



Future Scenarios: Mapping the Cultural Implications of Peak Oil and Climate Change

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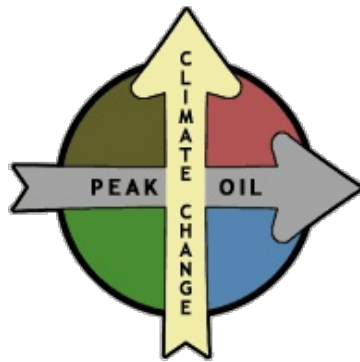
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Press Release from [Eat The Suburbs](#): The Australian co-founder of the permaculture concept David Holmgren has today launched a new global scenario planning website, [Future Scenarios: www.FutureScenarios.org](#).



Holmgren says his future scenarios will help both policy makers and activists come to terms with the end of the era of growth.



While the end of growth is so unthinkable to many policy makers and economists that they use the term 'negative-growth', Holmgren says we are already entering a generations-long era of 'energy descent.' We now face less and less available energy each year, coupled with a destabilised climate.

"The simultaneous onset of climate change and the peaking of global oil supply represent unprecedented challenges for human civilisation. Each limits the effective options for responses to the other," writes Holmgren on [www.futurescenarios.org](#).

Holmgren uses a scenario planning framework to bring to life the likely cultural, political, agricultural and economic implications of peak oil and climate change.

"Scenario planning allows us to use stories about the future as a reference point for imagining how particular strategies and structures might thrive, fail or be transformed," says Holmgren

Future Scenarios depicts four very different futures. Each is a permutation of mild or destructive



“Many futurists are looking at Facebook, robot pets and other i-fads, whereas David has been studying a much bigger picture. He works from the fundamental resource and environmental constraints, and I’m convinced that he’s got his assumptions right where others have them very wrong. He has followed through with unusual insight, drawing on 30 years of permaculture thinking, which I would say makes him the most important futurist in the world right now,” said Adam Grubb founder of Energy Bulletin (www.energybulletin.net.)



“These aren’t two dimensional nightmarish scenarios designed simply to scare people into environmental action. They are compellingly fleshed out visions of quite plausible alternative futures which delve into energy, politics, agriculture, cultural and even spiritual trends. They help us reconcile our own competing fears and hopes for the future, and to consider the best strategies for adapting to a changing world,” says Grubb.



Holmgren says “we will need resilience and adaptability in the face of radical change.”

‘Energy Descent’

Holmgren coined the term ‘energy descent’ in 2005 as a less negatively loaded way than ‘decline’ or ‘collapse’ for describing a future defined by constantly diminishing energy production.

“I chose the word ‘descent’ because it implies a long and sustained process through which it is possible to survive and even thrive. While energy descent does suggest the demise of globalised industrial civilisation, that process will play out over many decades, if not centuries. For individuals, households, organisations and communities focused on socially and ecologically adaptive design, energy descent is as much an opportunity as an obstacle. Realistic assessment of the larger forces at work in the world helps empower us to better refine our strategies.”

About Permaculture

Permaculture is an environmental design framework modelled on the patterns and relationships found in nature, yielding an abundance of food, fibre and energy for provision of local needs.

About David Holmgren



Holmgren co-wrote the first permaculture text *Permaculture One* in 1976 with Bill Mollison (published in 1978). With his 2002 book *Permaculture: Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability* David re-emerged from the relative shadows as the leading intellectual force of the permaculture movement. Rob Hopkins, founder of the popular Transition Towns initiatives in the UK, described *Principles and Pathways* as “the most important book of the last 15 years.”

David, his partner Su Dennett, and their son Oliver live at ‘Melliodora’ a small permaculture demonstration property in central Victoria, Australia where they are self sufficient in fruit, vegetables and animal products and provide most of their own energy needs.

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