



CASSE

Center for the Advancement of the
Steady State Economy

Join E. O. Wilson, Chris Matthews, Jane Goodall, David Suzuki, Wendell Berry, Vandana Shiva, Herman Daly, Bill McKibben, and thousands more who have taken a position on economic growth.

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Whereas:

- 1) Economic growth, as defined in standard economics textbooks, is an increase in the production and consumption of goods and services, and;
- 2) Economic growth occurs when there is an increase in the multiplied product of population and per capita consumption, and;
- 3) The global economy grows as an integrated whole consisting of agricultural, extractive, manufacturing, and services sectors that require physical inputs and produce wastes, and;
- 4) Economic growth is often and generally indicated by increasing real gross domestic product (GDP) or real gross national product (GNP), and;
- 5) Economic growth has been a primary, perennial goal of many societies and most governments, and;
- 6) Based upon established principles of physics and ecology, there is a limit to economic growth, and;
- 7) There is increasing evidence that global economic growth is having negative effects on long-term ecological and economic welfare...

Therefore, we take the position that:

- 1) There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and environmental protection (for example, biodiversity conservation, clean air and water, atmospheric stability), and;
- 2) There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and the ecological services underpinning the human economy (for example, pollination, decomposition, climate regulation), and;
- 3) Technological progress has had many positive and negative ecological and economic effects and may not be depended on to reconcile the conflict between economic growth and long-term ecological and economic welfare, and;
- 4) Economic growth, as gauged by increasing GDP, is an increasingly dangerous and anachronistic goal, especially in wealthy nations with widespread affluence, and;
- 5) A steady state economy (that is, an economy with a relatively stable, mildly fluctuating product of population and per capita consumption) is a viable alternative to a growing economy and has become a more appropriate goal in large, wealthy economies, and;
- 6) The long-run sustainability of a steady state economy requires its establishment at a size small enough to avoid the breaching of reduced ecological and economic capacity during expected or unexpected supply shocks such as droughts and energy shortages, and;
- 7) A steady state economy does not preclude economic development, a dynamic, qualitative process in which different technologies may be employed and the relative prominence of economic sectors may evolve, and;
- 8) Upon establishing a steady state economy, it would be advisable for wealthy nations to assist other nations in moving from the goal of economic growth to the goal of a steady state economy, beginning with those nations currently enjoying high levels of per capita consumption, and;
- 9) For many nations with widespread poverty, increasing per capita consumption (or, alternatively, more equitable distributions of wealth) remains an appropriate goal.

