

TACTIC FLOTILLA

A flotilla — also known as a boat rally or “kayaktivist” blockade — is an innovative way to attract public attention, demonstrate support for a cause or disrupt a marine target.

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Many communities live along the water; their livelihoods often depend on boats, their traditions focus on the water. Meanwhile powerful interests, from industrial fishing to fossil fuel extraction, threaten our riverways and coasts. It’s only natural that rallies and blockades — tactics we tend to associate with the land — also happen on the water.

In Bangladesh, boat rallies are a quite common — and effective — form of protest. People arrive on their boats, which are then decorated with placards, flags, colorful paint and cloth. Leaflets are distributed, speeches given, and even press conferences are organized across the boats using a mic and loudspeakers (sound carries well over water!). Colourful, spirited and community-oriented, they tend to capture the attention of both media and policymakers.

In 2010 and 2011, several “Freedom Flotillas” carrying only humanitarian aid and human rights workers attempted to break the Israeli naval blockade of Gaza Strip. They were violently boarded and seized, and the resulting controversy dramatized the plight of Palestinians in Gaza and further isolated Israel on the international stage.

In 2015, Shell Oil was planning to tow a massive offshore oil rig from the Seattle harbor (where it was undergoing repairs) up to the treacherous and ecologically fragile Arctic waters, where it would be used to drill for oil. The people of Seattle were determined to not let them out of the harbor — and a new tactic was born: the kayaktivist blockade. With indigenous kayakers in the lead, hundreds of water-borne blockaders blocked the rig’s path when it tried to leave. Many were arrested by the Coast Guard, but they were able to slow things down and create enough bad publicity that when Shell ran into further mechanical and political difficulties, the

RELATED TOOLS

Tactics

- Blockade
- Creative disruption
- Flash mob
- Visibility action

Principles

- Maintain nonviolent discipline
- Take risks, but take care

Theories

- Action logic
- Direct action

Methodologies

- Points of intervention

TAGS

Action design, Climate justice, Direct action, Environment, Human rights, Indigenous rights, Nonviolence

company pulled the plug on the entire \$7 billion operation.

Whether freedom flotilla, boat rally or kayaktivist blockade, water-borne protest can be a powerful way to attract public attention, demonstrate support for a cause or disrupt a marine target.

LEARN MORE

Gaza "Freedom Flotillas"

Wikipedia, 2010

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2007-present_blockade_of_the_Gaza_Strip#Naval_blockade

o98 posts tagged "kayaktivism"

Other98.com, 2015

<http://other98.com/tag/kayaktivism/>