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"The Morality of Ecosabotage"

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Environmental ethicists rarely discuss the morality of using illegal tactics to protect the environment. Yet ecosabotage (or monkeywrenching) is the topic of numerous articles and books in the popular press. In this paper I examine what I consider to be the three strongest arguments against destroying property as a means of defending the environment: the social fabric argument, the argument for moral consistency, and the generalisation argument. I conclude that none of them provides an a priori obstacle to a consequentialist justification of particular acts of ecosabotage. Then I sketch a version of constrained utilitarianism, which is capable, at least in principle, of justifying some acts of strategic ecosabotage in a democratic society.

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