

Richard Douthwaite's Contribution towards a Material Degrowth Society in Ireland

Second contribution as part of the
Legacy of Richard Douthwaite

Overview

- Introductory insights
- Richard and Feasta
- Conferences, Lectures, Publications
- Other Contributions, Submissions & Initiatives
- Richard's Personal impact - Testimonies





KEYS TO THE FUTURE



Who we are

Founded in 1998, **Feasta** is an Irish-based think-tank devoted to exploring how we can create the best possible future for society and the planet without diminishing the resources of either. To do this successfully it draws on an international, trans-disciplinary network committed to deepening our understanding of the key systems that support our world (food, energy, environment, economy) and of the complex, interdependent relationships between them. We believe that weaknesses in those systems threaten humankind and the planet, so we work hard to identify and analyse them and to use our expertise to find viable, long-term solutions.

Feasta is about the big picture. We recognise that these systems are continually changing both themselves and in relationship to one another—and that understanding and managing these dynamics is the key to the future. This is the world that members of **Feasta** think about, and it’s an exciting one to explore.

What we do

The **Feasta** network brings together experts and innovators in fields as diverse as food and energy security, economics, law, human geography and environmental policy. What they all share, however, is a belief in the fundamental interconnectedness of systems. A ‘bird’s-eye view’ is therefore a key feature of our work. By getting analysts out of the silos in which they so often find themselves, we create synergies that result in new ways of seeing the future and of helping that future to materialise.

Our global perspective makes us a natural home for cutting-edge thinking about issues like human welfare, environmental constraints and, of course, the economic and monetary instability that currently clouds our world. **Feasta** succeeds in this role because we take great care to find the right balance between the autonomy needed for creative thinking and the discipline required for the organisation to be effective.

The lack of any real global consensus about how humankind can turn things around makes our work essential at a time of great uncertainty and instability. The kind of rich, independent thinking that **Feasta** hosts is needed now more than ever.

FEASTA REVIEW *number 1*

[Search](#) [Home](#) [Feasta website](#)

Edited by RICHARD DOUTHWAITE and JOHN JOPLING

The First Annual Feasta Lecture
Trinity College, Dublin
26th April, 1999.

FEASTA *review* 1

*uneconomic growth in theory and in
fact*

HERMAN E. DALY

What I'd like to talk about this evening is a concept which I think is important, although you don't hear it talked about very much. It is the idea of uneconomic growth. We hear about economic growth more than we want to sometimes, so is uneconomic growth a possibility? I want to argue that it is.

The text for my homily this evening is taken from John Ruskin: 'That which seems to be wealth may in verity be only the gilded index of far-reaching ruin'. That's my theme and I want to develop it in the following way: first I'll discuss the issue of uneconomic growth in theory. Does it make sense theoretically? Does it flow out of standard economics? I will argue that it is highly consistent with micro economic theory but that it conflicts with macro economic theory as currently done.

2000 July 4 The Second Annual Feasta Lecture David Korten

The Second Annual Feasta Lecture

Trinity College, Dublin

4th July, 2000.

[PDF version](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

the civilising of global society

DAVID C. KORTEN

We live at one of the most critical and exciting moments in all of human history. We face both the necessity and the opportunity to reinvent society.

Understanding the Economics of Sustainable Development

A six week course of lectures - by Richard Douthwaite and others. In association with Cultivate and supported by Trocaire. (For more details please see the Feasta website 'Past Events' section.)

Date: September 26 - October 31, 2006

Venue: Cultivate Centre, Temple Bar, Dublin

The course questioned the conventional wisdom that both the key to rich-country prosperity and the solution to global poverty is for international trade and investment to generate global economic growth.

2006 July 7-9 The Ecology of Money

A short course given at Bridport Dorset UK.

Those taking the course learned how to design money systems to suit the goals and circumstances of their local communities.

