

The Resilience Imperative: Cooperative Transitions to a Steady-state Economy

By Michael Lewis, Patrick Conaty

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We find ourselves between a rock and a hot place—compelled by the intertwined forces of peak oil and climate change to reinvent our economic life at a much more local and regional scale. *The Resilience Imperative* argues for a major SEE (social, ecological, economic) change as a prerequisite for replacing the paradigm of limitless economic growth with a more decentralized, cooperative, steady-state economy.

The authors present a comprehensive series of strategic questions within the broad areas of:

- Energy sufficiency
- Local food systems
- Interest-free financing
- Affordable housing and land reform
- Sustainable community development

Each section is complemented by case studies of pioneering community initiatives rounded out by a discussion of transition factors and resilience reflections.

With a focus on securing and sustaining change, this provocative book challenges deeply embedded cultural assumptions. Profoundly hopeful and inspiring, *The Resilience Imperative* affirms the possibilities of positive change as it is shaped by individuals, communities, and institutions learning to live within our ecological limits.

Michael Lewis is the executive director of the Center for Community Enterprise and is well-known internationally as a practitioner, author, educator, and leader in the field of community economic development.

Patrick Conaty is an honorary research fellow at the University of Birmingham and a director of Common Futures. Since 1999 he has worked for the new economics foundation (nef), where he has produced a wide range of publications about predatory lending, financial inclusion, community land trusts, and social venture finance.

The Resilience Imperative: Cooperative Transitions to a Steady-state Economy By Michael Lewis, Patrick Conaty Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

Review, Resurgence Magazine, Ed Mayo

The two authors have an outstanding track record of social innovation for a more just and sustainable economy. What they describe is therefore born out of practice rather than ideas. The Resilience Imperative tells us that it is OK to dream in the daytime. The authors are practical pioneers with an unrivalled track record of cooperative innovation.

Review, E Magazine July 2012 K.B.

How can we get our economy back on track while simultaneously making it more socially, environmentally and financially sustainable?

The Resilience Imperative: Cooperative Transitions to a Steady-State Economy addresses this question through a series of warnings and historical examples. Authors Michael Lewis and Pat Conaty, who specialize in integrative economic systems, advocate for the U.S. moving away from a large economy reliant on fossil fuels to small, local economies.

Lewis and Conaty warn readers about the current “era of volatility” caused by human impact on the environment and climate change and walk them through the links between fossil fuel consumption, climate change, the global economy and financial recessions. “In part, what impedes our breaking out of the box is the conviction that economic growth and prosperity are synonymous—too many believe that we can’t have one without the other,” they write. They stress that prosperity is determined by quality of life and that the economy should be stabilized, not continue to grow.

The authors offer as examples Sweden’s JAK, an interest-free lending system, and Community Land Trusts such as the Gramdan movement in India. The cooperation between individuals and policymakers is vital to create a country that can sustain itself and its practices, they posit. “Without engagement, dialogue, and sometime fractious debate to determine what is most important, it is not possible to set strategy effectively or to learn from what works and what does not.” They argue that with more integration and cooperation between businesses, governments and communities, a more sustainable economy is possible.

From the Back Cover

**TIME FOR A SEE CHANGE
SOCIAL, ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC STRATEGIES FOR LIFE AFTER GROWTH**

A new kind of world is possible — this book makes that clear. The question is whether we're willing to do the work to get there.— Bill McKibben, author *Deep Economy*

Resilience is the watchword for our dawning era of economic and environmental instability. This timely book offers a wide range of practical suggestions and inspiring examples to help us build more resilient communities. — Richard Heinberg, author, *The End of Growth*, Senior Fellow, Post Carbon Institute

Navigating transition from growth to resilience is a formidable challenge, but together we can reinvent our economic life at a much more local and regional scale. The Resilience Imperative argues for replacing the paradigm of limitless economic growth with a decentralized, cooperative, steady-state economy.

The authors explore a comprehensive series of strategic questions, community initiatives and transition factors within the areas of:

Community land trusts for affordable housing and workspace
Low-carbon urban partnerships and energy sufficiency
Stewarding the commons and local food systems
Fair Trade banking and fee-based finance
Economic democracy and Trusteeship companies

This provocative book challenges many of our deeply embedded cultural assumptions. Profoundly hopeful and inspiring, The Resilience Imperative affirms the limitless scope for positive change created when individuals, communities and institutions learn to live within our ecological limits.

This is a book that puts flesh on the occupy movement's call for an economic alternative ... at once visionary and practical. — Robin Murray, Senior Visiting Fellow, London School of Economics and author of *Co-operation in the Age of Google*

Michael Lewis is the Executive Director of the Canadian Center for Community Renewal.

Pat Conaty is a Fellow of new economics foundation and a research associate of C'Co-operatives UK.

About the Author

Michael Lewis is Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Community Renewal He is well-known internationally as a practitioner, author, educator, and leader in the field of Community Economic Development. Michael has worked with a wide range of businesses, organizations, communities and governments on initiatives related to transition, community resource management, development finance and the social economy. Until recently he also led the B.C. – Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance, a university/ practitioner platform for applied research.

Patrick Conaty is a Californian working in England and Wales. He is a Fellow of new economics foundation and a research associate of Community Finance Solutions at the University of Salford. Pat specializes in developmental research on cooperative and mutual enterprise and is a national expert in the fields of community development finance and community land trusts.

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Jeffrey Lockwood:

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