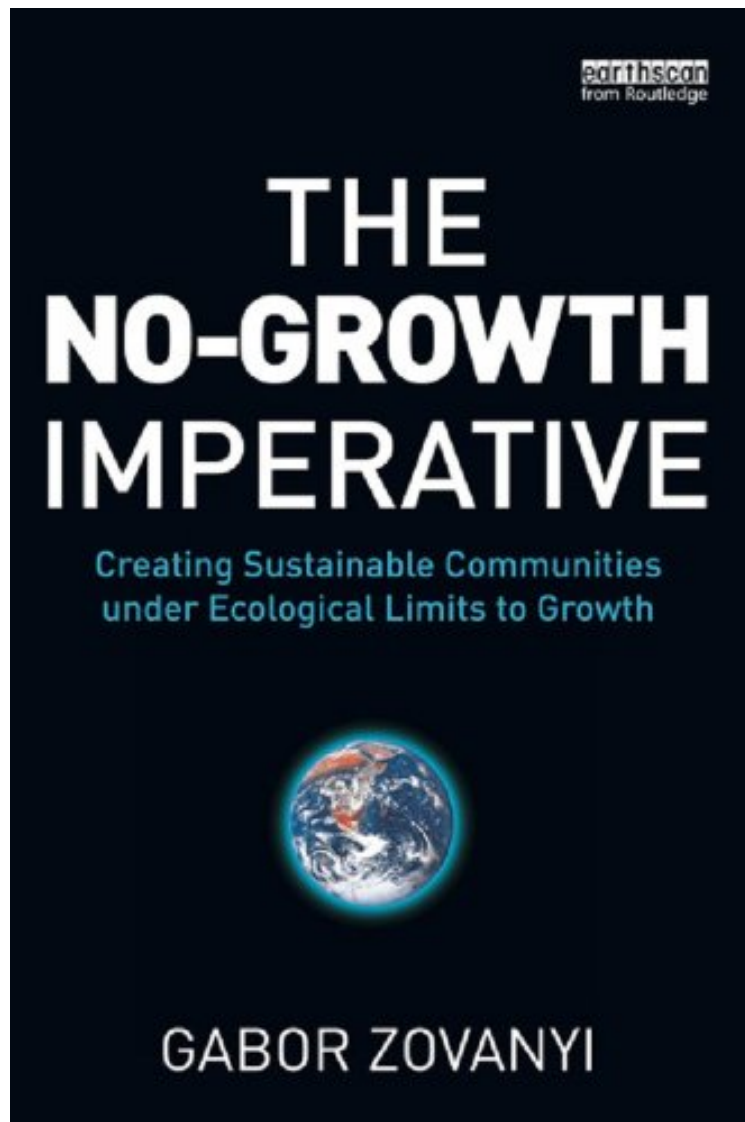


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The No-Growth Imperative: Creating Sustainable Communities under Ecological Limits to Growth

Gabor Zovanyi

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Gabor Zovanyi : The No-Growth Imperative: Creating Sustainable Communities under Ecological Limits to Growth before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The No-Growth Imperative: Creating Sustainable Communities under Ecological Limits to Growth:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. We need to change the paradigmBy George PlumbThe No-Growth ImperativeWhile many books could be claimed to be the most important book of the time in my mind The No-Growth

Imperative is certainly right up there. After reading this book it would be hard to imagine that anyone could claim that we must and can continue the current growth forever paradigm. The author explains very well why not only is it absolutely essential to change to a no growth economic and cultural system he also makes a strong case that it is culturally and politically possible. The book is not an easy read. It is incredibly loaded with very detailed information. In fact most of the content consists of material from other sources. The 233 page book has twenty-nine pages of footnotes! Much of the content is highly repetitive although the case could be made that repeating information is essential to people absorbing what the author is trying to say. A weakness in the book is that the author uses the traditional definition of sustainability which he encapsulates as, "...behavior capable of being sustained, maintained, or continued indefinitely." That is an inadequate definition because some human behaviors could be continued indefinitely but at the expense of other species going extinct which is already happening. A better definition is the one adopted by Vermonters for Sustainable Population in their forthcoming report on What Is an Optimal/Sustainable Population Size for Vermont? This definition is: "A sustainable human population is one where the people living in a given politically defined area (such as Vermont) do not live beyond the limits of the renewable resources of that area for either input (energy and matter) or output (food, material goods, and absorption of pollution). They then purchase or trade from environmentally aware sources those necessities that cannot be locally satisfied either in sufficient amounts or at all. They will thereby be living in a manner that present and future generations of people and all other life native to that area, will be able to enjoy a healthy habitat over the long term." The author presents 10 difficult personal actions needed to save the world. This is refreshing because usually people writing about climate change and the environment list just the simple and easy things which don't amount to much. While he hints at some things that would make communities more sustainable such as growing more of their own food, walking and bicycling instead of using motorized transport, and better defined neighborhoods, he doesn't paint a clear picture of what those communities would really look like. Where are the millions of people living in cities going to find jobs if we no longer have an export type economy? It is wonderful to see that someone with a background in urban planning, which almost always supports the growth paradigm, recognizes that it is time to stop growth. Thanks Gabor for writing this book.

