**Consumers Group: You are an Ethical Consumer Journalist**

**Your Background and Biography**

You grew up in a large family just outside Manchester, England. In secondary school you began to follow current events and became involved in reporting for your school newspaper. Eventually your writing led to a scholarship at Cardiff University, where you earned a bachelor’s degree in journalism.

As a young investigative journalist, you founded a subscription-based nonprofit and publication providing consumers with the resources necessary to make ethically sound decisions. For more than 20 years you and a growing staff have researched toxic ingredients, pollution, unfair labor practices, and other negative aspects of manufacturing. In addition to research articles your magazine (now a website, too) has featured opinion pieces about popular products made by corporations using questionable practices, shopping guides indicating recommended vendors, and a system for ranking companies based on their ethical business practices. Your subscribers are consumers willing to pay more to know that their purchases are not harming people or the environment.

Your organization has so far been more concerned about conflict metals and toxic chemicals rather than rare earth elements. But you are eager to work with other organizations seeking to harness the power of consumers to make the world a better place. While you recognize that consumer pressure cannot fix all the problems of production and labor exploitation, you think consumers can send a significant message to corporations and to the broader world of politics by being conscientious about what they buy.

In these negotiations you are especially concerned about corporate transparency: a set of practices that ensures companies can prove to the public (through journalists such as yourself) that they have followed fair labor practices and environmentally friendly ways of producing rare earth metals. You also want to make sure a Sustainability Seal does not prioritize protecting nature over human well-being. People need to have well-paying, safe jobs and a healthy natural environment.

**Your Mission**
Your goal at this hearing is to convince the Stewardship Council to include the Consumers Group’s recommendations in its final Sustainability Seal guiding values. To make this argument effectively, you must do the following:

- Complete the assigned readings listed at the bottom of this page.
- Work closely with the other members of your group to develop clear answers to the Stewardship Council’s questions.
- Use as much specific information as possible to develop strong arguments for your position that sustainable rare earth production must ensure the availability of products that meet society’s needs, while producing them in ways that are ethically and environmentally acceptable to a range of purchasers.
- Read as much as you can about your position and the positions of the other groups.
- Complete written reflections on your character, interest group, and readings as assigned.

**Your Victory Objectives**

- **You will receive 10 points** if the Stewards select your group’s proposal as the final Sustainability Seal guiding values.
- The Stewards will rank the interest groups by how well their goals are represented in the final Sustainability Seal guiding values. **You will receive between 1 and 4 points** based on how the Consumers Group is ranked and how well the Sustainability Seal guiding values reflect your goals.

**SOURCES**

**Group Sources**

- Consumers Case Study: “Can Consumer Choices Make Rare Earth Production More Sustainable?”

**Individual Sources**