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as 'any non – profit,



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One of the most significant challenges of the 21st century for global businesses and for the entire world's community is that of climate change and sustainability.

Key goal for business, sustainability is a wide term, defined in the Rio Earth Summit of 1992 as a ' strategy of social development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Including social, economic and environmental considerations, this term raises awareness about intergenerational equity, created by sustainable business practices. Indeed, Rio Summit has drawn attention to the fact that business malpractices may considerably harm the environment, and also, the individuals. Acting in a sustainable way for business appears to be a kind of oxymoron, as in a consumerism context, the dominant goal for the majority of multinational corporations (MNC) is to increase their profit.

Moreover, in the globalization context, the global consumption grew at an impressive rate, from \$1, 5 trillion in 1990 to \$24 trillion in 1998 (Ethical consumer, 2018). Indeed, civil society, by being active consumers, has a key role to play in making sustainability work. From this perspective, civil society has set up social movements to carry out sensitizing campaigns and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) defined as ' any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group organized on a local, national or international level' (NGO. org, 2018). Drawing attention to the risk involved, civil society (by the agency of social movement) and NGOs speak up to promote a new ethical way of consumption and trigger changes through civil society campaigning.

This paper attempts to illustrate the contribution of NGOs and civil society towards promoting sustainable business practices. The objective of the first part of this essay is to explain how effective NGOs and civil society campaigning are.

The second part of the essay will draw on the limitations of civil society campaigning in promoting sustainable business practice. Subsequently, this work will discuss opportunities for civil society campaigning to increase their effectiveness. 1 NGOs & civil society campaigning are effective From the numerous actions undertaken to protect endangered species from massive hunting to movement against fur resulting in Gucci, Michael Kors and Gucci becoming fur-free in 2017, civil society has found throughout times various ways to denounce the increasing overexploitation of natural resources and therefore stimulate changes. From 1990 to 1996, number of NGOs have risen from 6, 000 to 26, 000, following the raise of awareness of civil society regarding sustainability concerns, since the Club of Rome of 1970 establishing the concept of resource depletion. Institutions such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International were undertaken, echoing these new social movements. Firstly, both NGOs and social movements are trusted and their policy can be embodied as its affects all consumers.

Most people shop in big supermarkets, buy for example Nike shoes or consume coffee from farmers willing to pay cheap labour force, and even on exploiting children. Thus, when those consumers are faced with the consequences of their style of consumption, they are willing to consume in a more ethical way or to be involved in civil society campaigning (CSC) to instigate some positive social change. Secondly, NGOs play a key role in

raising environmental awareness in civil society. Highly trusted institutions in the society due to their non-profit behavior, they can act on behalf of this civil society to effect changes and promote sustainable business practice to big corporations.

Being cornerstone of sustainable prosperity success, ethical consumption and ethical business practices ideas profit of a positive image from consumers, making it become increasingly cost-effective for corporations. Indeed, 81% of consumers say they will make personal sacrifices to address social and environmental issues (Sustainable Brands, 2015). NGOs can be pleased with many victories. Thanks to their work, they allow civil society to become empowered in various function and roles, such as volunteering and donations. As we have no available space in this essay to cover all the success of NGOs, we will focus on Greenpeace's achievements in 2017, which succeed in making Nestlé clean up pet food supply chain (Greenpeace, 2017), obtain the ban of eight bee-harming pesticides by Aldi Süd, biggest European's pesticide retailer (Greenpeace, 2017) or gain the Thai Union Supply Chain's commitment to provide more sustainable and socially-responsible seafood (Greenpeace, 2017).

Greenpeace's actions are aimed at making the voice of climate change and human rights heard. They are working at the top, obtaining for example the removing of John West Tuna in Tesco's stores as it was not sustainably fished tuna, in order to avoid bad consumption choice from misinformed consumers. Funded almost entirely by donations, Greenpeace activities are totally involving the consumers in the process, from start to finish, via donation, volunteering and through frequent update. Moreover, it is the only

global environmental charity that refuses donation from governments and corporations, avoiding conflict of interest.

Thirdly, civil society also has a real impact on promoting sustainable business practice via consumer rights and consumer responsibilities. They could do so in 6 main ways: boycotts & buycotts, demonstration, militant acts, social movement alignment, localism & bioregionalism, critical pop culture & media and phone calls & letter writing (Kendall, B, Gill, R. and Cheney, G.

- 2007). An example of successful civil society campaigning can be the one of SeaWorld's establishment boycott. SeaWorld announced in 2016 the end of orcas breeding and the removal of orca whale shows. Another example of civil society campaigning victory is the one of Nike's boycott regarding its numerous ethical negligence during the 1990s, which has been so wide that it is still today considered as the best example of consumer impact on big corporations. Moreover, brands are looking for brand loyalty and following ethical business conduct gives them a competitive advantage.

Thus, firms such as Tiffany have certified their diamonds as ' conflict-free' and brands display their sustainable behavior through marketing campaign, as Veuve-Cliquot which innovates for more ethical packaging (HBR, 2016).

Finally, the power of activism can be seen through the impact on NGOs and civil society campaigning on global business, but also on governments.

