

Green Mission News

Earth Month- April 2014 Green Mission News

What's in the News...



What If the Economy Protected People and the Planet?

Written By John Fullerton and Hunter Lovins for FactCoexist.com

Our modern global economy has delivered remarkable historical achievements, and prosperity (for many) unmatched in human history. Now, however, it must evolve to address the grotesquely inequitable distribution of wealth, intractable poverty in much of the world, and chronic failure to deliver living-wage jobs, all while respecting ecological boundaries. (Read the [article](#).)

External Article Links:

- UN report: The transformative potential of the right to food

www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20140310_finalreport_en.pdf

- 5 Signs Solar Power Is Taking Over the World

www.truthdig.com/report/item/5_signs_solar_power_is_taking_over_the_world_20140322

- Town That Shouted 'No!' to Fracking, Says 'Yes!' to Rooftop Solar

www.repowerbalcombe.com/

- A Chipotle original comedy that explores the outrageously twisted and utterly unsustainable world of industrial agriculture

<http://farmedanddangerous.com/>

- Missing jet search makes one thing clear: Indian Ocean full of trash

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/sci-tech/missing-jet-search-makes-one-thing-clear-indian-ocean-full-of-trash-1.1753425#ixzz2xeHPk5HC>

- Deep Sharing: How the commons amplifies the sharing economy

<http://onthecommons.org/magazine/deep-sharing#sthash.rgjjCsBO.dpuf>

- What If the Economy Protected People and the Planet?

<http://livinggreenmag.com/2014/02/28/green-business/economy-protected-people-planet/#v3qc47tGmLcBMUse.99>

- Genetic ID Announces the Definitive 'International Guide to GMO Standards and Regulatory Policy'

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/1824459#ixzz2xeT4WkYO>

- Toward a circular economy: Philips CEO Frans van Houten

A new economic model is helping the Dutch manufacturer improve its resource efficiency and financial attractiveness.

www.mckinsey.com/insights/sustainability/toward_a_circular_economy_philips_ceo_frans_van_houten

- CHAMACOS Study Examines Pesticide Effects on Children's Health

www.thenation.com/article/178804/warning-signs-how-pesticides-harm-young-brain

and

cerch.org/research-programs/chamacos/

- The Regenerative Economy and the Pragmatism of Woo-Woo

www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-chasan/the-regenerative-economy_b_4878452.html

- Class action lawsuit v General Mills over all-natural claims and GMOs can proceed, says judge

A judge has refused to dismiss a class action lawsuit accusing General Mills of misleading consumers by marketing its Nature Valley products as 'all-natural' when they allegedly contain GMOs.

<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Regulation/Class-action-lawsuit-v-General-Mills-over-all-natural-claims-and-GMOs-can-proceed-says-judge>

- Can you compost your paper or bio-plastic product? Here's how to know for sure.

ecocycle.org/component/content/article/32-general/blog/446-is-it-compostable?

and

ecocycle.org/files/pdfs/compostable-product-guidelines.pdf

- Moving toward a circular economy

In this narrated slideshow, McKinsey alumnus Markus Zils explains how the circular economy encourages companies to seek ways of retaining more of the value of the material, energy, and labor inputs that go into their products.

www.mckinsey.com/Insights/Manufacturing/Moving_toward_a_circular_economy?cid=manufacturing-emi-alt-mkq-mck-oth-1402

- A guide to implementing the circular economy in your business

downtoearth.danone.com/2014/03/12/a-guide-to-implementing-the-circular-economy-in-your-business/

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Full Length Articles Below:

- Circular Economy: Integrating 'Life' into Businesses Responsible for 'Tomorrow'
- Minimalism, Simple Living, Eco Living, Zero Waste: What's the difference?
- Whole Foods executive clarifies stand on GMO labels
- We have lost Tony Benn

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Posted: 28/03/2014 11:12

www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/preetam-kaushik/circular-economy_b_5047105.html

Circular Economy: Integrating 'Life' into Businesses Responsible for 'Tomorrow'

In a capitalistic economy, claiming to be 'exclusive' may be a privilege. But, in a world which is fast losing out on its metals, minerals, water and clean air, it smacks of colossal snobbishness. Predicaments of an unsustainable future are staring at the businesses in the face. Use and throw has slowly turned into simply throw with shelf lives of products declining with innovation in technology. All this 'cutting-edge' and 'custom made' has come to a point of no return.