"Cap & Share"

A talk by Richard Douthwaite

Date: August 25 & 26, 2007

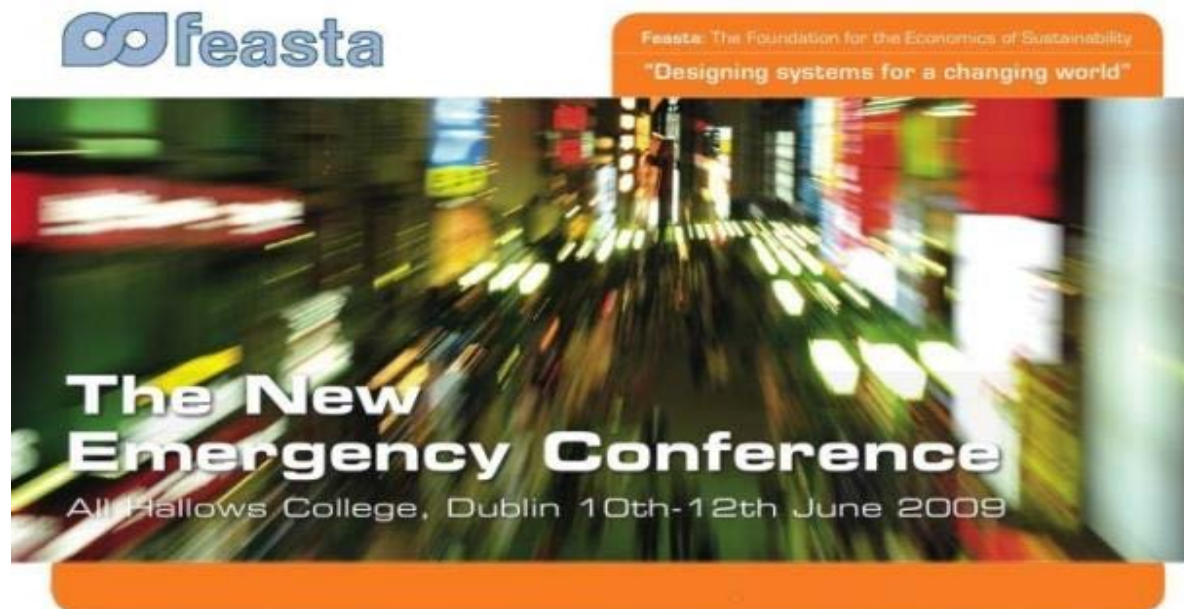
Venue: Cool Earth Fair, Festival of World Cultures, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

2008 Degrowth Conference April 18-19 -Paris, France.

A paper entitled "Economic Growth cannot continue", which "was written by David Korowicz & Richard Douthwaite, was delivered by David at the first conference on Economic De-Growth for Ecological Sustainability & Social Justice'.

2009 New Emergency Conference- (another seminal event)

In 2009 Richard was very instrumental in organising and setting the tone for the New Emergency



Submissions to Irish Government

Detailed Submissions to two Irish Government committees, one on the implementation of its climate change strategy and the second on sustainable development.

RD Briefing on TD's and Senators in June 2008

Climate Committee Briefing Session on Cap and Share

June 25th – the Dáil, Dublin.

Richard Douthwaite and David Korowicz briefed TDs and Senators about Cap and Share, and some contacts were made with TDs and some researchers.

Green Debt and NAMA – Feasta Annual Report 2009

Green Debt and NAMA Paper

Richard Douthwaite

August 19

Liquidity Network Submission to Éamon Ryan March 2009

Feasta Influence on Irish Government 2009

Liquidity Network submission to Eamon Ryan, Minister DECNR

Richard Douthwaite

March 9

The Irish money supply was contracting rapidly in early 2009. This was making trading increasingly difficult and jeopardising many businesses. The government could not borrow and spend enough to rectify the situation so the Feasta money group's work on a complementary currency to run in parallel with the euro looked as if it might ease the situation. We decided to keep government up to date with our progress and thinking because we did not want local authorities to be prevented from participating. The paper for Eamon Ryan was also sent to Peter Clinch in the Office of the Taoiseach.

LOCAL ECONOMIES, STRONG COMMUNITIES

An Irish conference on resilient local economies

Revised programme

Wednesday 26th to Friday 28th May 2010

Wednesday 26th May

Butler House, Patrick Street

20:00 Public talk

David Engwicht – “Creative Communities”: Unlocking the creativity of individuals, decision makers and communities.

Thursday 27th May

Parade Tower, Kilkenny Castle

09:00 Conference Start

Mayor Malcolm Noonan – Welcome and opening address
Minister Ciarán Cuffe – Keynote

09:45 The Big Picture

Richard Douthwaite – “Beyond the Limits”: Ireland’s prospects in a resource constrained world.

Nigel Dowdney – “The Tesco Effect”: Impact of globalisation on local communities.

