



The Five Principles of Green Economy

The problem: it's the (brown) economy, stupid

Humanity faces serious, potentially existential challenges in the coming decades: climate change, collapsing biodiversity, escalating inequality, financial instability, political dysfunction and social fragmentation. These systemic global crises cannot be tackled in isolation. They are all interconnected symptoms of the same underlying malaise: our fundamentally broken global economic system.

Economies are, at heart, a collection of rules and norms that reward some behaviours and punish others. In their current form, our economies incentivise overconsumption, degrade communal bonds, and destroy natural wealth. But this is not inevitable or unavoidable; it is simply how our economies are designed to operate. To solve these problems, a new economic vision is required.

Our vision of a fair, green economic future

Our vision of a green economy is one that provides prosperity for all within the ecological limits of the planet. It is based around five principles:



Well-being: A green economy must create genuine, sustained, shared wellbeing, going beyond mere monetary wealth to prioritise human development, health, happiness, education, and community.



Justice: A green economy emphasises equity, equality, community cohesion, and supporting human rights – especially the rights of minorities and the marginalised. It seeks a just transition and serves the interests of all citizens, including those yet to be born.



Planetary boundaries: A green economy recognises that all human flourishing depends upon a healthy natural world. It defends the intrinsic worth of nature, and protects biodiversity, soil, water, air and other ecosystem capitals.



Efficiency & sufficiency: A green economy is low-carbon, diverse and circular. It recognises that planetary boundaries place practical limits to economic growth, and aligns economic incentives with true costs to society.



Good governance: A green economy builds institutions that combine dynamic democratic accountability with a sound basis in natural and social science and local knowledge. Civil life prioritises public participation, informed consent, transparency, and accountability.

The green economy is a universal and transformative change to the global status quo, requiring a fundamental shift in government priorities to position social and environmental priorities above financial ones. Realising this change is not easy, but it is necessary. Without it, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals will be patchy and inconsistent at best, and economic, environmental, climate and social challenges will continue to intensify.