Unless there is a drastic change in ideology that follows integrated approach, future can take us on a time travel. Only, this time we will enter dark ages; never to return.

The current economy with linear production where only products are built to be

discarded at the end seems to be a game where everyone is out to lose.

A pair of word 'circular economy' seems to be the next biggest mantra. And, chant it, you must; for your own good and survival. For, this talks of an exclusive economy, which is capable of designing 'out' the waste. In a broader sense, circular economy is much [beyond](#) a simplistic one-line definition.

Though at the outset it looks like a clear contradiction and fitting reply to economy of accumulation; the new model of businesses is much more than that. The kind of world that capitalism has created is for all to see. Excesses of a consumption-based economic system --from burgeoning landfills, to rising levels of obesity; cronies of capitalism refuse to see what lies ahead of them. Because, in simple words, there is not much of a tomorrow left there.

In the world that's headed towards wider gulf between the rich and poor, democratic and autocratic nations -- circular economy seems to be the new leveler, if adopted by nations. It is not a new revolution that will take the world by storm. In fact, given that the capitalistic forces are leading the chains of excesses, it can never be, without participation from empowered people of every nation. This almost Zen-like 'here and now' formulation of hard economic realities seems very distant to the prevailing sensibilities which promote excesses.

Will the governments, corporations, and individuals would embrace a new set of beliefs so divergent from business as usual? Though it is tough to say whether the solidarity will form at that level, there sure is some strength for circular economy from within the circles of propagators. Fortunately for it, this 'new religion' has strong voices with those within government set ups too to talk about its need and feasibility.

Circular economy does not ask you to drop everything you did before. Neither does it accept just a bit of trimming here and there, to make it seem like an '[honest attempt](#)'. It is bringing forth a situation where we need to think of economy as a large circle. As opposed to a linear system that we have now where we only create stuff to turn it into waste, eventually; the circular economy is promisingly different. Here, 'net waste' does not figure that can harm the biosphere. Sounds fascinating, isn't it?

Now, get this. In circular economy, goods don't get produced for exclusivity. They get produced for a longer shelf life, and are readily reusable and recyclable when they reach the "end" of their operating life. Instead of unidirectional value chains, industry has to imagine being part of a circular value chain where they are responsible and not just profit-oriented. So, whatever goes around DOES come around!

Ideologically, this ain't a new thought. Actually in a world where limited resources had to be shared, fair and just were the key words that operated in the minds of native economists of those days. Barter system where fair and just market existed simply based on needs and not on the 'money' part, ecology was taken care of.

The new mantra of circular economy seems to have caught up well. Mckinsey and Company put out the findings of a study of which the company was a partner. This [study](#) revealed that the material waste in Europe can come down significantly by applying the principles of this new model of economy.

Circular economy factors in flexibility in production processes. In fact, flexibility is the prime aspect that creates the base for manufacturing units to change and adapt to changes in the business environments in a more economic manner than what they already do.

When circular economy gains more momentum, the trinity would have to be redefined for the benefit of humankind. The Sun, the wind, and the water have to play god with generous amounts of biomass playing their exclusive and collective roles.

What is needed here is the shift to systemic thinking, which has to begin right at the time when new projects are being planned at government and private level. In a circular world, everything is connected and reenters the atmosphere at the end of its use, unlike the linear model now.

So, careful planning and judicious use of resources are a must for this concept to be integrated.

With the idea still gaining the wind beneath its wings, it's a hard game. But, in a world hopeful of change, measuring Gross Circular Product may soon be a dream come true for the betterment of the earth.

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www.lifesimplybalanced.com/2014/03/minimalism-simple-living-eco-living.html

Minimalism, Simple Living, Eco Living, Zero Waste: What's the difference?

The truth is, there is no clear cut answer to what living a minimalist, simplistic, Eco-friendly, or zero-waste lifestyle means. All four can blend together in many ways and each really boils down to personal preferences anyhow. I am also not really sure a label matters for anything more than creating connections with other like-minded individuals.

