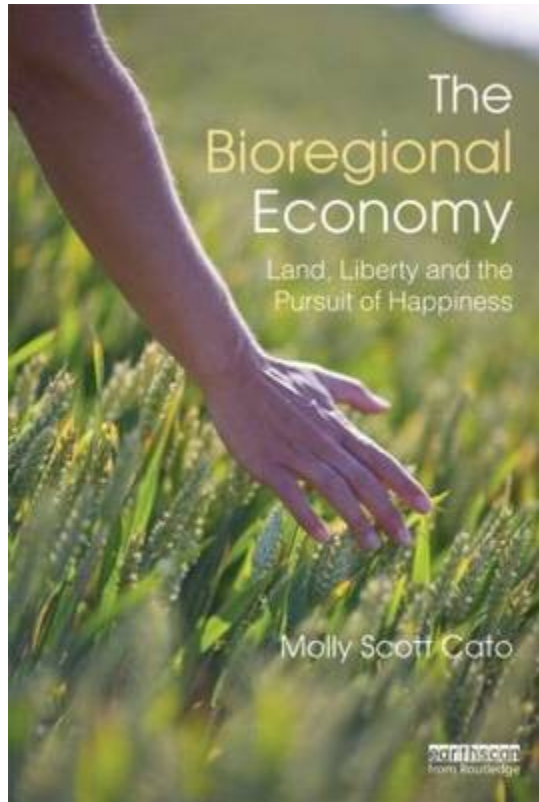


Living Lightly in our Environment

Applying the lessons of permaculture
to our thinking about the economy

Structure of the presentation



- The importance of embedding
- Three principles
- Ending economic growth
- Rethinking economic systems
- Bioregional economics

Radical change to our relationship with our environment

- Everything we consume and every action we take impacts on our environment: mostly negatively
- We need to learn the lessons of ecology and take practical steps towards being a species inhabiting our environmental niche, rather than a parasitic invader
- We need to work with the systems of nature and the energy of life.



Immanence

- Gaia: Suddenly, as a revelation, I saw the Earth as a living planet. The quest to know and understand our planet as one that behaves like something alive, and which has kept a home for us, has been the Grail that beckoned me ever since.



