
Reshaping the economy – The future political economy- The shaping of the ‘Sharing Economy’. - Paid and Unpaid work and Labour and its future in the coming 2 tonnes of carbon economy and zero carbon economies. By Miriam Kennet

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Résumé

During the 21st century the nature of Human effects on the natural environment are becoming much more apparent and far reaching. (IPCC Report 2018).The economy and human health are now major concerns for many people and are affecting the global economy and most countries economy and local economies everywhere. The costs are mounting of climate change and whilst many are quantifiable some are so far reaching that they might include the destruction of whole countries, states and regions or their sinking beneath the waves entirely. (Stern Review 2006) Whole areas which used to support different parts of the economy- such as agriculture or agribusiness may become unable to support any life or any crops or production. They may become uninhabitable or dangerous to live due to instability of shorelines etc- for example many of the world’s major cities are located by the sea and are now subject to regular major flooding. The traditional economic analyses are now found to be woefully inadequate for the task ahead. Designed to increase wealth and income perhaps mainly for the rich, they do not address or solve any fundamental dilemmas and need urgent replacement or supplementation by more realistic theories, solutions and discourses. These are available and this paper will link the challenges with the solutions provided by Green Economics Theorists with regard to a more beneficial and resilient future economy. (Kennet and Heinemann 2006)

The features of the last 10,000 years has been agricultural settled production and recently post agricultural production and industrial production. Much of this is beginning to be under threat and its almost certain that this won’t last for the next few hundred years let alone millenia. The internet, the platform economy and automation have pervaded almost all aspects of life and this is now being examined carefully and found to be a fragile economy delivering some benefits but causing unexpected problems. A technology based on algorithms, the sharing economy can mean many different things depending on the way it is interpreted. We proposed the case for a sharing economy in Kennet and Black, (2010) The Green Economics Reader and discussed it further in Kennet(2019) in The Future of Income, Work and Labour, but the debate and evolution to a sustainable model is still incomplete.

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In order to correct the rapid climate change and to prevent more mass extinctions- major changes are going to have to be made- these will include different ways of working, different aims –for example the accumulation of stuff- is going out of fashion, the ownership of cars, is no longer an aim of younger people, shifts in economic trends are happening thick and fast. Much of what people do today is pushing back from the commercialisation economy and commodification of everything- care, love, production, etc and back towards values and saving ourselves and the planet, veganism is rapidly gaining popularity.

The United Nations argues that the Green Economy is now the single most important tool in the fight for survival in the face of climate change and we explore our ideas for how we can provide such an economy in the next 10 years. (Gutierrez 2018). We discuss the coming political economy transformation which is currently underway and how it can prepare the economy and avoid more mass extinctions including our own! The very survival of life on earth and whole species is in question –for example caribou populations have halved rapidly recently. (BBC News 2019).

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Mots-Clés: Green Economy, Mass Extinction