

Green Peace: An Introduction

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ABSTRACT

Greenpeace is one of the most internationally recognized International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO). Greenpeace investigates, documents and exposes the causes of environmental destruction. It brings about change by lobbying, consumer pressure and mobilizing members of the general public for peaceful protest.

The organization takes peaceful direct action to protect our Earth and promote solutions for a green and peaceful future. Over the years, greenpeace has had numerous wins in campaigning for a sustainable, greener, healthier and peaceful planet. This paper provides an introduction to greenpeace, looking into its laudable achievements and the ways forward.

KEYWORDS: *Environmental destruction, Lobbying, Consumer pressure, Biodiversity, Ecotage, Greenpeace*

INTRODUCTION

Greenpeace is an independent, non-profit, global campaigning organization that uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems and their causes. Greenpeace's goal is to ensure the ability of the Earth to nurture life in all its diversity.

The organization seeks solutions for, and promotes open, informed debate about society's environmental choices. The organization brings about change by lobbying, consumer pressure and mobilising members of the public to take action against environmental destruction [1].

The core values of the organization are:

- Positive action: This is through the use of creative, non-violent confrontation to raise the level and quality of public debate.
- Global: Nature recognises no frontiers or national boundaries. The Global Performance Excellence Award (GPEA) is part of a global organization, that addresses cross-border environmental challenges and leverage global intelligence and resources. The GPEA process promotes and strengthen awareness in performance excellence

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as an increasingly important tool in competitiveness towards global business and sustainability [2].

- Credible: Greenpeace is a credible organization that deploys independent investigation, research and actions to highlight environmental problems as well as solutions.
- Financial independence: Greenpeace ensures its financial independence from political or commercial interests. It does not solicit or accept funding from governments, corporations or political parties. It does not seek nor accepts donations that could compromise its independence, aims, objectives or integrity. It's only source of financial support are from individual supporters and foundations.

Greenpeace mission/goals are as follows:

- Protect biodiversity in all its forms.
- Prevent pollution and abuse of our oceans, land, air and water.
- End nuclear threats.
- Promote peace and global disarmament [2].

HISTORY OF GREENPEACE

Greenpeace is a movement of people that are passionate about defending the natural world from destruction. The vision of the organization is a "greener, healthier and more peaceful planet, one that can sustain life for generations to come". Greenpeace was by a small group of concerned individuals, who set sail to Amchitka Island off the coast of Alaska to try and stop a US nuclear weapons test. Their old fishing boat was called "The Greenpeace" [3].

Greenpeace is an independent global campaigning network, founded in Canada in 1971 by Irving Stowe and Dorothy Stowe, immigrant environmental activists from the United States. The goal of Greenpeace is to "ensure the ability of the Earth to nurture life in all its diversity" and focuses its campaigning on worldwide issues such as climate change, deforestation, overfishing, commercial whaling, genetic engineering and anti-nuclear issues, as shown in Figure 1. It uses direct action, lobbying, research, and ecotage (or ecosabotage), to achieve its goals. The network comprises 26 independent national/regional organizations in over 55 countries across Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australia and the Pacific, as well as a coordinating body, Greenpeace International, based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands [4].

FUNCTIONS OF GREENPEACE

There is the need to firmly recognize that the struggle for a green and peaceful future requires fundamental changes in the way we relate to nature and to each other.

From climate change to inequality, armed conflict to social injustice, the great challenges of our time are not only urgent, they are intimately linked. From the power structures that make them possible to the mindsets that make them acceptable, they are interwoven and must be changed together. To this end, the mission still remains: "to protect the planet in all its diversity and promote peace and non-violence". What Greenpeace need is "a billion acts of courage" in support of a better world, which is achievable when we reach out across the divides that see us working separately, and together replace the systems of oppression, inequality and greed that hold back progress towards a better, sustainable and equitable future [5], as shown in Figure 2.

We are therefore, faced with an urgent, existential crisis and it's critical that we act quickly to make fundamental changes. We must go beyond treating symptoms of environmental degradation, inequity and conflict, and tackle the root causes the systems that perpetuate them. The predominant economic and cultural systems set us apart from nature. They

reward environmental destruction, promote excessive consumption, write off entire communities and ecosystems as "disposable", tolerate obscene levels of inequity, prioritise short-term profit over sustainability and wellbeing, commodify the commons, and undermine community, health and true security. There is the need for boldness to join forces with allies, to build the new systems for that green and peaceful world that we all know in our heads and in our hearts is possible.

With this in mind:

1. Our first goal is to defend important boundaries for a healthy ecosystem, and
2. Our second goal is to provoke systems change for the long term by (a) changing mindsets, and (b) changing power dynamics.

