

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact gudrun.freese@earthscan.co.uk for review copies of *Prosperity Without Growth* and author interviews, and rhian.thomas@sd-commission.org.uk for queries relating to the SDC and the Nov 2nd event. Further details in Notes.

Is our economy fit for purpose in a low carbon world?

Can economic growth deliver us from the threat of catastrophic climate change, or is it the engine that's driving us relentlessly towards it?

Speaking today at a high-level debate in central London to mark the publication of his controversial new book *Prosperity without Growth*, Tim Jackson argues that building a new economic model fit for a low carbon world is 'the most urgent task of our times'.

"The current model isn't working," says Prof Jackson, a top sustainability adviser to the UK's four governments. "Instead of delivering widespread prosperity, our economies are undermining wellbeing in the richest nations and failing those in the poorest. The prevailing system has already led us to the brink of economic collapse and if left unchecked it threatens a climate catastrophe."

Prosperity without Growth substantially updates Jackson's groundbreaking report for the Sustainable Development Commission. Launched earlier this year to great acclaim, the report rapidly became the most downloaded document in the Commission's nine year history and in recent weeks has contributed to a burgeoning debate about economic growth and its consequences for people and planet.

As world leaders prepare to meet in Copenhagen to forge a new climate deal, Jackson's analysis provides a salutary warning against complacency. Global carbon emissions have risen 40% since 1990 and will continue to rise inexorably unless action is taken urgently. By the year 2050, the carbon content of each dollar of economic activity will need to be a staggering 130 times lower than it is today, if we are to make room for much-needed development in the poorer nations and remain within a 2°C warming.

"By the end of this century, we'll need an economy in which each and every dollar of economic activity is taking carbon out of the atmosphere," says Jackson. "What does such an economy run on? What does it look like? What kind of economic activities take place in such a world? Nobody knows the answer to these questions. But it's fanciful to suppose we can achieve such a transformation without seriously examining the dynamics of the growth-based model."

Jackson admits the task is not a trivial one. "We are caught in a profound dilemma," he suggests. "Economic growth is the default mechanism for achieving social stability. And at the same time it drives the scale of ecological damage. What's needed now is an urgent commitment to building a different kind of economic system, one which puts people and planet at its heart," Jackson claims. "For the advanced economies of the western world, prosperity without growth is no longer a utopian dream. It is a financial and ecological necessity."

Praise for *Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet*

'*Prosperity Without Growth's* hugely encouraging and thrilling theme is that humanity can prosper without growth. In fact there is no other way left to us.'

Dr Robert Goodland, former Adviser to the World Bank Group, winner of World Conservation Union's Coolidge Medal of Honor, 2008

'This might well become as important for sustainable development as the Brundtland Report.'

Paul-Marie Boulanger, Director of Institut pour un Développement Durable

'Jackson's book simply resets the agenda for Western society.'

Bernie Bulkin, former Chief Scientist of BP

'The best account of the financial crisis and the state of society I have read in a long time...The beauty is that the change that is needed will make us happier.'

Clare Short, MP

'A must-read. . . bold, original and comprehensive. We have to define prosperity and welfare differently from the past and separate them from economic growth measured as GDP: this work shows how we should set about the task.'

Professor Lord Anthony Giddens, London School of Economics

DOWNLOADS: Preview [Chapter 1](#) of *Prosperity Without Growth* and read the full [Table of Contents](#).

More [pre-publication endorsements](#) from Bill McKibben, James Gustave Speth, Herman Daly, Molly Scott Cato, Oliver James and others.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

1. The embargo date for *Prosperity Without Growth*, Tim Jackson's new book, has been updated from November 5th to November 2nd, to coincide with a Sustainable Development Commission event on the 2nd November 2009. Details below.

2. **For extracts and review copies of *Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet* (Earthscan) or to set up interviews with Prof Tim Jackson, please contact gudrun.freese@earthscan.co.uk / Tel: +44 (0)20 7841 1930 / +44 (0)782 5600 487.**

- *Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet* by Tim Jackson; Published by Earthscan; November 2009; HB 9781844078943;£12.99;280pp

- Please reference the book as follows: *Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet* (Earthscan, £12.99) is available from all good bookshops and www.earthscan.co.uk
 - Download the cover: <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/Portals/0/PR/9781844078943.jpg>
3. **To attend the debate *An Economics Fit for a Low-Carbon Future* on 2 November and for press inquiries related to the Sustainable Development Commission please contact Rhian Thomas on 020 7270 8539 / 07825 106 803, or email rhian.thomas@sd-commission.org.uk**
- An Economics Fit for a Low-Carbon Future*
Methodist Central Hall, Westminster
Mon 2nd November. 4pm-6pm
Speakers include:
- Prof Tim Jackson**, Economics Commissioner, SDC
 - Jo Swinson** MP, Chair, All Party Parliamentary group on Wellbeing Economics
 - Lord Anthony Giddens**, Emeritus Professor, LSE, author *The Politics of Climate Change*
 - Ed Crooks**, Energy Editor, the *Financial Times*
4. The Sustainable Development Commission is the Government's independent adviser on sustainability, made up of 11 Commissioners and chaired by Will Day. It reports directly to the Prime Minister, the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales and the First and Deputy First Ministers of Northern Ireland.
5. Professor Tim Jackson is the Sustainable Development Commission's Economics Commissioner. He is also Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey and Director of the ESRC Research Group on Lifestyles, Values and Environment (RESOLVE)