



## BALLE BEAT

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**O**UR PRESENT global economy operates in a way intended to maximize financial profit and minimize environmental and social concerns. Its effects on people, local communities and the planet are devastating. Replacing this economy with a local living economy is something every business can do through many small decisions. What follows are 20 easy ways to begin. Few businesses will implement all 20 steps but every business can find many actions that make sense for it.

### PEOPLE

1. Build community and foster dialogue: Make your business a community gathering place; Sponsor evenings of discussion.

2. Support diversity of people, cultures, and resources: Hire staff of various races and cultures; Do business with people from other cultures.

3. Encourage self-organization, creativity and local decision-making: Encourage decision-making and responsibility at lowest employee level; Encourage and reward ideas from employees.

4. Utilize or increase the local knowledge base: Hire local people as employees and consultants; Share expertise with other local businesses; Work cooperatively with other businesses.

5. Increase social equity: Pay a living wage; Share profits with employees; Do business with local minority firms.

### PLANET

6. Enhance awareness, interaction and interdependency of humans with

# TWENTY WAYS TO BUILD A LOCAL, LIVING ECONOMY

the natural world: Landscape property with native species; Sponsor walks, canoe trips, etc. to local natural areas; Provide literature and information on local natural areas.

7. Increase focus on services needed and delivered rather than products: Switch to providing the service that your product represents (e.g. leasing rather than selling appliances).

8. Encourage reduced consumption of natural resources and focus on renewable resources: Use linen and metal utensils rather than paper and plastic; Build with lumber from certified sustainable forests.

9. Maintain and enhance natural ecosystems: Plant trees; Protect stream environs; Build or protect wetlands; Replace lawns with natural meadows.

10. Enhance efficient use of resources: Use the most efficient appliances available; Fit motors to the size of their task; Lease office appliances for take back options.

11. Avoid the use of toxic or persistent organic pollutants in manufacture or use of products or services: Switch to environmentally friendly cleaning products; Avoid pesticides and herbicides; Reduce use steadily with a goal of elimination; Support sustainable agriculture by using organic food and humanely raised animals.

12. Increase efficiency of energy flows and utilize natural energy flows: Replace incandescent lights with compact fluorescents; Switch to solar or wind power for electricity; Drive hybrid or natural gas vehicles; Use vegetable oils in diesel engines; Encourage employees to use public transportation and bicycles; Provide bicycle racks; Provide public transit passes with deduction from salary.

13. Enhance the use of resources from the local bioregion: Where possible buy supplies from locally-owned businesses; Reduce transportation costs of food and other resources by buying locally-grown food.

14. Avoid direct altering of internal information systems of organisms (DNA) (using Genetically Manipulated Organisms): Do not use GMO products.

15. Eliminate or recycle waste: Use recycled paper and recycle it; Compost garbage; Recycle printer cartridges; Reduce packaging by bulk purchasing; Recycle glass, plastic, aluminum and oils.

16. Create safe objects of long-term value: Avoid use of throwaway products; Manufacture durable products.

17. Use natural organic models in product or service design: Use organic methods for landscaping, gardening, farming; Use passive solar for heating.

### PROFIT

18. Increase the long-term economic viability of local communities: Do banking with local bank or credit union; Hire local people; Buy supplies from locally owned businesses.

19. Utilize full life-cycle ecological, economic and social accounting: Take accountability for products from birth to recycling; Account for energy used in product transportation.

20. Commit a percentage of profits to charitable purposes: Establish a foundation; Donate to local causes.

Many thanks to Judy Wicks and Dale Hendricks, Cochairs of the Greater Philadelphia Sustainable Business Network, for their comments on the original draft. If you have additional items to add to the list or examples of implementing them, please send to: Andy Smith Earth Ethics, [www.Earth-Ethics.com](http://www.Earth-Ethics.com), [astherev@aol.com](mailto:astherev@aol.com). □

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