Interconnectedness

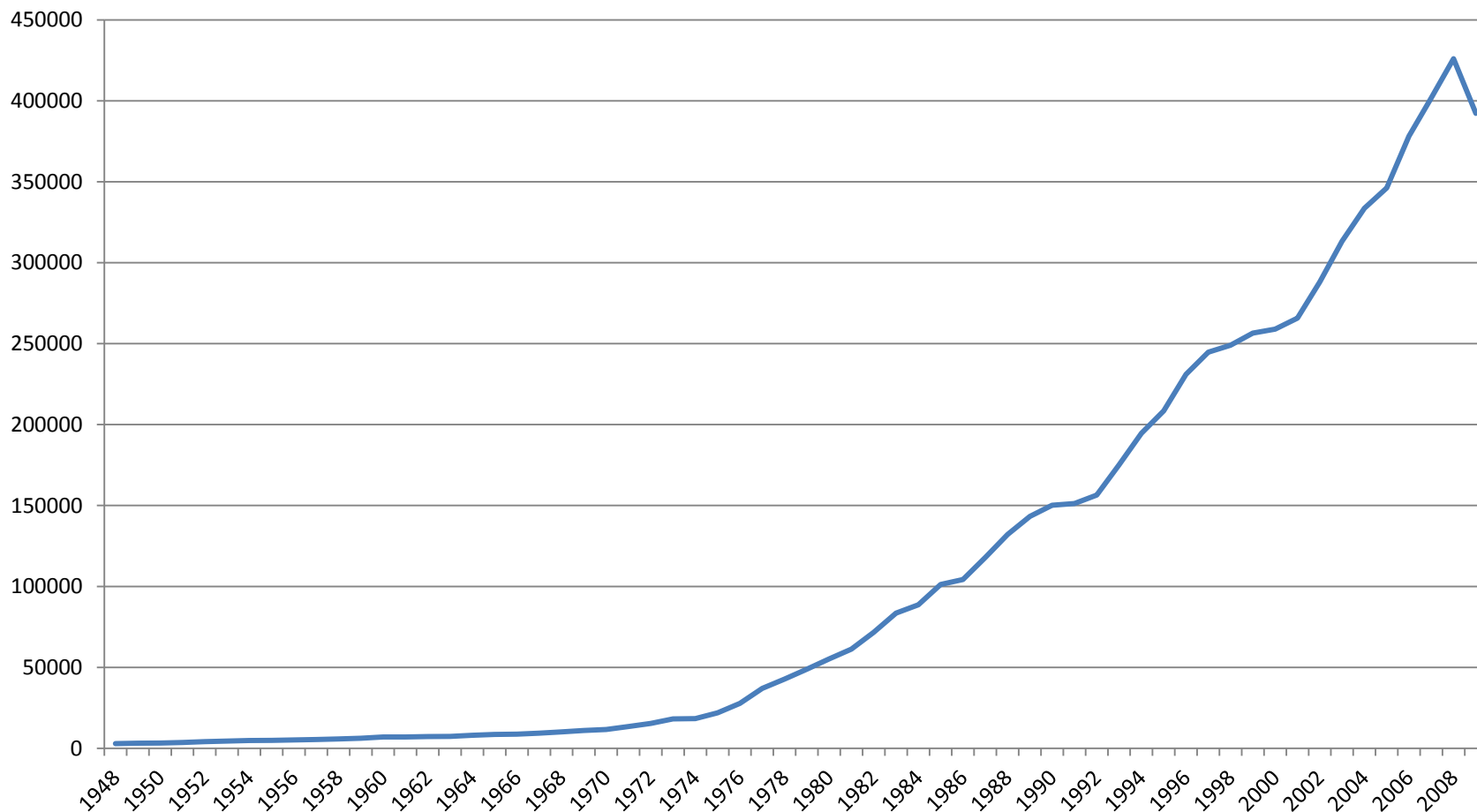


Unity-in-diversity



- Wings of the Eagle: a story from the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en

UK growth in economic surplus, 1948-2008



A steady-state economy



'STEADY AS SHE GOES'

- An end to economic growth
- Rate of throughput of resources slower than the ability of the planet to regenerate
- Evolution rather than growth

Replacing Progress with Balance

- The shark or the steady state
- The cowboy or the spaceman
- From a linear to a circular economy – you can't make pots back into clay
- More isn't always better

