

## STATEMENT ON THE GROWTH ECONOMY BY A COALITION OF RELIGIONS

As a coalition of believers from different faith traditions, we affirm that the Earth, our Common Home, is sacred and in urgent need of protection. Many of the threats facing planet Earth have been created by heavy reliance on economic growth.

The term 'Growth Economy' refers to current global patterns for which narrowly defined economic 'development' is the central focus. This monetary profit-based growth agenda has led to far-reaching impacts on many aspects of society; on many communities, and on the natural environment, including the climate. All species, biodiversity, oceans, food, water, soil and air continue to be harmed and to suffer.

### We believe that:

- Nature has inherent rights to exist and flourish.
- Human beings have a responsibility to act as stewards to help protect the natural world.
- The growth economy needs to be transformed into an economy that also benefits social well-being and ecological health.
- Simple living within an ethic of enough is essential for human and ecological flourishing.
- The failure of many economists to recognise ecological limits reflects a discipline that is fractured spiritually and ethically.

### We are concerned about:

- The unsustainability of endless growth on a planet that has biophysical limits.
- The denial of this reality by those promoting the 'growth economy'.
- The prioritisation of money over the priceless common good.
- The rapidly increasing impact on the poor and on future generations.
- The arrogance of the growth economy to undervalue and even destroy natural adaptations which have accrued over billions of years, yet which we are annihilating in a geological eyeblink.
- The pressure on ecosystems by throwaway, wasteful societies.
- The ecological impacts of overpopulation.

### We support:

- Change from the profit-driven market economy to one that recognises social, spiritual and ecological needs.
- The imperative of restoring the Earth to a healthy state.
- A society that prioritises the flourishing of humans, their spiritual wellbeing, and the wellbeing of ecosystems.
- The development and adoption of viable alternatives to the growth economy.

### We call for:

- Personal and community transformation.
- A realignment of values regarding consumption and waste.
- Each individual to re-evaluate the power of the growth economy over him or herself.
- Action in and between our faith communities to challenge the power of the growth economy.
- Leaders to acknowledge these serious issues and implement needed changes in meaningful, significant and timely ways.

We invite people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to support this call.

**Statement issued 23 July 2015 at the Faith Ecology Network forum: *Healthy Earth, Endless Growth – Are they compatible?* The Faith Ecology Network (FEN) connects faiths to grow in ecological awareness and care. Participants currently come from Aboriginal, Anglican, Baha'i, Buddhist, Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Hindu, Islamic, Quaker and Uniting Church faith traditions.**

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