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GREEN GROUPS ADMIT 'GOOD COP/BAD COP' COLLUSION TO PUSH HIGHER COSTS ON BUSINESSES, CONSUMERS

'Environmental groups have been caught admitting they collude to use Good Cop/Bad Cop strategies to push businesses to adopt expensive 'voluntary' certification standards that increase costs to business and consumers', said, Tim Wilson, Director of the IP and Free Trade Unit.

Mr Wilson's comments follow today's release of a new report *Naked Extortion? Environmental NGOs imposing [in]voluntary regulations on business and consumers*.

'Suspicions that environmental groups collude in a game of 'Good Cop/Bad Cop' to push business and consumers into adopting 'voluntary' certification standards has traditionally been speculative, Mr Wilson said.

Research shows they're gloating about it:

'Greenpeace is willing to play the role of good cop or bad cop in partnership with organisations. Its reputation for radical actions positions it particularly well to play the bad cop that can drive organisations to partner with groups that seem more middle-of-the-road in orientation' (Greenpeace head of research, Kert Davies).¹

'In response to Greenpeace's 'Bad Cop' routine 'Good Cop' groups, like the World Wildlife Fund, offer adoption of 'voluntary' certification schemes such as the Forest Stewardship Council and the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil to get the 'Bad Cops' off their back', Mr Wilson said.

Advocates of these 'voluntary' standards are now arguing they should be regulated for, through:

'... governments and international organisations in consumer and producer countries should establish complementary mechanisms to create an enabling environment ... [such as] national legislation [and] public procurement policies ... [as well as] regulatory waivers in exchange for certification' (WWF review).²

'We are already seeing this strategy employed in Australia through the *Food Standards Amendment (Truth in Labelling – Palm Oil) Bill* and the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill*. Both Bills require 'voluntary' certification standards be adopted by business and increase costs for consumers.

A copy of *Naked Extortion?* is available at www.ipa.org.au

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¹ Davies, K. 2010. "Greenpeace", in Lyon. T. P. [Ed] 2010, "Good Cop/Bad Cop: Environmental NGOs and their Strategies towards business", Resources for the Future Press, Washington DC, United States of America.

² World Wildlife Fund. 2010. "Certification and roundtables: Do they work? WWF review of multi-stakeholder sustainability initiatives", p6, at http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwf_msireview_sept_2010_lowres.pdf