) should change as to prevent further deterioration of the ozone layer. The benefit of Kantian ethics has a powerful and clear outline which well fit to everyone’s. Besides that, Kantian theory has played a good role in Greenpeace code of ethics where most of the Greenpeace employees followed. In addition, Immanuel Kant concludes that “ nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called ‘ good’, without qualification, except a good will” (Immanuel, 2008).

Apple Inc. and Greenpeace [2008]

Based on Patrick Schultz and Duane Helleloid (2010) statement said that Greenpeace challenged Apple due to their poor score on reducing the use of toxic chemicals such as Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) and Brominated Flame Retardants which is hazardous towards consumers. However, Apple declines to address the criticism by the Greenpeace activist about their products, recycling and the use of hazardous chemicals. And because of that, <https://assignbuster.com/the-best-ethical-practices-and-values-of-greenpeace-politics-essay/>

Greenpeace launched 'GREEN MY APPLE' a campaign against Apple as to raise awareness of Apple environmental inadequacies in the society. This campaign is to initiate Apple to improve their company policies towards the environmental impact. (Schultz & Helleloid, 2010)

Based on the action Greenpeace has taken, it has shown that the theory of utilitarianism is being used. Utilitarianism is "the moral course of action in which promoted the great happiness of the greatest number of people as to make the world a better place" (Rawls & Sen, 2009). The action has taken by Greenpeace is try to show Apple that what they are doing is not right because the substance uses by them are hazardous to consumers. Moreover, this case is quite similar to ozone depletion case where however the differences is Kantian rules is absolutism where the public must exercise or face the consequences of depletion but in utilitarianism is a choice of change or face consequences; e. g. if Apple stop using hazardous chemical on their product, they can protect the environmental impact as well as the health of their consumers; if they failed to practice their consequences is the public and the environment might face severe risk that is the purpose of Greenpeace try to convince Apple what they are doing is not right. In addition, David Crocker concludes that "Humans are not only experiencers or preference satisfiers; they are also judges, evaluators, and doers" (Crocker, 1997), and the reason Greenpeace became the ears and voice for the welfare of the public and environment.

Greenpeace condemning against Papua New Guinea (PNG) development

PNG main sources of income are based on forestry due to their land is unfitted for farming except for tree crops such as cocoa, coffee, palm oil, etc. However, according to Tim Curtin (2006), he mentioned that Greenpeace condemning PNG tree logging is based on unusual norms. Moreover, the condemning of Greenpeace is based on the information provided by Forest Trends which considered secondary sources of information – based on the author the term ‘ illegal logging’ is a term can cover a broad range non-forestry legal issues such as work permits, expatriate staffs, training, health and safety, which has nothing to do with forestry issues in PNG (Curtin, 2006).

Base on this case, Greenpeace has make an unethical condemnation against PNG in which against their main core values of “ seeking solution, promote open, informed debate about society’s environmental choices (Greenpeace, 2010). Besides that, they are did not exercise their campaign strategies and policies values – “ to take great care to reflect their fundamental respect for democratic principles and to seek solutions that will promote global social equity” (Greenpeace, 2010). In PNG case, Greenpeace ignored the promotion of global social equity and did not observe the condition in PNG besides taking second hand information to support their criticism.

Besides that, there is no ethics of care in this context; according to Helena Stensöta (2010), she said “ look into the context of the ethical dilemma in order to resolve it, and it regards moral development as advances in our understandings of responsibilities and relationships” (Stensöta, 2010). Based <https://assignbuster.com/the-best-ethical-practices-and-values-of-greenpeace-politics-essay/>

on her explanation, Greenpeace should put themselves in PNG shoes; to understand their condition rather than jump into conclusion without knowing what actually happen there, and besides that, Greenpeace should not relied on the information obtained from Forest Trends since Greenpeace did not have sufficient information pertaining PNG logging issues as stated by Curtin. In addition, “ the answer of ethical dilemmas must always be dedicated on preserving the relationships between people” (Aerostudents, 2010), and not pinpointing others.

“ Greenpeace succeeded in obstructing Greenland’s opportunities to secure their economic foundation for its people’s life condition and he regards Greenpeace action as being a very grave and illegal attack on Greenland’s constitutional rights, and it is highly disturbing that Greenpeace in its chase on media attention with all measures breaks the safety regulations put in place to protect people and the environment by Greenlander Prime Minister” (Pearse, 2010). Greenpeace against Greenlandic economic development

Greenlanders are critically dependent on fisheries, shrimps and metals exports, and cultivating forage crops, garden and greenhouse vegetables as well as domesticating sheep, reindeers and fishes for local uses (CIA, 2011).

Greenpeace exist in Greenland has create hatred amongst Greenlanders because their action has cause a huge loses by stopping them on sealskin trading, and “ telling youngsters in town not to eat whale or seal, the food Inuit’s have lived off for hundreds of years” (Moshiri, 2010). Again in 2010,

Greenpeace once again attack on Greenland oil rig development which condemn by Greenlander Prime Minister Kuupit Kleist (refers to the textbox

above), and “ damaging country’s economy by occupy drilling platform”
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(Carrell, 2010). As understand, Greenpeace trying to protect the nature from deteriorated by the oil drilling.

The case above has shows that the organisation has violated their principle of “ non-violent confrontation, finding solutions and informed debate about society’s environmental choices” (Greenpeace, 2010). This case is very similar to their condemnation on Papua New Guinea development where there is no fundamental respect for democratic principles when dealing with the situation in a wrongful action because it is not about informing the public about the danger of environmental impact but it creating public unrest.

Besides that, there is no ethical relativity in this case. According to Gael McDonald (2010) saying that ethical relativism it driven by “ the recognition of historical, cultural and individual diversity and the principal supporters are those who have identified significant variations in moral customs around the world and in different social settings” (McDonald, 2010). Based on Greenland case, Greenpeace should not condemn Greenlanders oil rig development and halting their sealskin export because it will ruin the country economic, and their forceful approach has infuriate Greenlanders where the organisation has no right to condemn their economic approach where most Greenlanders agreed upon the development of their oil rig reserve because “ it will reduce the dependency on Danish annual \$500 million grant from the oil development” (Moshiri, 2010). In addition, there is also no duty of care to resolve the problem in a less confronted approach.