There are 'nine crucial boundaries' that humanity must remain within for a liveable planet. This concept is from the Stockholm Resilience Centre to ensure our environmental goals are based on the best science available. The boundaries are: climate change, stratospheric ozone, landuse change, freshwater use, biological diversity, ocean acidification, nitrogen and phosphorus inputs to the biosphere and oceans, aerosol loading and chemical pollution [6].

Greenpeace work goes beyond the idea of peace being an absence of conflict but to delivering "human security." Beyond the traditional weapons and military security auguments, "human security" includes threats to people's dignity and happiness such as those coming from climate change, poverty, food and resource shortages. As environmental boundaries are stressed, severe resource scarcities will trigger more conflicts. There cannot be peace without the world adopting a more cooperative approach to sharing scarce resources. Consequently, Greenpeace is working with allies for hopeful, solution-based, cooperative answers to depleting resources.

Greenpeace is to "promote a new perspective and shift in mindsets" that is rooted in stories that help us: valuing people and communities near and far; understanding that we are part of nature and that we each hold a stake in its future; measuring our success according to our relationships and not our possessions; understanding that security depends upon a healthy environment and a just, equitable society rather than force and surveillance; understanding that people, not corporations are self-interested elites, should be at the heart of governance and public life; seeing that the world is getting better, because people are working together to make it so; and understanding that the economy must work within the environmental limits of the planet.

The need for Changing Power Dynamics - Climate change biodiversity are "symptoms of a fundamental power imbalance". Their consequences are disproportionately felt by the poorest and most marginalised in society. To create "lasting and exponential change" in the world is not enough to alter the behaviour of individual actors like government and corporations, we need to shift the way power is distributed. The exclusive power of some self-interested elites who exercise control over our institutions and our governments results in a system that serves to win greater power and wealth for those at the top, regardless of the cost to the rest of humanity and the planet. Hence, Greenpeace must ensure that we shift the tide to focus on the wellbeing of people and the planet's health. Solutions too must be sorted to achieve greater equity among genders, races and classes and where the benefits of inclusion, diversity and innovation are enjoyed by more than just those at the top.

As Greenpeace cannot be big or powerful enough to reach these goals alone, it focuses its efforts in two ways vis-a-vis:

1. Using disruption and
2. Influencing culture.

Greenpeace through its core part to create change via its "non-violent direct action" has been able to win policy and behaviour change from governments and corporations [7].

Ecotage also referred to as ecosabotage, is the destructive or obstructive action designed to publicize or harass people believed to be harming the environment [8]. This is a form of radical environmentalist groups that participate to stop or halt and raise awareness about climate change by encouraging widespread political mobilization [9].

CHALLENGES

Facing the entire world today is rising sea levels, more extreme weather events, and loss of diversity. Our climate is breaking down and destructive industries continue to threaten our forests, oceans and air. However, collectively we can overcome these challenges. The 15 biggest environmental challenges or problems confronting the planet cum humanity are [10]:

1. Global warming from fossil fuels.
2. Poor governance.
3. Food waste.
4. Biodiversity loss.
5. Plastic pollution.
6. Deforestation.
7. Air pollution.
8. Melting ice caps and sea level rise.
9. Ocean acidification.

10. Agriculture.
11. Food and water insecurity.
12. Fast fashion and textile waste.
13. Overfishing.
14. Cobalt mining.
15. Soil degradation.

THE WAY FORWARD

Halting deep sea mining - Governments must put an immediate stop to critical deep sea mining so as to secure long-term protection for the oceans.

Environmental justice - Environmental justice must be vigorously pursued to help ensure a better, greener and fairer world for all, as shown in Figure 3.

Penalty for polluters - Polluters must be made by law to pay for the escalating costs of climate crisis i.e. by putting in force "green" laws.

UN Ocean Treaty - The UN Ocean Treaty which has been formally adopted in New York must be strictly adhered to by all countries.

Greenpeace need collaborate with the UN for a sustainable development and climate action and as well with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU). Additionally, more work and sustained political ambition is needed to ensure that NATO is well and fully prepared to continue to deliver in a changing climate. The EU is involved in the global and regional implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, moreso with the reversed progress in achieving the SDGs caused by major global crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and climate change, and more worsened by challenges due to poverty, inequality, carbon emissions, education, health, economic growth and finance [11, 12].

Greenpeace should continue to help in organizing the news media and the public, in the area of public education and genetically engineered (GE) food products.

There is need on campaign on educating energy policymakers on the value and feasibility of developing renewable energy.

Peaceful and non-violent protests in favour of renewable energy, healthy environment and sustainable development need be pursued for our children's future [13].

