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In Focus: the sad, sad demise of Greenpeace



Wilson da Silva, Editor in Chief Cosmos

Greenpeace was once a friend of science, helping bring attention to important but ignored environmental research.

These days, it's a ratbag rabble of intellectual cowards intent on peddling an agenda, whatever the scientific evidence. It was once the most active, independent and inspiring civilian group for the environment.

Whether riding zodiacs alongside boats carrying barrels of toxic waste to be dumped in the open sea, or campaigning against CFCs and HFCs that were depleting the ozone layer, Greenpeace did admirable work. But in the last decade or so, Greenpeace abandoned the rigour of science.

When the science has been inconvenient, Greenpeace has chosen dogma. Which is why it has a zero-tolerance policy on nuclear energy, no matter how imperative the need to remove coal and gas from electricity production. Or why it is adamant organic farming is the only way forward for agriculture, when organic could not feed the world's population today. And why, in the early hours of yesterday morning, a group of Greenpeace protesters [broke into a CSIRO Plant Industry experimental station](#) at Ginninderra, north of Canberra, and destroyed an entire crop - half a hectare - of genetically modified wheat.

Greenpeace has always been media savvy, but over the past decade this has become an addiction, leading it to launch campaigns that generate lots of publicity, but have doubtful merit: witness its attacks in 2007 on [Apple's iPhone as being toxic and hazardous](#). It [later admitted](#) these had been exaggerated, and that it had targeted iPhone to grab headlines. This was also a stunt, complete with hazmat protection suits and the ever-present video

camera [to record the action.](#)

No GM wheat has been approved for human consumption in Australia, but the CSIRO did have permission to conduct trials. And was so 'toxic' the wheat had to be destroyed? Its genes were modified to lower its glycemic index and boost fibre content, creating bread and other wheat products that would improve bowel health and nutritional value.

Greenpeace has lost its way. Its former glory rested on the righteousness of its actions in support of real evidence of how humanity was failing to care for the environment. Now it is a sad, dogmatic, reactionary phalange of anti-science zealots who care not for evidence, but for publicity.

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