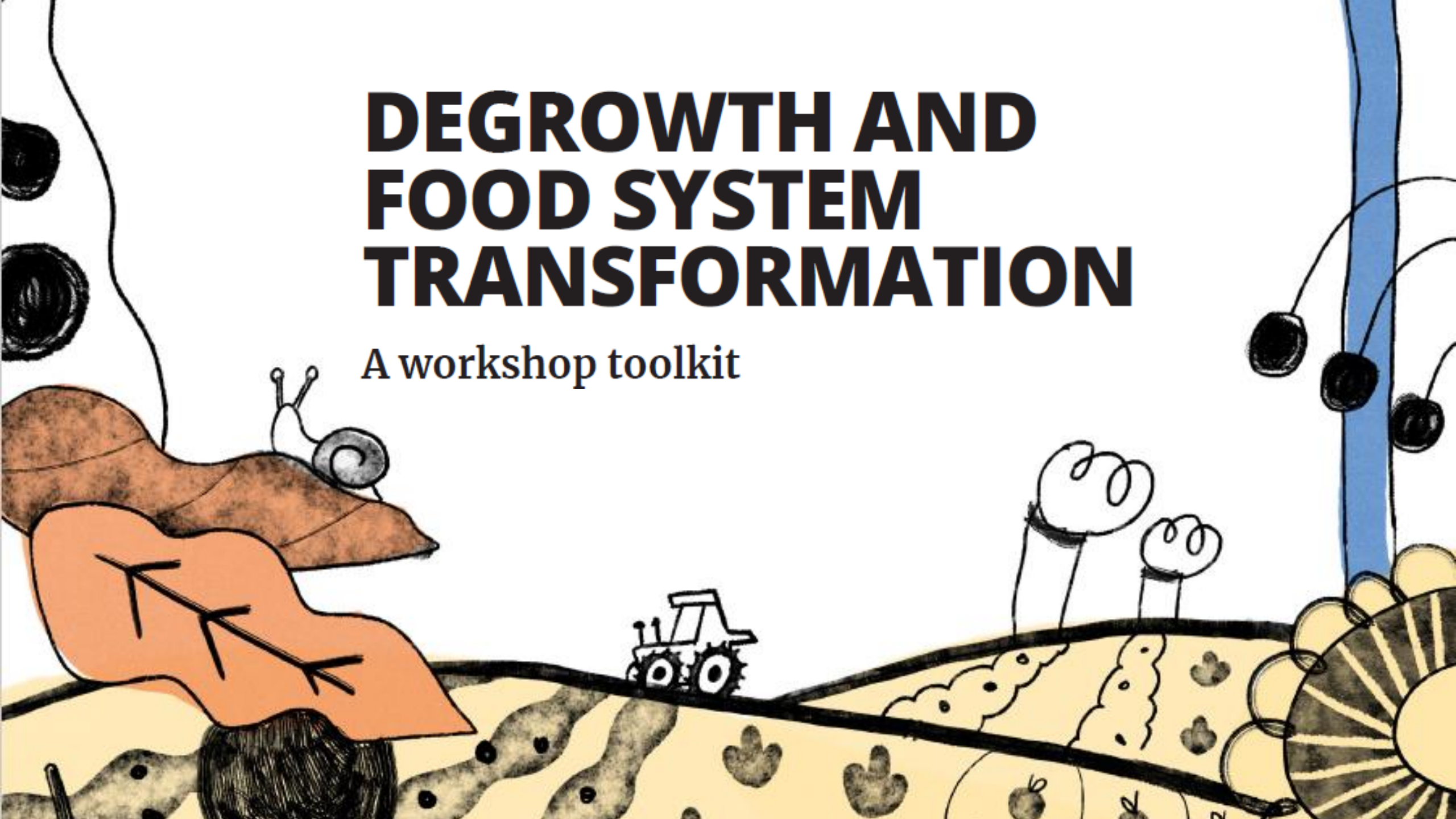
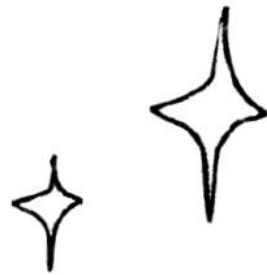