Driver of changes, government plays a major role in promoting sustainable business practice. Most of nowadays governments have a sustainable development minister acting in a sustainable growth direction. Indeed, there

cannot be any improvement on environmental considerations without an implemented legislative context set by governments.

2. Effective to a certain extent The effectiveness of both ethical consumerism and civil society is jeopardized by factors such as funding, government decisions, sustainability myths or economic variation. One of the biggest issues faced by NGOs and CSC is that they are not able to enforce business and governments to shift from basic business practice to sustainable ones. They are just able to influence and to guide those entities toward that ultimate goal. Firstly, it is important to remember that NGOs are non-profit organization acting against large multinational corporations aiming to make profit.

Despite their victories, NGOs are facing money trouble, lack of recognition or media coverage, which makes their task arduous. One of the best ways to gather money for NGOs is to make partnership with business, making NGOs reliability often tackled as being controversial: they need for financial supports can result in prioritizing biggest donors interest rather than the initial defended cause. Furthermore, managerial response to NGOs activism is not always pro-active, firms can just wait for the NGOs to pull back and the conflict to stop by itself. Moreover, companies can use greenwashing, marketing technique to promote a fake perception that the firm is environmentally friendly (Investopedia, 2018) to cover up their malpractice. Coca-Cola can stand as an example of CSC failure to have an impact: there is 11. 000 liters drank every second, despite NGOs efforts to make people boycott this major polluting firm when it comes to its violations of human, social and environmental rights.

Secondly, notwithstanding its impact on corporations, consumer activism and civil society campaigning can also fail to reach its goal. Ethical spending has felt in 2014 and 2015 emphasizing the gap between consumers' willingness and concerns, and their real purchasing behavior (WBS, 2017). As a matter of fact, 75% support ethical consumption whereas 13% adjust their purchasing behavior. Furthermore, it is hard to follow ethical consumerism rules when there are purchases between firms with different values, such as Innocent buying by Coca-Cola or L'Oréal acquiring Body Shop, making both brands losing their ethical label. Moreover, campaigns effort to encourage the use of tap water rather than plastic bottle non-biodegradable were unsuccessful as use of bottled water continue to rise (ABC, 2017). On the same way, the introduction of a levy on plastic bags failed as people, after grumble against the new plastic bag's legislation, are now willing to pay the extra cents it adds to the total purchase amount rather than bringing their own reusable bag Another key point to add is that current market capitalism present challenges to make absolutely useful sustainable choices. For instance, organic food free from pesticide is still more expensive than the majority of goods that consumers can find in the market. Furthermore, this wide number of products is sold wrapped in plastics that cannot be recycled.

Thirdly, corporations are strongly affected by changes in the market, thus, they are willing to influence governments to avoid decision making them uncomfortable and as a result, firms will make governments to go against NGOs and civil society campaigning when their demands conflict with the key aim every MNC aspires to, that of generating profit for its shareholders. Sustainable business practice suffers from sustainability biases pretending

that the sustainable option will be more expensive than the usual one.

Furthermore, after the 2008 crisis, governments were more concerned about managing the crisis rather than enforce new laws supporting CSC and NGOs ideas.

3 Opportunities for improvement Civil society campaigning benefits from a favorable trend, enhancing sustainability. For the most part, eating and acting in a healthy and ethical way is trendy. In the United-Kingdom's food market, the organic sales have increased by 7, 1% when non-organic sales continue to decrease, pursuing the 5th year of consecutive growth for this sector (Soil Association, 2017). As said before, the increase in civil society awareness since the early 21st century opens up new prospects for NGOs and social movements. The long-standing campaigns to heighten awareness about the recycling of waste, the importance of avoiding pesticides, refrain eating endangered species or the need to pay attention to basic items such as switching off the lights started to bear fruit. More and more concerned, people are increasingly willing to engage in sustainable cause, 61% donated to NGOs last year (NPT UK, 2018), increasing the ONGs impact on firms and on governments, single entity able to compel firm to follow more sustainable business practice. Moreover, technological changes and social network development ease the sustainability ideas and models.

Arising from years of campaigns and social actions, improvements are occurring each day, as a result of civil society promotions of sustainable practices. By developing their marketing and communication one step further, civil society campaigning driven by NGOs will increase ethical consumerism and ethical behavior, influencing business practice to become



more sustainably responsible to respond to this increasing demand in a virtuous circle trend. And they have already! Eco-sustainable business emerges. Firms connect consumers to local producers thus avoiding passing through the mass distribution process increasingly thrive. Big polluters open sustainable division, such as Coca-Cola with the objective to minimize their impact on climate change and on local population where they produce.

Conclusion To summarize, this essay argued that civil society campaigning is mostly effective in promoting sustainable business practices. Despite the limitations mentioned in the examples above, CSC is an important instrument to create change. Civil society campaigning has yielded successes and disposes of various ways to reach its goals. The increasing awareness of environmental issues strengthened by the governments' implications gives many opportunities to help CSC to develop the use of sustainable business practices in corporations. Obviously, there are still battles to be fought. Although, by using soft-power to promote their ideas, NGOs and civil society need time to achieve battlefields victories. As said by Confucius " The man who moves a mountain begins by carrying away small stones". Admittedly it takes times, but at the end, civil society succeeds in creating a change and promoting sustainable business practices.