Practicing minimalism means removing the unimportant things and distractions from our lives so that the focus can on the important. This varies for every single individual, as we all have different ideas of what is important. Some people live to the extreme out of a small backpack, while others have houses, families, and a more permanent existence, though both are minimalists.

Living simply focuses not as much on how many possessions or distractions one has, and more on self-sufficiency. For many this means composting, gardening, making things they may need, or making do with what they have. For others this means living off the grid and their land.

Eco living can be much the same as living simply, with a focus on how living habits

effect the earth and ecology.

The efforts of Zero-Waste are put into redesigning the life-cycle of things within everyday life so that no waste is sent to a landfill, or essentially wasted. Those who focus on zero-waste typically compost, change their purchasing habits, and focus on little to no packaging for all of their daily resources.

It's human nature to package and label things and people into different categories, but in reality if a person's focus is on minimalism, simple living, Eco living, or zero waste, they are touching on all four lifestyle choices in one way or another.

If I had to lean towards one or another, I would say my family is very minimalist. But in living this type of lifestyle we recycle, compost, reduce packaging by buying in bulk, and make do with what we have. We live simply, and try to be Eco-friendly and strive for zero-waste everyday, but essentially our focus is to remove the unimportant to allow the important to be seen.

Perhaps simple living sums everything up. Do you lean towards one lifestyle or another? Do you feel labels are unnecessary?

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Published: March 30, 2014 5:09PM

Whole Foods executive clarifies stand on GMO labels

By Joe Rogoff

Whole Foods executive responds to editorial on labeling food with genetically modified ingredients.

Whole Foods Market's goal in stating our intent to label products for GMO content by 2018 is to clear up confusion about what is — or isn't — in the food we buy. Unfortunately, the recent Capital Press editorial "GMO label initiative is backwards," only continues the confusion.

Whole Foods Market is currently working with suppliers to label products as non-GMO because there are no laws that products containing GMOs must be labeled. Our customers have asked for this level of transparency, and in the absence of federal standards, we have taken the initiative with our suppliers on their behalf.

Non-GMO labeling by a third party confers credibility on claims made by the producer, but in order to be fully transparent, information about GMOs should be easy to find on every product. There must also be labels on products that do contain genetically engineered ingredients.

The Capital Press editorial says, "By 2018, everything in Whole Foods stores will be labeled non-GMO, according to the company's website."

Actually, what our website says is "By 2018, we will require our supplier partners to label products containing GMO ingredients." Our goal is not to eliminate GMOs from our stores, but to have products that may contain GMOs labeled as such. Ultimately, GMO produce, animals that are fed GMO feed, and products that contain GMO ingredients will all be labeled in our stores.

Lastly, we do not believe the argument that "GMO labels would make food cost more in Oregon and reduce the selection" to be true. Manufacturers update product labels on an average of once a year, and adding new language or labels should not increase cost. Many of these manufacturers already sell products in the 64 countries that require them to be labeled. Whole Foods Market does not currently intend to stop selling foods with GMOs, and the inference that a labeling initiative will "reduce the selection" is probably not true for the State of Oregon, either.

This is simple – consumers want to make food choices based on clear information on how their food was produced. Let's tell them in the easiest way possible: on the labels of their food.

Joe Rogoff is the regional president for Whole Foods Market in the Pacific Northwest.

<http://www.capitalpress.com/Opinion/Columns/20140330/whole-foods-executive-clarifies-stand-on-gmo-labels#sthash.ufpqURO7.dpuf>

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We have lost Tony Benn

We have lost Tony Benn, tireless British Parliamentarian, and anti-war activist, dead at 88, but the plaques he secretly placed in the House of Commons - his private testimony to "the people who fought for democracy" - remain. Benn, who in 2001 left Parliament after 50 years "to spend more time on politics," earlier erected several plaques, "quite illegally, without permission." He put the one dedicated "in loving memory" to suffragette Emily Wilding Davison in the broom closet where Davison hid herself the night of the 1911 census so she could record her address as the House of Commons, "thus making her claim to the same political rights as men....By such means was democracy won for the people of Britain." Benn wanted his epitaph to be, "He encouraged us." He did. RIP.

His "five little democratic questions" to any powerful person:

"What power have you got?

Where did you get it?

In whose interests do you exercise it?

To whom are you accountable?

And how can we get rid of you?"