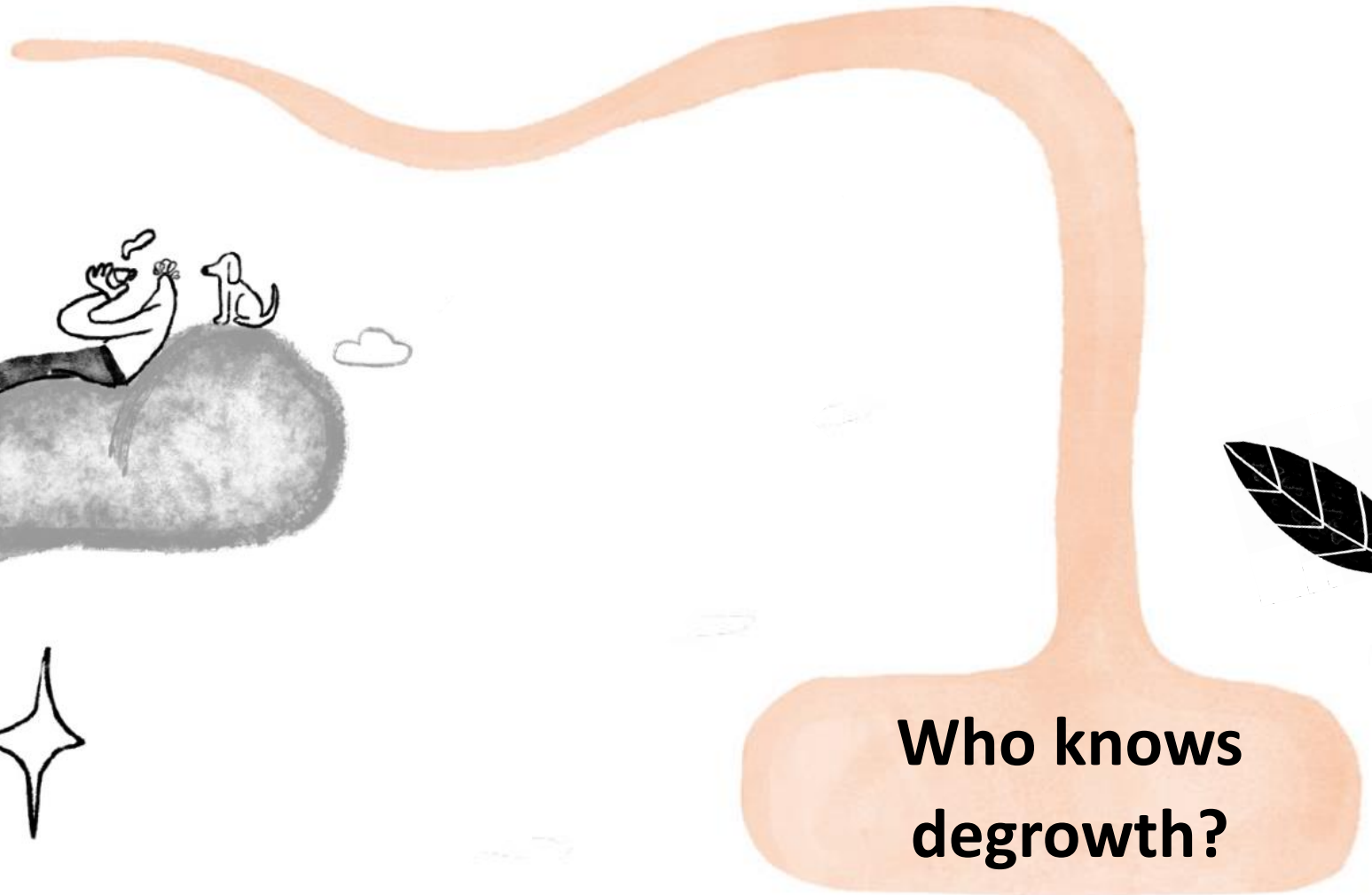
# DEGROWTH AND FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

