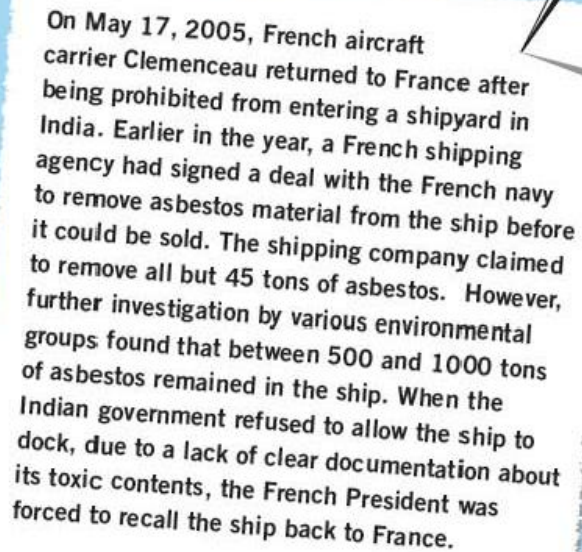


## What Is Environmental Justice?

**Environmental Justice** is the right of all people to equally share in the benefits and burdens of the environment. Environmental injustice occurs when certain groups carry a greater share of environmental risks and hazards and lack the power to influence decisions about the environment. This includes dumping hazardous waste sites, landfills and incinerators in communities with large minority and poor populations.

**Environmental injustice** can also exist on an international scale. A major form of injustice occurs when developed countries produce dangerous chemicals and export them to developing countries with relaxed environmental laws.

**Read the examples below.** How is each one an example of environmental injustice? What are possible ways to stop this type of injustice? What are some examples of environmental injustice that you see in your community? What are some steps you can take to combat this injustice?



On May 17, 2005, French aircraft carrier *Clemenceau* returned to France after being prohibited from entering a shipyard in India. Earlier in the year, a French shipping agency had signed a deal with the French navy to remove asbestos material from the ship before it could be sold. The shipping company claimed to remove all but 45 tons of asbestos. However, further investigation by various environmental groups found that between 500 and 1000 tons of asbestos remained in the ship. When the Indian government refused to allow the ship to dock, due to a lack of clear documentation about its toxic contents, the French President was forced to recall the ship back to France.



The poor, rural, rice-growing community of Guiyu in China has been transformed into a booming electronic waste processing center. Laborers at an electronic waste disposal site regularly burn circuit boards and plastics from old computers. They pour acid on electronic parts to extract silver, gold and other valuable metals. According to reports, nearly 80 percent of children in Guiyu suffer from lead poisoning.

