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WORKING PAPER

**Inconsistencies in Activists' Behaviours
and the Ethics of NGOs^{*†}**

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Inconsistencies in Activists' Behaviours and the Ethics of NGOs.

Abstract

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and pressure groups have taken up the mission of counterbalancing the huge power of the multinational corporations. Curiously, while most NGOs have a sincere ethical background and a genuine ethical motivation, the way some activist groups and NGOs themselves act does not always live up to the principles they advocate.

Research using a multiple case study methodology is used to provide an illustration of various questionable practices followed by pressure groups revealing a range of tactics. The concerns, the objectives and the legitimacy of NGOs and activist groups will be discussed, along with their strategies and tactics. A framework will be developed as a basis for analysing the ethical aspects of the various NGO actions. The analysis of the cases will reveal some worrisome inconsistencies between the demands and the practices of NGOs and activist groups. Should not the means employed by activists and NGOs be consistent with their own espoused or implied values? As power gives responsibility, NGOs should be seen as having corporate stakeholder responsibility.

Keywords: ethics, NGO, activist, pressure group, stakeholder, inconsistencies, stakeholder responsibility