

## **Lillooet Naturalist Society position statement on the fundamental conflict between economic growth and biodiversity conservation**

### **Whereas:**

1. Economic growth is an increase in the production and consumption of goods and services, which entails an increase in throughput, or flow of natural resources, through the economy and back to the environment and;
2. Economic growth occurs when there is an increase in the product of population multiplied by per capita production and consumption, and;
3. Economic growth is often and generally indicated by increasing real gross domestic product (GDP) or real gross national product (GNP), and;
4. Based upon established principles of physics and ecology, there is a limit to economic growth, and;
5. A steady state economy is generally indicated by stabilized (or mildly fluctuating) real gross domestic product (GDP) or real gross national product (GNP), and;
6. A steady state economy, with a stabilized (or mildly fluctuating) product of population multiplied by per capita consumption, is an alternative to economic growth; and;
7. A steady state economy, with stabilized (or mildly fluctuating) production and consumption of goods and services, is an alternative to economic growth, and;
8. That British Columbia is a part of the North American economy, which grows as an integrated whole consisting of agricultural, extractive, manufacturing, and services sectors that require physical inputs and produce wastes, and;
9. There is increasing evidence that North American economic growth is having negative effects on the long-term ecological and economic welfare of North America and the world.

### **Therefore, the Lillooet Naturalist Society takes the position that:**

1. There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and biodiversity conservation based on the ecological principle of competitive exclusion, and;
2. There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and the ecological services underpinning the human economy (for example, insect and vermin control, pollination, decomposition, climate regulation, nutrient recycling, buffering from storm, drought, and flood events), and;
3. Technological progress has had both positive and negative ecological and economic effects and may not be depended upon to reconcile the fundamental conflict between economic growth and biodiversity conservation, and;
4. Because of its negative effects on ecological sustainability and sustainable economic welfare, economic growth is an increasingly dangerous and anachronistic North American goal, and;
5. A steady state economy is a viable, sustainable alternative to a growing economy and has become a more appropriate goal, particularly in the larger, wealthier economies of North America, and;
6. The sustainability of a steady state economy requires its establishment at a size that does not breach ecological and economic capacity during expected or unexpected supply shocks such as droughts and energy shortages, and;

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7. A steady state economy does not preclude economic development, a qualitative process in which different technologies may be employed and the relative prominence of economic sectors may evolve, and;
8. Upon establishing steady state economies, it would be advisable for North American nations to assist other nations in moving from the goal of economic growth to the goal of a steady state economy, beginning with those nations currently enjoying the highest levels of per capita consumption, and;
9. For many nations with widespread poverty, including Canada's First Nations, increasing per capita consumption (or, alternatively, more equitable distributions of wealth) remains an appropriate goal for the time being; yet the ultimate goal should be the establishment of healthy ecological and social conditions within the framework of a steady state economy.