A workshop toolkit





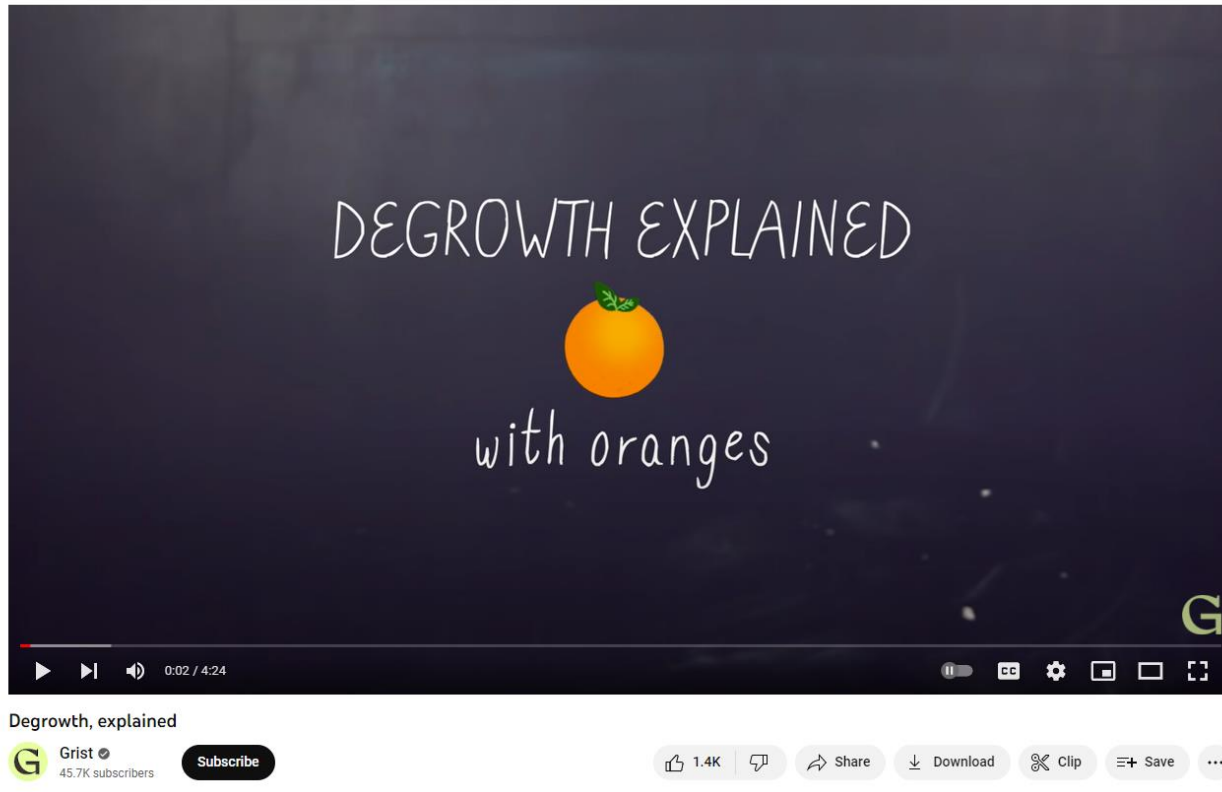
**What does degrowth mean to  
you?**



**Who knows  
degrowth?**



# Let's listen...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MXP2E09dJQ>





# Degrowth: Vision and Critique

Degrowth is

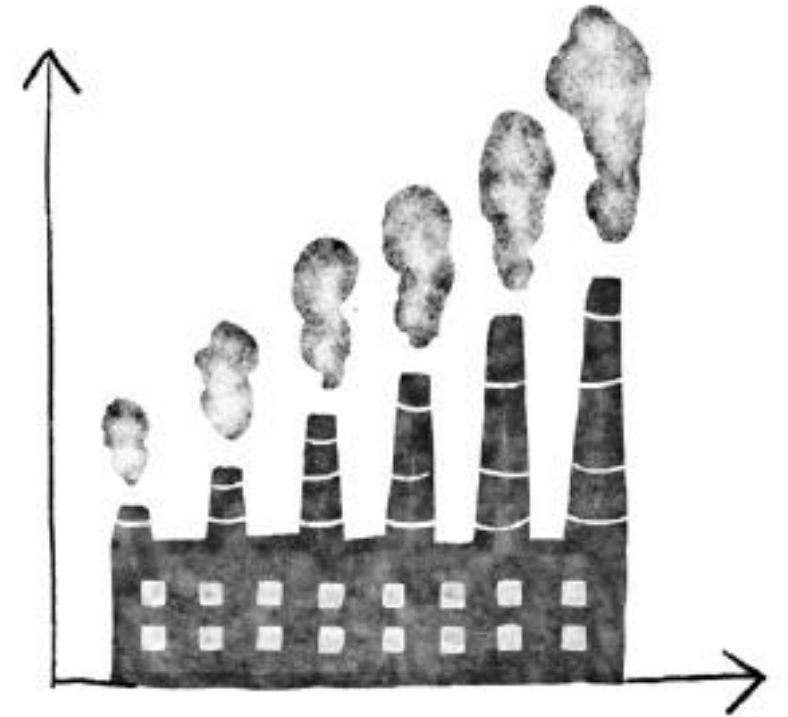
- (1) a hopeful, positive vision for future societies and
- (2) based on a critique of the primacy of economic growth



