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## Dismantling Green Projects

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# DISMANTLING GREEN PROJECTS

By Pamela Reyes

In recent years, people have been buying into a systemic green-washing market and investing in zero-emission fuel scams. As the world transitions into this capitalist strategy, indigenous communities and vulnerable environments are taking the hit. Nevertheless, there are many environmental justice advocates, such as ENST students, with enormous potential to raise awareness for collective action. Therefore, if you've noticed some deceiving patterns of environmental propaganda by a particular organization, corporation, or firm, this analysis will give you some insights to demand for their accountability. As an example, I will elaborate my approach with the Lithium triangle located in South America.

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Calling out on industries for green-washing by ramping the term out loud, doesn't really make an impact. There's no such thing as an eco-police force to report fraudulent activities from an entitled "eco-friendly" corporation. Therefore, if there is a socio-environmental

area that thrives you, I invite you to read on and begin your own Dismantling Green Project. To support my argument, I've employed insights from several key studies. Toadvine (2011), inspires action from interdisciplinary collaboration with "no imaginable end-state process to achieve". This article invites our unique set of skills to bear on a common problem. Hence this logic is the foundation of my approach. I am also using the article "Integrated Framework to Assess Greenwashing" as inspiration for this structure. In addition, I have used several other sources to reinforce my analysis. I must mention however, that this paper will not solve world problems, but it hopes to change some schematics from dominating resource-burdening activities.

To begin your venture, figure out what language you speak best. Ethics, economics, or ecosystems? Then 1) Target the corporation raising deceptive or false environmental claims, that associates better with your language. By questioning their so-called eco claims, 2) gather plenty of research information on this matter, 3) find an audience to create collective action, and 4) craft a persuasive framework addressing deceiving or fraudulent environmental practices. For the first step, let's concentrate on the ethical concerns regarding extractive and

political practices in the Lithium triangle. We can focus on the company Tesla and its Lithium suppliers located in this area; Ganfeng Lithium, Livent, and Albemarle (Barrera,2023). While it is crucial to invest in zero-emission projects for climate mitigation, like to produce lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles, the brine extractive process for lithium presents environmental and social challenges. This includes significant water consumption, especially in regions already facing water scarcity such as the salt flats of Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina (Berg, n.d.). The extraction processes can pollute water and soil with harmful chemicals that disrupt the water cycle for habitats and ecosystems. Social impacts concern the displacement of local indigenous communities, and the violation of their land and human rights (Giglio, 2021).

Here, we can begin our second process with more research concerning our target company and its deceiving socio-environmental practices. In the salt flats of Jujuy, Argentina, the privatization of natural resources is bypassing Indigenous communities' rights into their territories. These companies also involve unstable working conditions, while governments obstruct their freedom to protest (Ferre, 2023; Giglio, 2021). One conspicuous practice by powerful corporations is the



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stimulation of foreign political conflict. An example of this practice was the attempt to facilitate access to the Bolivia's lithium reserves for foreign companies. This event was followed up with Elon Musk's tweet "we will coup whoever we want" against former Bolivian president Evo Morales.

In addition, the affiliation of developed nations with the Global South by exporting resources at low international prices as commodities, perpetuates dependent relations of developing countries as peripheral economies (Ferre, 2023).

Once you've gathered enough data, it's time to find the most relevant audience for the third step. Here's the trick, find the one that resonates with you the most and make it personal! However, be cautious not to let your personal biases dictate your findings. For this case, my target audience will be college student consumers of Tesla EV's in California.

chose this audience because for the most part, college students are outspoken and eager to change systemic injustice. Now, for the last and most challenging step, building a framework can be tricky. Since we chose ethics concerning the Lithium triangle, let's find out what policies in California are already in place to link our locations. California's Voluntary Carbon Market Disclosure Act (SB1305) focuses on voluntary carbon offsets and disclosure of requirements surrounding the marketing, buying, and selling of offsets (Bill Text, n.d.). Although the brine extraction process for lithium does not emit CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere due to the evaporation process, the energy used to extract and process hard rock mines comes from fossil fuels. Ganfeng Lithium, Livent, and Albemarle lithium producers also extract lithium through hard rock mines in other countries, therefore, Tesla as a supplier falls into fraudulent advertising. Taking this into consideration, students

as consumers could demand reporting obligations for the respective companies' websites to reflect transparency for their environmental claims. In addition, a petition to implement UN environment programme of UNEP's Defenders Policy into the SB1305, could enhance the power of this bill. Some of the priorities of this policy include contributing to ending threats, restrictions, and violence against environmental defenders, assisting states in addressing crucial issues related to environmental rights, and encouraging states to recognize and support the role of ordinary citizens in environmental protection, as well as Indigenous Peoples. (Environment, U, n.d.).

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This exploration into the world of greenwashing and zero-emission fuel scams highlights the urgent need for action. As we witness the impact on indigenous communities and vulnerable ecosystems, it becomes evident that environmental justice advocates, including ourselves as ENST students, possess the power to drive meaningful change. Using the Lithium triangle as a lens, our four-step approach—identifying corporations, delving into data, connecting with a targeted audience, and constructing a persuasive framework—provides a practical roadmap for dismantling deceptive practices. I invite you to embark on your own "Dismantling Green Project," using your unique skills and passion to challenge misleading environmental claims. While acknowledging the limitations of this paper, our collective effort has the potential to reshape the narrative surrounding resource-burdening activities. Together, we can demand transparency, ethical responsibility, and accountability from corporations, ensuring a more sustainable and just future.