Positive responses to the ecological emergency

How consumers, businesses and campaigners can work together to help tackle climate change and environmental breakdown

1. Rob Harrison - *Ethical Consumer* Co-Founder – 30 Years of Publishing on Consumers and Climate

2. Francesca de la Torre – *Ethical Consumer* Researcher - How consumer markets have responded to the climate crisis

3. Rob Harrison – Thinking beyond capitalism?
30 Years of EC – 1989 Consumer Boycotts
Environment

As 'environment' is a very broad area, we use five different categories:

- Environmental Reporting
- Climate Change
- Pollution & Toxics
- Habitats & Resources
- Palm Oil

Animals

Our research on animals is divided into three main areas:

- Animal Testing
- Factory Farming
- Animal Rights & Cruelty

People

Our 'People' category is divided into 5 areas of research:

- Human Rights
- Workers' Rights
- Supply Chain Management
- Irresponsible Marketing
- Arms & Military Supply

Politics

Our research into a company's politics is divided into 4 areas:

- Anti-Social Finance
- Boycott Calls
- Controversial Technologies
- Political Activity
30 years of green consumer advice
30 Years of false responsibilisation

Mindless Overconsumption Is Destroying You and the Planet

By Greenpeace | May 09, 2017 10:44AM EDT

Overconsumption

Overconsumption is costing us the earth and human happiness

Story of Stuff creator Annie Leonard's new book examines the high price of the western world's obsession with all things material
30 Years of False Dichotomy

Opinion Business
Ethical shopping is just another way of showing how rich you are
George Monbiot

Why Your Carbon Footprint Is Meaningless
Liberals who call for personal sacrifice to combat climate change aren’t helping, in fact, they’re hurting.

Focusing on how individuals can stop climate change is very convenient for corporations
Sure, it’s morally good to reduce your footprint—but don’t let that deflect attention from who is really to blame.
2001 Ethical Consumer Manifesto (47 items including....)

- Greening government purchasing
- Energy labelling
- A carbon or energy tax
- Balanced transport taxation
- Home generator energy export
- Minimum energy standards for products and buildings
Where is consensus on regulation now?

Miatta Fahnbulleh - Chief Executive of the New Economics Foundation - on a Green New Deal

John McNally MP - SNP environmental spokesperson and member of the Parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee

Mike Berners-Lee – Professor and expert on carbon impacts – There is no planet B

Caroline Pakel - Extinction Rebellion Political Circle for XR UK and the Future Democracy Hub
Crisis of governance

Ethical Consumer 2018 manifesto
10 key steps

- Break up technology monopolies into separate businesses and democratise ownership
- Eliminate the use and inclusion of ‘corporate courts’ in trade deals
- Make disclosure of lending and share ownership by financial institutions mandatory
Changing consumer markets

“Deforestation due to soy production fell by 86 per cent in the decade following the campaign”
## Changing consumer markets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010 £m</th>
<th>2016 £m</th>
<th>2017 £m</th>
<th>% Growth 2016 - 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy efficient appliances</td>
<td>2,068</td>
<td>2,795</td>
<td>3,010</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy efficient boilers</td>
<td>2,332</td>
<td>3,268</td>
<td>3,575</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro generation</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-87.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy efficient light bulbs</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical cleaning products</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable timber and paper</td>
<td>1,655</td>
<td>1,207</td>
<td>1,306</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying for re-use – household items</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green electricity tariffs</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>7,644</td>
<td>8,922</td>
<td>9,401</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ethical Consumer Markets Report 2018
### Changing consumer markets

#### Eco-travel and Transport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010 £m</th>
<th>2016 £m</th>
<th>2017 £m</th>
<th>% Growth 2016 - 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative fuel vehicles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2,377</td>
<td>3,077</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars under 100g CO₂ / km</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>5,786</td>
<td>4,144</td>
<td>-28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>9,173</td>
<td>8,286</td>
<td>-9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ethical Consumer Markets Report 2018
“Partnering consumer power with worker-designed solutions to protect their own human rights is a 21st century strategy for transforming supply chains. And it’s winning.”
Huffpost Dec 2017
Changing consumer markets

Our own 2018 survey found that 11% of people claimed to be vegetarian and 3% vegan – an increase of 52% and 153% respectively since 2016. The statistics are even more impressive amongst 18-25-year-olds, 17% of whom said that they were vegetarian and 4% vegan in 2018. (ECMR 2018)
Changing consumer markets

The latest Ethical Consumer Markets Report (out soon) will show a growth of 105% in the value of transport (flying) boycotts in 2018 to over £2bn.

UBS surveyed 6,000 people in the US, Germany, France and the UK, in May and found that 21% had reduced the number of flights they took over the last year.
By 2018 at least 265 advertisers had ended their advertising with the paper and a new editor was appointed to “detoxify” the brand.
Changing consumer markets

Conclusions

• Changing markets works best when companies, campaigners, consumers and governments are all pulling in the same direction.
• Consumers can have impact on their own, particularly with boycotts.
• Even if consumer actions in one region look promising, big global trends may reduce the importance of these.

Encouragingly however, when surveyed, 70-80% of consumers in China, India and Brazil show similarly high levels of concern for the environment and an understanding of importance of the role of the consumer choice. (EC180)
Beyond Capitalism?

Dare to declare capitalism dead - before it takes us all down with it

*George Monbiot*

The economic system is incompatible with the survival of life on Earth. It is time to design a new one
“I’m a capitalist, and even I think capitalism is broken.”
Ray Dalio 2019 (CEO of Bridgewater – A US Hedge Fund)
Beyond Capitalism?

Ethical Consumer’s 2013 Conference
“Is there a co-operative alternative to capitalism?”

“When a system is as broken as the food system of the western world, it is no good tinkering around the edges. A radical new approach – or approaches – is required.”

“In May, climate change movement Extinction Rebellion called for a boycott of the fashion industry: “in order to disrupt business-as-usual and send a message to government, industry and public alike that enough is enough … The fashion system is broken.”
Beyond Capitalism?

One thing to keep?

One thing to get rid of?

One thing to change?

No crossing out – arrows with comments please
Thank You

www.ethicalconsumer.org