Fair share of limited resources by degrowth

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Fair and sustainable economy!

Quality of life

Carrying capacity

Participation and democracy

Justice

Based on Carley and Spapens
Development within limits

Sustainable development?

Or recognition of limits!
Social degradation ...
Stress or jobless ...
Over- and underconsumption
Everybody happy?
It is claimed that the “Green Economy” and “Green Growth” proposed by UNEP, OECD and Europe 2020 is the way out of ongoing economic-, climate-, water- and food crises by restructuring our economies to simply encourage and sustain green energy, green growth and green jobs.

A Green Economy is a big step forward, but will not solve on her own problems of inequity in incomes, access to resources and quality of life, nor tackle pollution from existing industry and environmental degradation.

Promoting Green Growth is not the same as “changing our economy” towards Sustainable Development.
Greening the economy

The tricky trap of promoting Green Economy is:

How to avoid

“Greening the greed”? 
Need for systemic change

Business as usual
Economy
= unsustainable

??????
How do we organise a total transition

Green Economy
Promoting green products

Need for sustainable society – not only “green” consumers
Recognising limits

- Our global economy is already going **far beyond the limits** of the carrying capacity of the planet.
- Environmental problems are **caused** mostly because of this. Some social ones too.
- We are using too much of our natural capital, and any businessman knows: if you start **eating your capital**: **bankruptcy** will soon follow....

- There is an urgent need to cut down the use of natural resources in absolute amounts.
- Technical solutions (eco-efficiency) will not be enough..

=> **sufficiency**
The sky is the limit?

QuickTime™ and a mpeg4 decompressor are needed to see this picture.

www.impossiblehamster.org
Balanced living within the limits

To achieve a balanced living for most people of earth ANPED stresses the need to jointly address:

- overall and limited levels of consumption
- need for more social equity - fair distribution

See publications of Herman Daly, Robert Costanza, Tim Jackson, Peter Victor and others on “Redefining Prosperity” and for that reason redefining main policy goals.

⇒ Economy on a finite planet
⇒ Rights for future generations
⇒ Sustainable and Fair Economy
Fair share for all!
Contraction and Convergence

Environmental Space

Former Eastern European countries
Industrial countries
Developing countries

Use of natural resources pp

Ceiling (= overconsumption)

Floor (= dignity life line)

Level of welfare

Based on Rochol
Stop the rat race....
Current threats

• If we deny this (growth addict) reality the problems will increase, as well the measures to take

• Leads to more drastic decisions (‘war economy’)

• Threat for democracy

• Social dramas – for most the vulnerable groups
Collective denial

- Also within the mainstream CSOs

- Researchers and think tanks were the first to initiate the degrowth debate

- Degrowth debate is very new for most CSOs

- Resistance of word and strategy, because of “negative message”

- Most CSOs are getting part of (official) stakeholders dialogues, and that position often makes them less critical (cooptation)
New paths to take (1)

• A lot of small initiatives are taken, inspired by scientists, and the books they wrote. But still isolated from mainstream NGOs.

• The first two degrowth conferences in Paris and Barcelona were huge successes.

• ANPED-network (on SD) is involved in those dynamics, and will continue working in this framework. It fits in the capital approach and the so called “strong sustainability”
New paths to take (2)

The two international conferences on degrowth developed clear policy proposals and strategies for action on degrowth and define the key open questions and research agenda.

www.degrowth.eu
The future (1)

• At the moment we are trying to get all the various (smaller) initiatives together. Combined with scientists.

• Focus on more research work within this framework – paradigm shift

• Concretise the different issues: money, work, infrastructure, advertising, natural resources, housing, basic income and income ceiling etc
The future (2)

- Future scenarios: based on what is possible (availability of natural resources, absorption capacity of the Earth) and not on what we want: unlimited economic growth, more jobs, status quo on many things

- We need to think more in terms of transition, well being, long term strategies, coherence, ..
- Dismantling the culture of consumerism, instead of promoting (green) consumerism
- Sharing available work
- Urban planning which allows sustainable transport, local shops and food production, open spaces, .. (local agenda 21)
- Education: integrate SD in curricula at all levels
- Allow real civil participation (not consultation after the decisions are made.. :-(
- Put human values at the heart of every policy

=>

Show leadership and design long term visions, go beyond single and end-of-pipe solutions
THANK YOU!!
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