

Transition Declaration of Independence

Adapted from the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America

Thomas Jefferson, 1776

Adaptation by Dr. Susan Krumdieck, 2008

When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the economic bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, Justice, the pursuit of Happiness, a Healthy Natural Environment and Sustainability.

— That to secure these rights, Organisations are instituted among Communities, deriving their just powers from the consent of the Members,

— That whenever any Form of Economy becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new Relationship, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Economic Relationships long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them and their environment to ruin, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Economic Constraints, and to provide new Guards for their future security and sustainability.

— Such has been the patient sufferance of this community; and such is now the necessity which constrains us to alter our former Systems of Business Growth for its own Sake and Environmental Exploitation. The history of the present Theory of Economics is a history of repeated disasters, injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over communities and the environment. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, felled our forests, polluted our water and fouled our air.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has exploited our talents, put us into debt, degraded our culture and eroded our relationships with the members of our community.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has exploited mineral resources which by right should belong to people in perpetuity in order to obscenely enrich a few in the short term.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has paved our farms, sprawled our towns, and destroyed the quality of live of our people and their children and grandchildren.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has convinced us, for more than a century, to ignore the voice of scientific knowledge and reason in order to continue the acidification of our air and oceans through Sulphur Dioxide, Nitrous Oxides and Carbon Dioxide emissions from combustion of fossil fuels.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has exploited the labour of people and environments that have no protection from ill use, and has persecuted people who worked for economic justice and equality.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has assaulted the morality of our youth and treated them as a target market rather than with the respect of future citizens and community members.

The Growth Economy for its own Sake has corrupted the purpose of our governance and civic institutions, it has usurped the purpose of our curiosity and research efforts, and it has shifted the motivation for the education of our young from development of their intellect and character to exploitation of their labours for further growth of the economy.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the Transition Community, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of this community, solemnly publish and declare, That this Community is, and of Right ought to be Free, that we are Absolved from all unsustainable and perverse requirements of the Exponential Growth Economy, and that all connection between this Community and the Exponential Growth Economy, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as a Free and Sustainable Community, we have full Power to reduce fuel and electricity consumption, restore our environment, protect our culture, nurture our agricultural assets, set aside our resources, refrain from extracting minerals, stone or fossil fuels at exponential rates, set our own inviolate limits to growth and pollution of our natural environment, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Local Commerce based on our own principles and theories, and to do all other Acts and Things which Sustainable Communities may of right do.

— And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.