

TEXTE

Is Black Friday bad for the environment? Activists take on shopping frenzy

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Activists are pointing to the environmental impact of consumption culture

Black Friday is here once again, ushering in a frenzied period of marketing campaigns, bargain hunting, and online shopping sprees. But with all that buying, is there a hidden cost to the environment?

Environmental activists have long campaigned against consumption culture - and now they are training their sights on the phenomenon imported from the United States. Some argue Black Friday is a celebration of buying things for the sake of buying things. As it fuels unnecessary consumption of goods, the environment takes a hit.

“The problem is the environmental impact of the production, transport and waste created by these products,” said Viola Wohlgemuth, a Greenpeace Germany campaigner focusing on over-consumption.

She told Euronews most people in Germany hadn’t even heard of Black Friday three years ago, but now it is ubiquitous. “The value of the product and the resources used to make it gets totally lost in that whole idea,” she argues. “The whole online business model creates more delivery and packages, causing a huge impact to the climate. “

Buy Nothing Day

Black Friday is coming under fire not only from activists, but also from governments. On Tuesday French parliamentarians passed an amendment to the country’s anti-waste law that aims to ban publicity campaigns for Black Friday. The amendment blasted the concept for overconsumption and its "disastrous environmental record".

Brands are finding traction on social media by publicly rejecting the shopping day. French clothing company Faguo formed a collective with 600 other French brands, refusing to take part in Black Friday to argue for reasoned and responsible consumption. Named Make Friday Green Again, the campaign hits out at Black Friday for promoting overconsumption, which in turn is hurting the environment.

Anton Lazarus and his colleagues at the EEB advocate an alternative to Black Friday too. “Buy Nothing Day is about making a decision other than buying something new,” he said. “Can you borrow the thing you need instead? Or repair something you already have? These should be the first options before deciding to buy something new.”

BTS Négociation et Digitalisation de la Relation Client		Session 2020
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