

ACTION AGENDA RETHINKING GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

This Action Agenda has been developed to assist Canadian decision-makers to move towards new economic models that measure human well-being while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. It is derived from research and dialogues with over 100 researchers, practitioners, civil society leaders and policy-makers participating in workshops and panels convened by the Canada Research Chair on Sustainability Community Development, Royal Roads University.

The evidence is very clear that the present economy based on perpetual growth, rising levels of debt, and continuing ecological deficits cannot continue. Although the de-growth movement has been very critical of sustainable development, we have concluded that the future competitiveness of this country is reliant on the more rapid implementation of sustainable development and a shift from an economy focused on the Gross Domestic Product coupled with corresponding legislative changes, especially with respect to financial market oversight.

‘De-growth’ as a concept does not work, as de-growth is in itself not a goal, but perhaps an outcome. Research has shown that conditions of low or zero growth can effectively deliver prosperity. It is about changing the nature of our development paths, redirecting their trajectories towards a steady state economy of a stable or mildly fluctuating scale.

Our economy as currently configured is very effective at delivering goods and services. We propose redirecting those strengths to change our current unsustainable development pathway to a new economic model that sustains ecological inputs while optimizing outputs. The following provides an agenda for moving towards a more diverse economic agenda based on sustainable prosperity.

Find the detailed agenda and deliberations at this address:

<http://crcresearch.org/reports/action-agenda-rethinking-growth-and-prosperity>

ACTION AGENDA FOR DECISION MAKERS

- 1. Measure well-being, not outcomes.** Adopt a national indicator of well-being as the predominant indicator of human progress. A set of sustainable indicators should be developed in each community, in partnership with the community infrastructure of the United Way. (See [OECD indicators](#))
- 2. Regulatory and Policy Framework.** Develop a combination of regulations critical to sustainable development pathways, which impose quantitative limits, limits on practices and, in some cases, taxes to internalize external costs.
- 3. Future value of resources.** Implement accounting practices that value current and future natural resources equally. (See the [Stern Report](#))
- 4. Transition to a low carbon economy.** Embed an estimated cost of carbon into all public financing to create disincentives to fund projects that contribute to increased climate change.
- 5. Reinvestment.** Redirect incentives and subsidies for fossil fuel production, fossil fuel dependent goods, and other sectors with negative environmental externalities should be redirected towards long-term investment in more sustainable development pathways.
- 6. Subsidiarity.** Implement subsidiarity, an organizing principle stating that a matter ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest, or least centralized authority capable of addressing that particular issue
- 7. National Waste Strategy.** Develop ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and policy development focused on eliminating waste, including virtually zero waste from production processes by 2020 by all levels of government. (See [Zero Waste International Alliance](#))
- 8. Sustainable Infrastructure.** Prioritize the maintenance and transition to sustainable infrastructure at the national, provincial and municipal level. Explore co-operative models for managing common assets and for the management of public utilities and infrastructure.
- 9. Financing Strategies.** Support this transition with innovative financing and market strategies for investment in renewable energy, energy efficiency, the green economy, developed by a financial leaders' working group, including leaders from the country's business schools. The development of green revolving loan funds by municipal governments is a critical first step. (See [FCM](#)).
- 10. Re-localization.** Develop new policies at all levels of government, that stimulate re-localization innovations, and co-operative business enterprises to build greater local economic diversity and social innovation, in order to increase community resilience to exogenous shocks.