

The dirty side of clean energy

Jacobo Ramirez

Video Byte

Keywords: clean energy, climate change, wind farm, wind energy, government, social injustice, Oaxaca, Mexico, Zapotecas, Ikoots, Jacobo Ramirez, social turbulence, social systems, political systems, indigenous, Latin America

Posted Date: December 4th, 2019

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.2.18374/v1>

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Abstract

Investments in renewable energy are a powerful way to fight climate change Except when they come at the cost of human lives That's the reality currently faced by the indigenous people of Oaxaca, Mexico In arguably the richest land for harvesting wind energy in all of Latin America government and investors foresee a promising solution to climate change and a source of new jobs But their approach is proving problematic to the way of life of the native Zapotecas and Ikootts who have had to sacrifice their land, their livelihood, and even their lives to backers of wind energy projects It's what researcher Jacobo Ramirez calls a worrying case of social turbulence where Mexico's unpredictable political and social systems has created a situation in which laws and regulations protecting environmental justice are not observed Until government and business can learn to include collective indigenous interests in their plans environmental injustice will continue to prevail