

CONSUMER STRIKE #15 OCTOBER 2012

Title of action

Consumer strike 15 october 2012 (with a special focus on food)

Applicant

Research & Degrowth - Decreixement Acampada - Menja Just

Organization's web

www.degrowth.org – Menjar just web

Description and justification of action

The events of 15 October 2011 showed the capacity of citizen mobilisation all over the world. It is now time to pass to a new level of action, which unites and inspires the movement.

We propose a general consumer strike on products and services from multinationals. The large transnationals (financial, media, energetic, pharmaceutical, telecommunication, and in alimentation etc.) base their position, power and existence on the people's demand for their products and services.

For instance, 10 multinationals hold the food industry worldwide. These food transnationals are responsible for an agricultural production model that overexploit, wastes and contaminates natural resources as well as disturbs and impoverishes local communities, and flood the market destroying and local means of production and distribution

The world Buy Nothing Day has been organized for years now and yet, remained marginal. At several points the movement of indignados and various coalitions have been calling for a consumer strike, but the action was not accompanied by a process which could really make it become a mass movement as we propose.

Stop buying means stop cooperating, and challenging corporate economic power. A consumption strike has the potential to empower in time of scarce jobs and resources by fomenting cooperation and lessening pressures on natural resources. It is a strategy to solve the crisis which is outside the present paradigm, based on reducing consumption, sharing work and goods, solidary and localised economy,

In order to open to the vast majority of citizens we propose a consumer strike on multinational products mainly. This will include a wide call for support from the NGOs and unions, production of educational material (stickers, booklet and a website) and the organization of a preparatory event.

Concrete results that are expected with the action

Thousands, millions of people, stop buying products and services of multinational corporations, especially food, for one day. The strike will sow the seeds of resistance and expand the experience of avoiding corporate products, giving preference to local enterprises, cooperatives, more sustainable production on a daily basis.

Strategy:

Coalition building: calling for a consumer strike coalition made up of diverse entities and citizens, who can then bring the idea to their communities. Intention is to build consumer strike committees in various cities and countries.

Direct acts: production of stickers calling for a Global Consumption Strike, and doing creative consumption strike messages on corporate adds

Educational events: organizing training sessions for consumer strike delegates, printing out posters and maintaining a website with consumer strike messages like this one

“no compres lo que no necesites, no compres lo que perjudica el medio ambiente, no compres lo que genera desigualdad o incita violencia, no compres lo que genera paro, ..” / “don't buy what you do not need, don't buy what damages the environment, don't buy what creates inequalities or incites violence, don't buy what generates unemployment,...” (*borrowed from the call for a consumption strike on December 21 2011 by Ecologistas en accion and other groups*):

It would mobilize the public, showing examples of fair and sustainable production and consumption, while explaining the wasteful and unfair allocation of food resources. One example of an action in this direction is offering free meals to a significant number of people with food that would have been thrown away (as there is no market for a large part of the food produced).

Typology of action

No cooperation with corporations. Non-violent action.

Citizen participation

The consumer strike is open to the vast majority of citizens, not only workers but also unemployed, students, retired...

Timeline/ calendar

5 months of preparation, 1 day of consumer strike on the 15 of October which continues for the rest of life...

Potential collaborations

The network of preparation of October 15 2012

Ecologistas en acción and various networks working on anti-advertisement, including Adbusters, (who started Buy Nothing Day)

Collaboration in France with *Casseurs de pub* and Paul Ariès, who are working on the consumer strike idea.

The Research & Degrowth international network, which includes making calls for a consumption strike in the international conferences in Montreal and Venice (www.degrowth.org) as a unifying action.

Building links with the World Social Forum, and Rio+20