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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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06.05.2023

## Why consumption does have the power to change things



Sources: 15-15-15

*The will to make this a better world has led all kinds of social movements and people to propose a multitude of strategies. Environmental education has echoed this role of the human being: to transmit to the public what those behaviors and values are with the ability to take care of everything alive.*

Special place have had collectives, associations, NGOs, social networks and all kinds of agents promoting the ecosocial. Social movements have always been launching ramps for the new, the best, fields of social experimentation, often minorities with a great capacity

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for change. And it is from these ecosocial contexts where a powerful new idea appears to change things: Responsible Consumption, currently called in our country from the spheres most focused on the theme *Transformative Conscious Consumption* (hereinafter CCT).

### ***Consumption as Political weapon***

The CST owes much impetus and raison d'être to social groups. We have very interesting guides, prepared from the NGOs Cerai, Setem or Greenpeace, to give some examples. And the emblematic national magazine *Opciones*, With true experts in the field, it keeps the status of the question.

But if there is something that characterizes with Strength to this tool of social transformation is its special character: its Switch is struck from the individual.

The CST is a tool for change that It can be implemented from individual action, without waiting for major agreements. And that makes it tremendously democratic. They also call it the vote economic. The CCT makes it possible to bring many realities together without imposing each other. other. Anyone, from their field of personal struggle, can give a lot to the world through its particular consumption, focused as a political act daily. Anyone (together with countless people) can build more eco-social plots of reality. It's a tangible thing.

For those who sound new this of *Ethical Consumption* (such as is called in the Anglo-Saxon world), our purchases are financing the Companies that in turn interact and create reality. Beyond the states, The economy is shaping the world every day.

Every time we acquire a good or service We vote on the policies of one or other companies. Entrepreneurs are pending our decisions, desires, needs and when we decide Buying one product or another we are sending a message to the market. Marketing Modern works like this.

What is not profitable is not manufactured. Imagine, then, the power of the destiny we give to money. Now, the ethics that Gravitare around money goes beyond how money is earned.

With enough information, options and a A good dose of will we could recognize a certain *sovereignty of the consumer*. Although there are many economists who would not endorse this, there are currently so many options for the CST that we could take steps forward gigantic if we put to work its full potential.

### ***Quantifying transformative conscious consumption***

Hector Conesa. In Spain, in 2021 Fair Trade had a turnover of more than 144 million euros. This is possible, not only because of the NGOs that promoted this movement but also because of the countless consumers willing to buy these products.

Spain enjoys the second position of cultivated production from organic farming in Europe. Approximately one A tenth of our country's agricultural area is devoted to organic agriculture. It would not be possible without individuals willing to acquire it.

Currently there are many cooperatives of renewable energies distributed throughout the Spanish territory. Tens of thousands of affiliates make them possible.

Only the two best known banking entities Ethics of our country exceeded, long ago, the 200,000 customers. One New way to invest savings.

Second-hand platforms in The Internet proliferates and spreads more and more strongly.

The collaborative economy, in its many Examples, it reaches every corner.

Behind all these realities there are social movements or companies that bet in their beginnings to change the Rules of the game. But there are also millions of individuals scattered throughout the world. geographies, truly aware.

And they are necessary.

### ***The power of Individual action***

For a few years, and from the voice of Some eminences in ecosocial transitions of our country, is repeating a lot the mantra that individual action has been exhausted and that We must only look at political and collective work. People who They utter this message are considered by me comrades in struggles, teachers and My admiration for them is very evident. I have learned a lot from them. And I agree with virtually everything they stand for.

In everything except one thing. In that devaluation that is made of individual action. It is said that current civilizational challenges, such as climate change, must be faced through political action and social movements. And reason is not lacking. So far, completely agree. Such issues such as global warming, biodiversity loss, deforestation or energy decline need a lot of coordination, and not only at the local level but at the supranational level. There are issues of such depth, scope and global connections that we need to work in groups, from governments and large networks of activism.

