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Abstract

Presented here is a minor assignment in which each student was asked to write a brief outline for a New York Times Op-Ed that was already published. The goal of this assignment was to have students "reverse write" the article as an outline to understand how writers approach scientific/ controversial pieces of writing.

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ENG21003-S: NYT Op-Ed, **Using Old Cellphones to Listen for Illegal Loggers**

In Indonesia, local tribes and villages are fighting against a deadly opponent: illegal loggers. The result of such criminal activities caused villages to lose a ton of money; additionally also caused for the steady increase in global deforestation, as seen in recent years. Mike Ives explains in four very brief points how a man from San Francisco has helped save thousands of acres of tropical landscape in more than 15 countries across the globe.

    1. Addressing Solutions to the Problem

Locals first used fencing, but when they saw how ineffective it was against loggers, they switched to a new source: technology. They began asking local environmental groups for technology to help, and instead came up with a surveillance system linking used cellphones and artificial intelligence to detect sounds and catch the logging in the act.

    2. Artificial Intelligence

With the help major companies like Google, Huawei, and technologist Topher White, artificial intelligence has been developed to encompass a "sound library", allowing such cellphones to detect certain sounds associated with logging such as electric saws and trucks.

3. Updating Technology to fit with the Environment

Due to the lack of electricity in such areas, the technology had to be adapted in order to run 24/7 detection of such illegal activities. The result was newly designed solar panels that are able to capture small fragments on light from the canopy.

However, some have concerns that the technology alone is not enough; government and parliament across the globe have to do their part to enforce logging regulations and hold tighter restrictions to logging limits.