

## GREEN ECONOMICS

### Seven Fundamental Principles

1. *No artificial subsidies.* It is immoral and irresponsible for our government to finance the destruction of our environment, through tariffs or other payoffs to corporations and the like. Big business does not deserve to be propped up by special hand-outs from the government. We call for an end to government-sponsored special privileges.
2. *Ownership of value.* We must respect the natural autonomy of every individual. When you add value to something, that added value is YOURS. If you take away value from something (by polluting it, for example), then YOU are responsible for that. It is not fair to use taxpayers as the automatic money source for cleaning up all the environmental destruction caused by reckless individuals and companies. The idea of "limited liability" for corporations and their directors has been carried too far.
3. *Our natural resources are our greatest treasure.* No individual person made our planet's natural resources; therefore no individual person can claim ownership of them. Our natural resources belong to all human beings and we have a responsibility to protect our common heritage for future generations. Natural resources are NOT private property; only added values made by people, such as houses or bridges, are rightfully private property.
4. *Understand the economic role of natural resources.* Why are some lands valuable and others practically worthless? The things that give value to land are the populations around it, the resources it contains, and the government services (electricity, roads, ambulance service, etc.) that make it useful. None of these things were created by landlords. The rental

income that arises from payments for the use of land and other natural resources is an enormous value. These values arise because of society and therefore belong to all of us, not just to a small privileged class of individuals. If an individual wishes tenancy over a portion of the environment, that individual has an obligation to reimburse the rest of the community and must behave responsibly to sustain the environment.

5. *We must respect and not restrict human rights,* such as the right to conduct one's economic affairs as best as one can. Yet taxes on human production infringe on this right since they lead to a decrease in production. For example, a tax on houses makes housing less cost-effective to own or buy; therefore less housing gets constructed, less rehab work is done, and so all housing becomes scarce and artificially expensive. Abolish all such taxes; in their place, let users of our natural resources reimburse society for that use. Economists have shown that such a system will raise more than enough revenue to pay for legitimate government programs.
6. *Retain and expand local, community-level control* over land-use decisions and other natural resource questions. This responsibility will lead to better-informed citizens, who will understand what is best for the environment and their own economic needs. For obvious reasons, we find it easier to trust local communities than large government power structures.
7. *Combat urban and suburban sprawl,* and decrease our society's over-reliance on the automobile. To ensure a sustainable level of well-being, we must encourage more human-scale, compact communities within areas that are already developed. By making efficient use of areas that have already been

urbanized, and recycling abandoned or underused sites, we can halt new expansions into the unspoiled parts of our planet for over 50 years. Stop the government's tax-breaks that reward air pollution and sprawl. More compact development will then arise naturally.

These seven principles are not new. However, for the first time in our planet's history, we can no longer afford to postpone their adoption. In recent years, the Green movement has embraced these views wholeheartedly. Here is one example from 1989:

The Green Party of Great Britain in their *Manifesto for a Sustainable Society*, calls for the collection by society of the land values it produces. "Ultimately, the collection rate will be increased to the highest practicable proportion of the full economic rent." They add that "Without this, the economic pressures of the present land system (including land speculation) will defeat all attempts to remedy ecological and allied problems."

Common Ground,  
U.S.A.