But let's not forget that behind the fossil fuel multinationals that have brought us to where we are there are also hundreds of millions of individuals making particular decisions to start their private vehicles every day. And honestly, although British Petroleum

popularized the concept of carbon footprint so that *we would fight* among ourselves to see who was *more guilty*, there is a reality: the sum of the private and voluntary actions of millions of people does have an impact. This has not been invented, nor can it be appropriated, by British Petroleum. This is part of a complex mechanism that begets realities. It's real. While it is true that we depend on very marked structures and systems that limit the margin of personal choice, it is also true that, with advances in social, solidarity or alternative economy, individual CCT options have multiplied.

It is too simplistic to throw the blame the powerful (governments and big business) and dodge our individual responsibility, for avoiding guilt or being branded as Individualistic. I, personally, don't feel guilty about what happens in the world, but I do launch myself to trace the chains of cause and effect that I They allow me to co-responsibility with what happens in it. The search for Individual responsibility empowers me, gives me the opportunity to put myself in relationship with what happens around me, with what happens in the globality. That personal search to connect with the world (because I want to help) generates Multiple transfers, widens my individual action to the furthest away. And not I'm going alone. I'm connected to many more people who do the same thing I do. Let's say that collective work does exist. Invisibly, but really. There are many of us in the struggle as added individuals. That's why it works. But To be many we need to start from each one, independently of what we see doing in our environment.

Feeling guilty is a choice personnel. In my talks, I like to tell it as follows: We have Before us a coin. It is the currency of responsibility. You can choose Which face (focus) you want to look at. The face of guilt or the face of the empowerment.

Demonstrate in public, as many do experts, that individual action is not so important, that what is relevant are Only organized collective actions, seems to me not only a big mistake, but dangerous and unfair. I have been listening to it and reading it for many years.

These people will already have very incorporated in their routine their CCT, so they can afford to emphasize more the group. The A step prior to the collective is the coherent conquest of the individual. But in My opinion, they do not take into account that the audience they are addressing He might not have earned this facet of personal ecosocial feeling. When they remove Importance to individual action may be giving, without realizing it, excuses, to his audience for not catching up on the CCT, discouraging this Great individual power that we all have.

### *Conscious consumption in the face of degrowth*

The whole apparatus of ecosocial cooperatives (banking, energy, food consumption, etc.) is born from the collective, but it gains strength from the multiple individual choices. That collective work is necessary, but the individual work that often sustains it, too. And today more than ever we have to join forces and not create rivalries between the collective and the individual.

The global decline that is upon us, by the loss of biodiversity and the decline of energy resources, minerals, forestry and water, demand new policies, but also, that Individual level, let's voluntarily choose:

- Reduce our consumption.
- Make the transition to more vegetarian diets ([flexitarian](#) at least).
- Favor the local, the small, fair trade and cooperatives.
- Generalize the relational versus mere consumption.
- Familiarize ourselves with intermediate technologies, crafts and trades (greater self-sufficiency).
- Buy or grow food from agroecology.
- Sharing (care, transport, goods, shelter, work ...).
- Repair (clothing, technology, appliances, furniture, real estate, vehicles...).
- And many more examples of CCT.

And this is where the role and prominence of The individual is more necessary than ever.

There is a possible scenario. A virtuous degrowth (accompanied by real democracy and balance between the two planetary hemispheres). An achievable path if we choose it and work voluntarily.

Therefore, we need to empower the individuals, not only calling them to unite, but to act fully in their routine. From the moment we get up until we go to bed we are drinking Individual decisions in our consumption. Decisions that have an impact on the world.

And, while social consensus arrives, we must ask ourselves: What about me? What will I decide to do at this time? To ask this is an act of courage, of hope. It is to convert the instant in ecosocial transcendence. It is to turn the personal into the global, into activism.

Our routine is the architect of the globality. Such is our power.

Source: <https://www.15-15-15.org/webzine/2023/05/04/por-que-el-consumo-si-tiene-poder-para-cambiar-las-cosas/>

Rebellion 05.05.2023