

# **Beyond Economic Growth: The Political, Ethical and Cultural Dimensions of a Post-Growth Green Economy**

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The aim of this research project is to investigate the conceptual, normative, and empirical dimensions of green/sustainability critiques of orthodox economic growth; make the argument for the limits and downsides of this objective for the macro-economy (from ecological, energy, climate, inequality, and human-flourishing perspectives); and explore some of the principles, policies, and potentials of a “post-growth” economic alternative.

The project is made up of three parts:

### **Part 1: Green Political Economy Critiques of Economic Growth**

The question pursued in this first part of the project is to trace the conceptual origins of how orthodox, undifferentiated economic growth as a permanent feature of the economy became a central imperative and objective of both mainstream economic and political thinking. It also seeks to outline some of the historical origins and main empirical and normative arguments of those critical of orthodox, undifferentiated economic growth.

### **Part 2: Normative and Empirical Principles of a Post-Growth Economy**

The second part of the project goes into more detail about some shared principles of a viable and normatively attractive synthetic account of green political economy drawn from the analyses in Part I. Specifically, it seeks to identify and critically assess some of the main normative and empirical principles of a post-growth political economy.

### **Part 3: Economic Growth as Ideology**

In this part of the proposal I wish to begin the preparatory methodological work on how to empirically examine one of the claims I also made in my book, namely the “ideological” character and function of economic growth. This relates in part to the “common sense” (popular, as well as policy-elite) acceptance of and support for economic growth as a necessary and desirable objective—that is, the widespread cultural acceptance of and indeed normalization of orthodox economic growth, to the extent that the self-evident benefits of, and imperative for it are so widely assumed that they are hardly ever debated, questioned, or compared against alternatives

This project follows on from my last book, *The Politics of Actually Existing Unsustainability*, and will constitute of me deepening and developing my attempts to outline and defend an account of “green political economy” capable of moving from normative critique to political implementation and realization. This project constitutes a critical—and at times radical—analysis of dominant pro-growth forms of economics/political economy and their associated political and policy implications. It also canvasses and synthesizes a variety of green-/sustainability-based critiques of growth to produce the conceptual, normative, and policy outlines of a new green political economy paradigm and a “post-growth” emancipatory and transformative politics.