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I am appalled at the suggestion that environmental lobby groups could be forced to spend half of their income on remediation work.

While remediation work is important, the work of lobby groups in pushing governments and industry into better environmental performance is much more important.

Remediation is generally the fixing up of the mistakes of people who should be paying for it themselves. Much degradation has been caused by misguided government policies in the past, which governments should be fixing. Environmental groups should be using their resources to lobby for those responsible to repair their damage, not to have to fix the damage themselves.

Environmental groups are supported by large numbers of voters who are concerned about the environment and government policies that affect it. Forcing their financial contributions to remediation may well create a substantial electoral backlash.

While criticism might make governments uncomfortable, the pressures they can exert can, and have done in the past, change poor policies for the better.

This government in particular seems focussed on sacrificing long term environmental considerations for short economic gain with the prospect of major environmental damage later on. Lobbying becomes all the more important under these circumstances

The proposal smacks of Stalinist type control to block out criticism and to force environmental groups to fix the damage.

It is like forcing anti-smoking lobbyists to spend half their time picking up cigarette butts.

If the government is so concerned with criticism, it should heed the science and the advice and do more about the huge amounts of environmental damage already done and that which may stem from their poor policies.

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