CONCLUSION

It is better late than never as we require a strategic, grassroot response to globalization in providing the needed global consciousness raising and resistance to global capitalism in the face of the declining capacity of nation states to regulate transnational corporations. All hands must be on deck to fight against a whole

range of other global political issues such as global warming (climate change), environmental degradation, infectious disease epidemics, human trafficking, and international terrorism when it is clear that nation-states acting singly can do relatively little.

There is the urgent need for the regulation of transnational corporations. To achieve this goal, civil society organizations should use both cooperative (e. g. eco-consumerism, collaborations with business, promotion of voluntary codes of conduct and stewardship) and confrontational strategies such as consumer boycotts, public relations wars, surveillance and exposure of corporate malpractice, and shareholder activism. Required as well is strong collaboration of Greenpeace with the European Union, UN, World Trade Organization, the Group of 8 (G8) and policymakers. We need to ensure a safe environment/planet now and for the future generations.

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Temperature change in the last 50 years

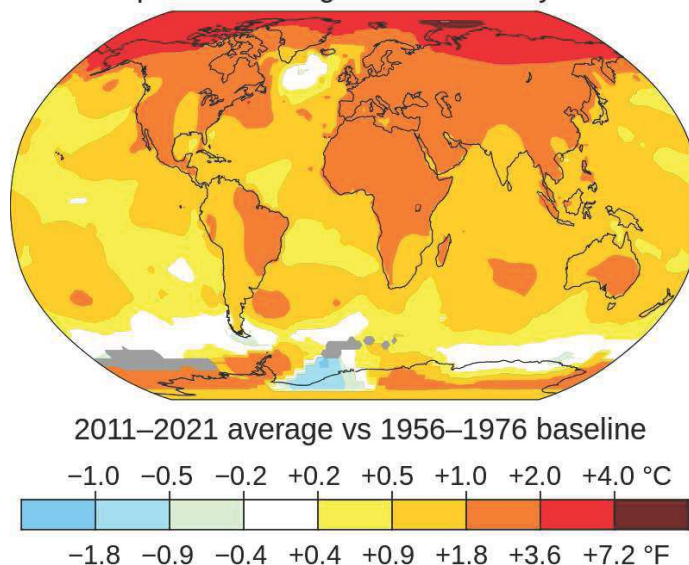


Figure !. Climate change.
 Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_change

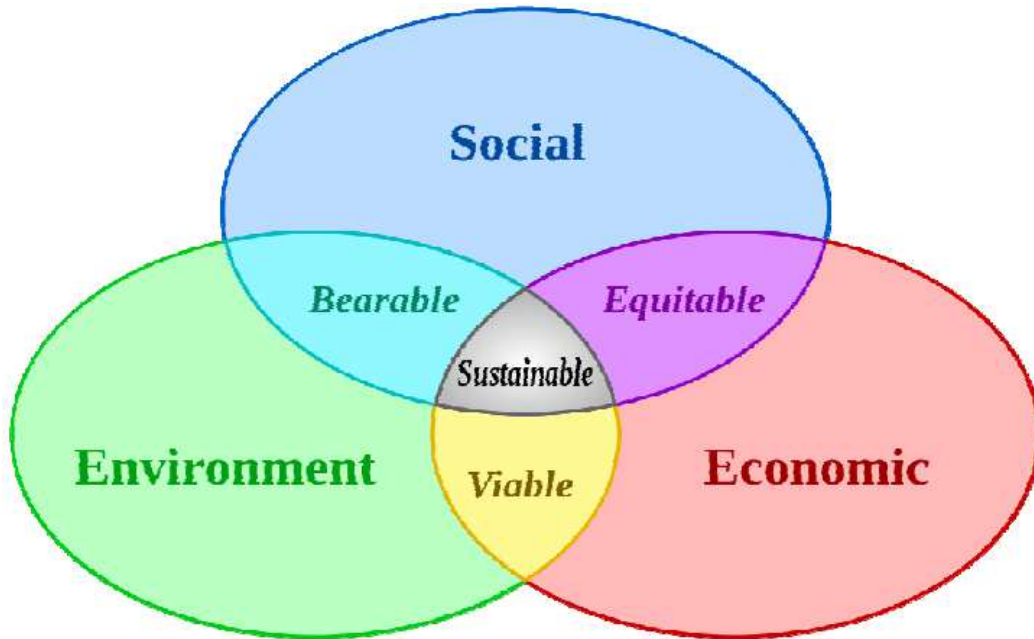


Figure 2. Sustainable future.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_ecology_\(theory\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_ecology_(theory))



FIGURE 3. Environmental justice.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_Justice_Foundation