
**Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Law and Policy
(IGE Consumer)**

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Contribution of Consumer Protection to Sustainable Consumption

**Submission by The Secretary of Consumer Protection of the Municipality of
Florianópolis - SC
Brasil**

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Written contribution

Topic: Contribution of consumer protection to sustainable consumption.

Name: Francisco Carlos Fernandes Pacheco

Institution: Secretária de Defesa do Consumidor
Prefeitura Municipal de Florianópolis – SC - BRASIL

*“Who has more than need to have
are almost always convinced that do not have enough.”*

Dear Experts

The changes brought about by the current technological revolution, in which everything is interconnected or connected, have imposed radical transformations on human life in all senses, including, specifically in the scope of the present discussion, aspects related to the economy, industry and consumer relations.

What we are experiencing is just the tip of the iceberg in the face of what is yet to come.

As Dr. Isabelle Durant (Assistant Secretary General - UNCTAD) recently stated at the Consumers International Summit 2019, held in the city of Estoril, Portugal, between 29 April and 2 May, the 21st century is much faster than the previous ones; we have to be more agile.

Take the internet example. At birth, in 1990, the global computer network did not involve more than 100 scientists in Geneva. After three decades, there are already four billion human beings connected and we are faced with Artificial Intelligence, Cognitive Computing, Virtual Reality, Internet of Things,

Cloud Computers, Blockchain, Autonomous Vehicles and what else is about to emerge.

In this sense, we can say: "Those who think today and do not act now have already lost tomorrow."

The importance of trade and the strengthening of the market economy, as well as what they represent for the progress of humanity, have sustained this group throughout its history.

At this point, we must effectively find ways to reconcile consumption facilitated by existing technological tools and the universalization of access to consumer goods with sustainable consumption, otherwise our planet and its inhabitants will suffer the consequences, respectively, in terms of resources their physical and mental health.

On that occasion, more precisely, one of the items on the pre-established agenda refers us to a discussion on sustainable consumption, a question that leads us to reflect on waste. We must be attentive to this point, seeking a relationship of faithful consumption with our planet.

Which path should we follow to achieve this goal? Where does the indifference that does not solve but seem to aggravate problems?

Socrates, the well-known Greek philosopher, already said that a life without question is not a life that is worth to anyone.

In that sense, many questions are needed to get the answers we need, because meeting this challenge is a great challenge.

We need to get out of here with new ideas that can reflect the world.

This is the debate that this contribution aims to promote in this forum of discussion of plurality of ideas on fundamental issues, composed of representatives who have the power and the reach to contribute and change the future of the world in which we live.

I apologize for repeating Dr. Isabelle Durant's name, but the statements she has brought to us are very pertinent when she says that "cooperation will only work if it yields results, otherwise our meetings will simply

become blah, blah, blah; we know the consumers better, we are their voice and we must speak loudly. "

In my day-to-day work on consumer protection, I come across situations that, after exchanging ideas with colleagues from the most diverse continents, specifically at the Consumers International Summit 2019, I have come to realize that there are globalized problems, involving consumers not only my country, but the world as a whole, especially the most vulnerable consumers.

Adaptation to the digital age is an irreversible path. We need to figure out how to connect it with sustainable consumption.

We can not be indifferent to another important point that is the super indebtedness, which are leaving the poorest consumers poorer and here I want to make mention to someone who inspires us to act with passion on issues related to consumption and especially this, my colleague Dr. Cláudia Lima Marques.

Less enlightened consumers do not know who they are dealing with. Among the most vulnerable, there are the elderly, who live alone and think that the bank manager is their best friend; there are too many innocent people who think the ease of credit will solve their problems.

Consumer relations are full of clutter and we need to direct our attitudes and work to alert consumers. It is our duty to open their eyes to see the danger and "take their feet off the snare."

This body has credibility and trust in its guidelines. "We are the world", "We are the guardians of the guidelines for the consumer," said Dr. Tereza Moreira also at the Consumers International Summit 2019, whom I thank for the invitation to be present here. We must strongly urge member countries to actually do something about recommendations coming from this expert group before it is too late.

Protecting consumer behavior is protecting the human person, the citizen, his dignity in a special relationship, the consumer relationship, alerting him to his decision-making ability, his last-choice power, which can and should be in harmony with that that is really needed and the future of our planet.

This is my simple contribution.

Thank you very much.

Francisco Carlos Fernandes Pacheco
Municipal Secretary of Consumer Protection
Florianópolis – SC - Brasil