*"Economic growth without destruction of nature is an illusion and ... therefore industrialized countries need to equitably downscale production and consumption; [...] degrowth proponents are fundamentally critical of growth, capitalism and industrialism, want to overcome other forms of domination, and advocate a radical restructuring of the economy in industrialized countries." (The Future is Degrowth, Matthias Schmelzer, Andrea Vetter and Aaron Vansintjan, page 17)*

# Economic growth: ideology of capitalist societies

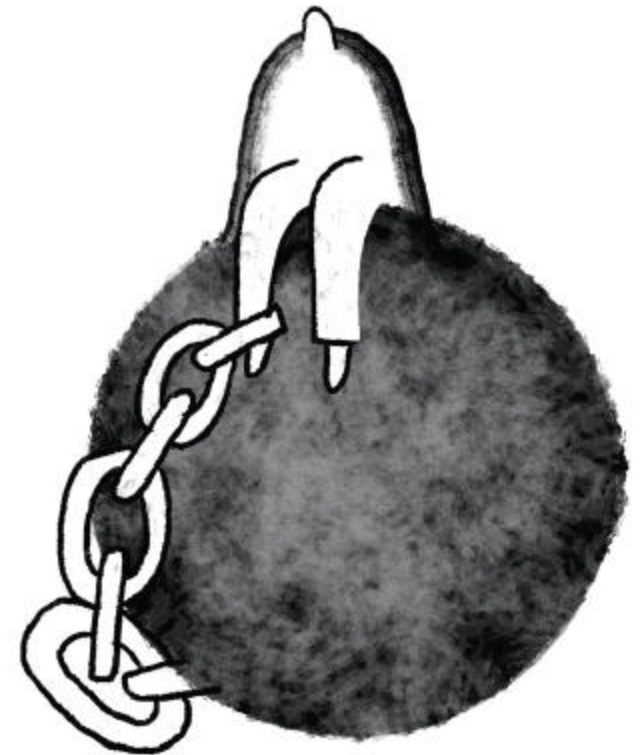
- Economic growth cannot be decoupled from resource consumption and is thus not compatible with social justice, environmental justice and climate protection
- Growth relies on the exploitation of the environment (resources) and people (labour) and the privatisation of what used to be the communal or public use of goods and services, from which only a small group then profits
- The consequence of this: global social inequality, ecological crises and the destruction of our livelihoods
- This pursuit of perpetual economic growth is rooted in the ideology, and operating principles, of capitalist *societies* (not only the *economy*)



# Questioning dominant values and power relations

The degrowth movement encourages us to question the dominant value and power relations in our society, for example...

- the centrality of the principles of efficiency, profit maximisation, mass production or individualism;
- what is currently excluded from the democratic decision-making process;
- the sacred character of private property;
- the adherence to hierarchical, colonial and patriarchal structures;
- ideas around western superiority;
- what type of work, what type of activity earns how much “respect” and remuneration;
- or whose interests are prioritised and protected (and whose are not).





# Economic growth & (neo)colonial exploitation

*“Degrowth in the North represents a process of decolonization in the South, to the extent that it releases communities in the South from the pressures of atmospheric colonization and material extractivism.”*

From Hickel (2020): What does degrowth mean?



Degrowth directs criticism specifically towards the Global North

- The overwhelming majority of environmental destruction is driven by the excess consumption of resources and energy in the Global North, the consequences of which are mainly borne by the Global South
- Consumption and prosperity in the Global North are principally based on the exploitation of (forced cheap) resources and labour in the Global South.

Degrowth must be based on decolonization: Solidarity with the political movements of the Global South who are advocating a break with neocolonial dependencies, and a self-determined development of the Global South (often also connected with a rejection of Eurocentric, colonial development indicators such as GDP, and a focus on goals such as “the good life/buen vivir”).

# Degrowth: in favour of a good life for all within planetary boundaries



## Requirements:

- **A reduction** in the things that are destroying life on our planet and undermining social justice; a reduction in production and consumption in the Global North and a break with Eurocentric, colonial notions of “development”
- **An expansion** of the things that sustain life on our planet and improve social justice; prioritising principles and values such as solidarity, sustainability, sufficiency, justice cooperation, care
- The **redistribution** of wealth within countries and regions, as well as between the Global North and the Global South

**This implies a political commitment towards a radical restructuring of society**



# DEGROWTH AND FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

This workshop was developed by the  
UNMAKING project from Utrecht  
University (<https://unmaking.sites.uu.nl>).

Design by [www.bomburo.com](http://www.bomburo.com)

