



Original Position on Economic Growth Displayed with Changes Adopted on June 3, 2008

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 ~~American~~ **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 ~~American society and government~~ **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 ~~American~~ **global** economic growth is having negative effects on ~~the long-term ecological and economic welfare of the United States and the world...~~

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 ~~the long-term ecological and economic welfare of the United States and the world~~, and;
- 4) Economic growth, as gauged by increasing GDP, is an increasingly dangerous and anachronistic ~~American~~ 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 ~~the United States and other~~ 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 ~~the United States~~ **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 ~~for the time being~~