

Case Study I (Community Level): Molly Scott Cato, Transition Towns Network

Molly Scott Cato agreed with Dr. Hoffmann in his doubts about the efficiency factor five and attributed this strategy to a psychological trick of avoiding the difficult and radical changes that in her opinion are truly needed. She pointed out how the money system in the capitalist economy creates an inherent pressure for growth and suggested a redefinition of the economy as a provisioning one as opposed to a pure market economy. Such a provisioning economy would rely much more on shared self-production and economic activities within a bioregion, and thereby reconnect economic with social and cultural systems. While not denying the need for continued interregional or global trade, she argued for a societal re-definition of our needs and desired quality of life, a re-valuation of and genuine responsibility for our local environment. As a concrete example of these principles she then presented Transition Stroud, which forms part of the Transition Towns Movement. In despair about the lack of action by governments and business, and realizing that acting as individuals is most likely to be too small for making any meaningful change, she made a convincing case of how acting in communities might be most likely to attain a critical mass just in time. Questions from the audience reflected sincere admiration for her principles but also substantive doubts about the potential for their up-scale, especially to urban environments. The main message we took from Molly: Don't avoid difficult messages and trust in the power of doing the right thing!