More than two decades of mounting evidence confirms that the existing scale of the human enterprise has surpassed global ecological limits to growth. Based on such limits, The No-Growth Imperative discounts current efforts to maintain growth through eco-efficiency initiatives and smart-growth programs, and argues that growth is inherently unsustainable and that the true nature of the challenge confronting us now is one of replacing the current growth imperative with a no-growth imperative. Gabor Zovanyi asserts that anything less than stopping growth would merely slow today's dramatic degradation and destruction of ecosystems and their critical life-support services. Zovanyi makes the case that local communities must take action to stop their unsustainable demographic, economic, and urban increases, as an essential prerequisite to the realization of sustainable states. The book presents rationales and legally defensible strategies for stopping growth in local jurisdictions, and portrays the viability of no-growth communities by outlining their likely economic, social, political, and physical features. It will serve as a resource for those interested in shifting the focus of planning from growth accommodation to the creation of stable, sustainable communities. While conceding the challenges associated with transforming communities into no-growth entities, Zovanyi concludes by presenting evidence that suggests that prospects for realizing states of no growth are greater than might be assumed.

'Gabor Zovanyi, an urban planner, persuasively demolishes the temporizing evasions of managed growth, balanced growth, smart growth, green growth, etc., and logically demonstrates the imperative of no-growth. Many ideas and strategies for implementing no-growth at the local level are insightfully discussed. Well referenced and highly recommended!' ndash; Herman Daly, Professor Emeritus, University of Maryland 'This book is an outstanding resource for community leaders and activists seeking to move beyond the endless growth model and towards greater stability and sustainability.' ndash; Eben Fodor, urban planner 'As the era of exponential economic growth comes to its end, societies are experiencing extraordinary levels of stress. Planners should be at the forefront of this inevitable historic shift, and this clear, well-argued book points the way. It could hardly be more timely.' ndash; Richard Heinberg, Post Carbon Institute "Gabor Zovanyi is a professor on a practical mission who makes a crucial contribution by describing in detail the characteristics of sustainable communities. The No-Growth Imperative will be read by sustainability scholars and students far and wide, but it is a must-read for the mayors, city councils, county commissioners, and other civic leaders of the 21st Century." ndash; Brian Czech, Centre for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy "Humans are endowed with several unique qualities of which perhaps none are more important than our capacity for logical, evidence-based analysis and our ability to engage in forward planning. In short, humankind is the only species able to act deliberately to change its future for the better. We even have a whole planning profession founded on this singular reality. That said, the evidence today suggests that the sheer scale of the human enterprise, and our seemingly unthinking dedication to continued material growth, are undermining global life support systems and with them, the human prospect. Change is coming; the end of growth is inevitable. The only question is whether the end will be dominated by chaotic disorder or inspired vision. But where are the planners? At last with The No-Growth Imperative,

we have a de-growth book for community planners and social activists that should let them confront society's growth demons head on. Let us begin the transition to an equitable stable steady-state within the means of nature and, in the doing of it, rise to our full human potential." ndash; William Rees, Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia

"At the end, as a counterpoint to much ecological writing, the author proposes 10 difficult personal actions needed to save the world, including ecologically responsible childbearing, shifting from private to public transport, eating much lower on the food chain and becoming (a new word for me) a locavore." ndash; David Lorimer, Network About the Author

Gabor Zovanyi is a Professor of Urban Planning at Eastern Washington University, USA. He has degrees from UCLA, San Diego State University, and the University of Washington. With research specializations in growth management, sustainable communities, and land-use law he is also the author of Growth Management for a Sustainable Future.