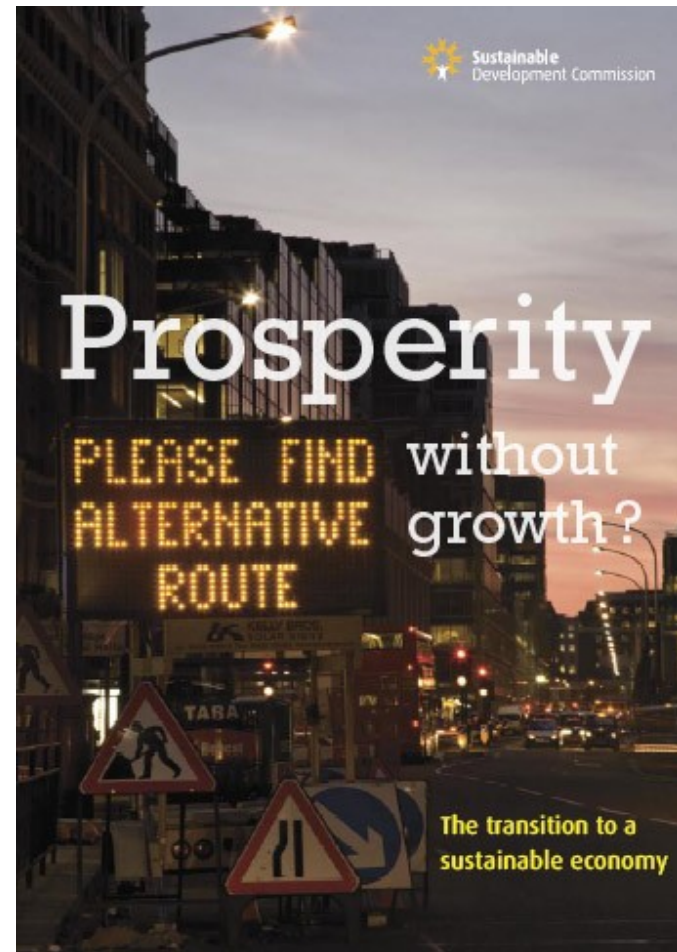


Closing the loop

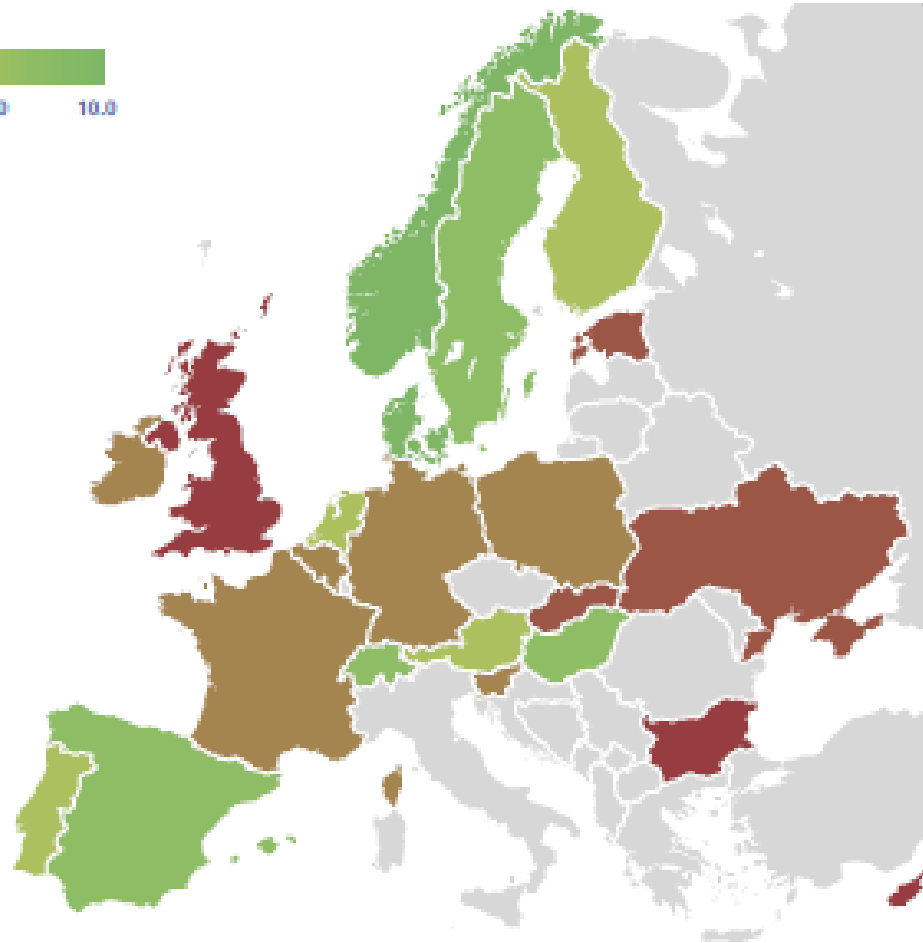
- All activities should be based on the closed loop.
 - We need an economy that follows the cyclical pattern of nature rather than the linear progress model, e.g. the carbon cycle
 - Biofuels on the farm
 - Reducing the flows in and out of our household, e.g. rainwater harvesting.

Prosperity without Growth

- Report from SDC
- Flourishing within limits
- Reducing the carbon intensity of our production
- Improving macroeconomic accounting
- ‘Alternative hedonism’



Trust and belonging in Europe



Questions?



Creatively Use & Respond to Change
(envision possibilities and
intervene in effective ways)

Use Edges; Value the Marginal
(important things happen
at the intersections)

Observe and Interact
(pay attention)

Use & Value Diversity
(diversity leads to
greater resilience)

Care for the Earth

Catch and Store Energy
(harvest while it's abundant)

Use Small, Slow Solutions
(local resources & responses,
manageable scale)

Obtain a Yield
(make sure you're
getting valuable results)

Integrate
(capitalize on how
things work together)

Fair Share

Care for People

Self-Regulate; Accept Feedback
(be open to modify
dysfunctional behaviours)

Design from Pattern to Detail
(observe natural/social patterns
and apply them to design)

Use & Value Renewables
(reduce dependency
on scarce resources)

Produce No Waste



What permaculture says about economics

Finances & Economics

Local and regional currencies
Carpooling, Ride sharing & Car share
Ethical Investment & Fair Trade
Farmers markets & Community
Supported Agriculture (CSA)
WWOOFing & similar networks
Tradable Energy Quotas
Life Cycle Analysis & Energy
Accounting



Observe and Interact

- Observe well before taking action—this applies to our whole approach to economic life
- We need to consider deeply all our decisions and then change gradually towards a more sustainable style of life
- At the industry level--the *Passivhaus* which reduces energy use by fitting into its environment
- At the personal level we can find ways of gardening our own outside spaces that work with nature.

What is a bioregion?

- ‘a unique region definable by natural (rather than political) boundaries’
- A *bioregion* is literally and etymologically a ‘life-place’—with a geographic, climatic, hydrological and ecological character capable of supporting unique human and non-human living communities. Bioregions can be variously defined by the geography of watersheds, similar plant and animal ecosystems, and related identifiable landforms and by the unique human cultures that grow from natural limits and potentials of the region

- [We] have ‘forgotten’ that the economy and all its works is a subset and dependent upon the wider ecosystem. . . Modern citizens have not only lost contact with the land, and their sense of embeddedness in the land, but at the same time they have lost those elemental social forms of more or less intimate and relatively transparent social relations. Thus a basic aim of bioregionalism is to get people back in touch with the land, and constitutive of that process is the recreation of community in a strong sense. (Barry, 1990: 9).

Key characteristics of a bioregional economy



- Locality
- Accountability
- Community
- Conviviality

- Cultural openness and maximisation of exchange that can be achieved in a world of limited energy, within a framework of self-sufficiency in basic resources and the limiting of trade to those goods which are not indigenous due to reasons of climate or local speciality.

Locality and self-reliance



Accountability as reconnection



- Each bioregion is the responsibility of its citizens
- Every local community protects its own backyard
- Bioregional resources belong to the region's citizens

Community not markets

- ◎ Reclaiming of public space for citizenship and relationship.
- ◎ ‘putting the economy back in its place’
- ◎ ‘The *agora* is first and foremost a place of public life and civil society’



Conviviality instead of productivity



- I choose the term 'conviviality' to designate the opposite of industrial productivity. I intend it to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment
- I believe that, in any society, as conviviality is reduced below a certain level, no amount of industrial productivity can effectively satisfy the needs it creates among society's members. (Illich, 1974).