

# BALTIMORE GREEN FORUM

*a monthly environmental education and discussion forum*

**Sunday, April 28, 2013**

**4:00-5:30 PM**

**Optional Affinity Groups 5:30 – 6:30 PM**

**Maryland Presbyterian Church**  
1105 Providence Road, Towson, MD 21286  
<http://www.mpchurch.org/About.htm>

## **Degrowth: Local and Global Answers To the Most Difficult Challenges for Sustainability**

**Presentation by Nancy Wallace**

Degrowth is a call for a radical break from traditional growth-based models of society, no matter if these models are "left" or "right", to invent new ways of living together in a true democracy, respectful of the values of equality and freedom. The approach is based on sharing and cooperation, with sufficiently moderate consumption so as to be sustainable.

The degrowth movement began in Europe 10 years ago. It brings a principle of vigorous discussion and full participatory engagement in creating new solutions to the fundamental structural problems of current civilization, on the political and economic level as well as individual. The premise is that even "green" or "socially just" capitalism in its current, growth-based form is not sustainable. Other popular green solutions of sustainable development and population stabilization at current levels are not sustainable as well. Degrowth includes solutions such as "frugal innovation," i.e. innovations that integrate limits, and First Nation/indigenous examples of cultures integrating limits.

Growth no longer guarantees us better material living conditions, increased equality, or more freedom. Growth in recent decades has in fact been accompanied by the significant widening of our society's inequalities. Founded on techno-scientific progress and infinite population increase, growth increases our dependence on the technological, our subjection to the "megamachine", and restricts freedom.

The Western Hemisphere widened the degrowth movement at the 2012 Montreal Degrowth conference by integrating our cultural and economic solutions from the First Nations in Canada and Latin America. Degrowth may be the only means to restore the Chesapeake Bay and address our city/suburban/rural economic inequalities, two of the toughest challenges we face in Maryland.

Why degrowth? Because the quest for continued growth is exhausting ourselves, our societies and our planet. And growth is not keeping its promises to improve our collective wellbeing.

Nancy Wallace will present the history and principles of degrowth as a method to address our most difficult challenges in the environmental movement, initiate a discussion on degrowth for Maryland, and provide resources for further exploration.

Ms. Wallace is a Maryland environmental and progressive activist for 40 years. She attended the 2012 Montreal International Conference on Degrowth in the Americas with representatives from Europe, North and South America, and Australia. She worked professionally on endangered species, oceans, and population public policy at the national and international levels for 15 years.

Background information with references may be found at: [http://montreal.degrowth.org/downloads/papers/G014\\_Schneider.pdf](http://montreal.degrowth.org/downloads/papers/G014_Schneider.pdf).

Additional resources at:

<http://www.degrowth.org/> ~ <http://montreal.degrowth.org/> ~ <http://www.resilience.org/stories/2013-01-21/degrowth>

<http://degrowthcanada.wordpress.com/> ~ <http://www.greeneconomics.org.uk/page346.html>

<http://climateandcapitalism.com/2013/03/25/should-socialists-support-degrowth-2/>

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*The Purpose of the **Baltimore Green Forum** is to seek to improve the quality of *all life* in the greater Baltimore area. Our contribution to this goal will be to gather monthly in order to: **Discern** the progress towards regional sustainability that has already been achieved, **Discover** the connections amidst the chaos of the movement and build a community of like-minded individuals, and **Do** take appropriate action to address the challenges we face together. BGF is open to the public and is free of charge, but donations to Maryland Presbyterian Church are greatly appreciated. For questions, updated program info, to co-sponsor, or to RSVP, contact [baltimoregreenforum@gmail.com](mailto:baltimoregreenforum@gmail.com) or 410-554-0006*

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