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LOCAL FUTURES
ECONOMICS *of* HAPPINESS

Earth Day is as good a day as any to remind ourselves that GDP – the main way governments measure 'progress' – goes up with environmental breakdown.

What does GDP actually measure? It measures the amount of money changing hands in society. *It measures commercialization.*

When the water is so polluted we have to buy it in bottles, GDP goes up. When nature becomes a rare commodity and people are changed entrance fees to zoos or nature reserves, GDP goes up. When traditional cultures are uprooted and replaced by an urban consumer culture, GDP skyrockets.

Watch and share our new animation

Importantly, it's not just the destruction of the Earth that drives the 'progress' of the global economy – it's the destruction of society, community, family and human wellbeing.

When sales of depression medications rise, so does GDP. When legal fees escalate in messy divorces, so does GDP. When wars spread and military spending increases, so does GDP.

On Earth Day (and every day) let's strive to do all the things that make GDP go down: plant a garden, save seeds for next season, share produce with friends. Stay healthy, lend someone a hand, enjoy the sunshine, make some music with friends.

Most of all, please share our new, free-to-watch **animation**, and help anti-GDP awareness grow!

Watch and share our new animation

Earth Day is not enough...

Earth Day and similar campaigns do not challenge the destructive expansion of GDP and the global economy. In fact, the Earth Day 2025 **website** calls us to "unite around renewable energy so we can triple clean electricity by 2030" ... which effectively just means more industrial growth.

Anyway, the time has come for campaigns that break out of the environmentalist silo. Middle classes are facing an unprecedented cost-of-living crisis – one that is caused by the *same* corporate-growth policies that are destroying the planet. But divisive media rhetoric is turning economically insecure people against environmentalists.

We need a campaign that *unites* environmental, economic and social-justice concerns – one which focuses on rejecting corporate growth in favor of community wealth.

... that's where World Localization Day comes in!

Host an event any time during the month of June. You can organize your own event, however big or small, or you can promote the World Localization Day campaign at an already existing activity.

Get involved in World Localization Day

Feminine Futures

April 30
True Progress and Restoration of the Whole
with
Rutendo Ngara
Indigenous knowledge systems holder, transdisciplinary researcher (South Africa)
Register to join →

Rutendo is an African Indigenous Knowledge Systems holder and transdisciplinary researcher. She is a practitioner of a number of physical disciplines, including Dance, Yoga and Wushu/Kung Fu/Tai Ji. Rutendo has represented South Africa as an international silver medallist.

She serves on a number of boards, including the Credo Mutwa Foundation (as Chairperson), the South African Wushu Federation, and the ASSEGAA Alliance for protection of sacred sites. She holds a BSc in Electrical Engineering, an MSc in Medicine in Biomedical Engineering, and is pursuing a doctorate in Philosophy of Education. The quest for harmony, healing the whole, and co-existence underpins her endeavours.

Planet Local Voices

The final episode of our **Planet Local Voices** series features **Jeremy Lent**.

Described as "one of the greatest thinkers of our age," Jeremy Lent is an impassioned researcher and speaker who investigates the underlying causes of our civilizational metacrisis, and explores pathways toward an ecological civilization. He is the author of *The Patterning Instinct* and *The Web of Meaning*, and the founder of the Deep Transformation Network – an online global community where people can engage in facilitating a deep transformation toward a life-affirming future on a regenerated Earth.

Watch/listen to the episode here

Other voices for localization

"How Eco-Localism Differs from Tariff Terrorism" Resilience.org, 17 April.

Richard Heinberg, senior fellow of the Post Carbon Institute has written **this piece** on Trump's tariffs.

"... this is the moment when eco-localism is most desperately needed. As soaring consumer prices, supply chain disruptions, and reductions in government-provided funding and services threaten communities, localists can help bolster local markets and inspire mutual aid efforts".

Read Richard's article **here**.

Lawyer, economist and author, **Michael Shuman**, is a leading voice for local investment and community capital. Michael has recently published this interview with Helena Norberg-Hodge in his regular publication **The Main Street Journal** **"It's not Countries Ripping us off, it's Global Corporations"**.

*"Whenever I get sucked too far down the political rabbit hole of the moment, I try to schedule a chat with my dear friend Helena Norberg-Hodge. No one has done more to build a global movement for localization. And she reminds us that **the biggest threat we face is not this politician or that political party, but the structure of the global economy** which, in her words, frees "corporations to extract, produce, transport, and sell whatever, wherever, however they want on the planet, with as few 'barriers', regulations, protections for people and nature, as possible."*

Read Michael's interview with Helena **here**.

Upcoming events

23 April
Mapping Localisation and the New Economy in Australia
Hosted by NENA, Local Futures and Degrowth Network Australia.

The **New Economy Network Australia (NENA) Localization Hub** is hosting a series of three online workshops with Henry Coleman from Local Futures. These interactive sessions will provide opportunities to meet and network with localizers across the country, and will grapple with the specific challenges faced by localization initiatives in Australia. Register **HERE**.

26 April
Thriving in Uncertain Times: ***In Conversation with Damon Gameau and Helena Norberg-Hodge***
Hosted by Local Futures and Relocalise Northern Rivers, Australia

Join in a vital conversation tailored for the future-economy curious!

Local community initiatives will be showcased, Q&A moderated by Local Futures' Henry Coleman. Tickets and info **here**.

15 June
Spiritual Ecology Festival
Hosted by St Ethelburgas, UK

This deep dive into spiritual ecology will explore a rich diversity of cultural, spiritual, and political perspectives. With talks, films, workshops, live music, contemplative spaces, and large-scale community action, this event brings people together to explore the interconnected challenges of climate crisis, polarization, and our relationship with land.

All our best,
from the Local Futures team

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