Bruce Darrell – “Food Security”: Not just an issue for the developing world.

11:15 Break

11:30 Concurrent Workshops

1/ Tools for supporting independent local businesses

Nigel Dowdney

2/ Investing in ourselves and the role of local currencies

Richard Douthwaite & Brian Dillon

3/ Strategies for developing ‘Nutritional’ resilience

Bruce Darrell

12:30 Plenary Session

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Building Resilience

Joël Labbé – “Top Down & Bottom Up”: Policy and community action in meeting the challenges ahead.

Joan Fitzpatrick – “Farming in Kilkenny”: Prospects and Challenges for the future.

Continued...

Patrick Lydon – “The Callan Experience”: A model for local community self-reliance.

15:30 Break

15:45 Concurrent Workshops

1/ Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities

David Engwicht

2/ The trend towards resilient local economies in France

Rafaël Sauchier & Cyril Dion

3/ Integrated area planning and community approaches

Catherine Corcoran

16:45 Plenary Session

Thursday 27th May

Butler House, Patrick Street

19:30 Public talk & Wine Reception

Cyril Dion – “The Colibri Movement” (tbc)

Official closing of the conference and wine reception.

Friday 28th May

3 hour field trips by Coach

10:00 depart to Callan ESCOs

Callan renewable energy supply project: Willow coppice, chipping, storage and district heating system.

Ballytobin Bio-gas facility: Anaerobic digester, CHP and community district heating.

14:00 depart to Cloughjordan

Cloughjordan Eco-village: Tour of The Village Project with director Una Johnston. District heating system, Community Supported Agriculture, Green Buildings, Walk-able communities.

Note: Coaches will leave from The Parade at the allocated time and arrive back in Kilkenny 3 hours later.



www.resilientkilkenny.org



Welcome to the 2000 Convergence Festival Site

CONVERGENCE FESTIVAL '00 | PROGRAMME

home events participants schedule registration

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What A Sustainable World Would Be Like with Richard Douthwaite
Richard will cover the characteristics of a sustainable economic system and indicate how it would differ from the system we have today.

In particular, a sustainable economic system would be:

- 1 a stable population
- 2 provide the basic necessities of life for its population from renewable resources under its control and expects to be able to continue to do so without over-using or degrading those resources for at least the next thousand years. It is therefore able to trade with the outside world out of choice rather than necessity. This frees it from the need to do unpalatable or unsustainable things in order to compete such as adopting potentially dangerous technologies or curtailing social protection provisions.
- 3 able to protect its renewable resources and its population both militarily and economically. Its collection of economic protection weapons includes an independent currency and banking system. It has no debts to lenders outside and there are no net flows of capital across its borders, thus allowing its interest rate to fall to close to zero as it moves towards maturity.

** It does not depend on continual economic growth to stave off collapse. Its economy grows very slowly if at all.*

Resilient Communities

green, smart
and sustainable

CONVERGENCE

Sustainable Living Festival www.cultivate.ie

Wednesday 26 May - Tuesday 1 June 2010

The 15th Convergence Festival

features talks, conferences, workshops and World Café discussions on how urban and rural communities can adapt and thrive in these uncertain times.

This festival brings together people from a wide variety of sectors to strategise on how we develop the resilience of our communities.

Collaborators:

Tipperary Institute, Carnegie Trust UK, Irish Development Education Association, RealEyes Sustainability Ltd, ESD Training Ltd., Sustainable Projects Ireland Ltd., Transition Ireland and Northern Ireland, Near 90FM, ECO-UNESCO and Re-Dress

Venues

The new venue (former ENFO Building) for sustainability powered by Cultivate and ECO-UNESCO



Ireland's first ecovillage in Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary | www.thevillage.ie



A dynamic higher education, development and research centre in Thurles, North Tipperary
www.tipperaryinstitute.ie



Also... Wood Quay Venue, the spectacular new conference centre in Dublin City Council Civic Offices
www.woodquayvenue.ie And...

Light House Cinema at Smithfield | www.lighthousecinema.ie

Tickets & Booking

Phone 01 674 5773

Web www.cultivate.ie

Shop Cultivate at The Greenhouse, St Andrew St, D2

Save with a Full Festival Pass: €75



Cultivate, Tipperary Institute, Sustainable
Projects Ireland Ltd. and Carnegie UK Trust Present...

Investing in Ourselves:

Realising Jobs and Capital for Communities



Tuesday 1st June 2010

**10.00 – 16.00 | €30 | St Kieran's Hall,
Cloughjordan | Bookings 01 674 5773**

10.00 Opening - Ciarán Lynch, Director of
Rural Development, Tipperary Institute

10.05 From Vulnerability to Community
Resilience - Professor Peadar Kirby of
University Of Limerick outlines our current
vulnerabilities and suggests how we could
develop the resilience of our communities

10.10 Designing Financial Institutions for a
Shrinking Economy - Richard Douthwaite
from FEASTA outlines possible options for
communities to invest in themselves.

10.40 Development of Community Land
Trusts - Bob Paterson, the co-founder of
Community Finance Solutions, the independent
research and development unit at the University
of Salford, outlines the advantages of developing
Community Land Trusts (CLTs). CLTs are
established in communities to acquire fixed
assets and then hold them in perpetuity for local
use.

11.10 Break

11.30 Discussion with the morning speakers

12.00 Case Studies

- The Ecovillage
- Sustainable Energy in Rural Village
Environments
- North Tipperary Green Enterprise Park

12.30 Lunch

Investing in Ourselves

This event explores how to enhance
community assets and create jobs and
livelihoods in our localities. Topics
covered include social finance,
mutuality, cooperatives, community land
trusts, asset development, energy bonds
and other ways for communities to
invest in themselves and become
economically viable.

14.00 Integrated Community Planning For
Rural Sustainability - Bridget Kirwan and
Catherine Corcoran from Tipperary Institute
introduce the Institute's work on the Carnegie
Manifesto for Rural Communities

14.15 Identifying, Utilising and Optimising
Community Assets - Dr Kate Braithwaite, MBE
from Carnegie UK Trust outlines her experience
of resilient communities and gives an overview
of Carnegie's work in community asset
development, supporting dynamic local
economies and inspiring community innovation.

14.45 The Launch of the Carnegie Manifesto
for Rural Communities

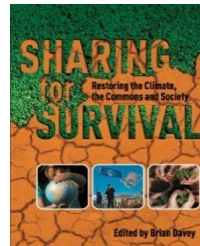
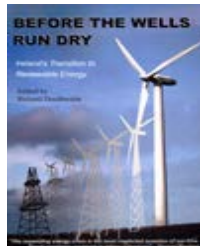
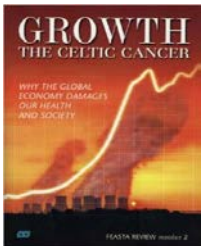
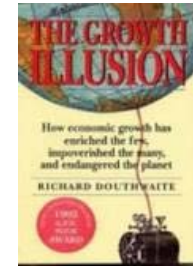
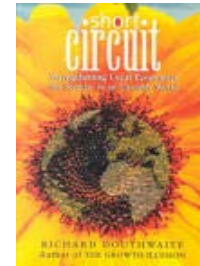
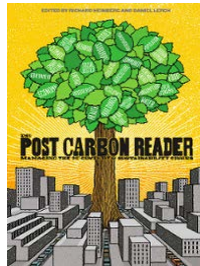
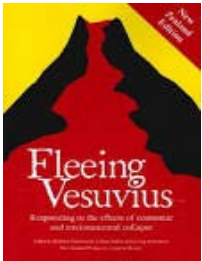
15.15 Tour of the Cloughjordan EcoVillage
The ecovillage is a unique and innovative project
that is striving to create a fresh blueprint for
modern sustainable living.



Conclusions

- Richard's impact primarily through his thinking
- A charismatic leader *and* practitioner
- Major achievements
 - Feasta
 - Writings
 - Influence
 - Seed projects
- Vision – Substantial number of people to move beyond the Growth Economy

References



Websites

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1 Feasta | http://www.feasta.org/ |
| 2 Cultivate | http://cultivate.ie/ |

...more effectively than anyone else in my experience challenged the orthodox view that economic growth is essential to eliminating poverty and improving the quality of life for all. (David Korten)

Feasta, under the leadership of Richard taking a new approach to environmental activism. (Mark Garavan)

...an intellectual cornerstone of the environmental movement in Ireland... (Anne B. Ryan)

... helped establish was one of the most creative centres of Irish political and economic thinking in the last decade... (Eamon Ryan)

