

Enough, *go leor*, plenitude

caring sufficiency
instead of
extractive excess and misery

personal and political

coming home

Enough interweaves

Ecology: systems, connection, interdependence, diversity, polycultures, the value of 'ordinary'

Ethics: a moral compass of equality, sharing, sufficiency for all; ethical thrift; politics

Aesthetics: beauty of limits and of diversity; conviviality; joy; satisfaction of the 'sweet spot' /finding 'home'; what needs to shrink, what needs to grow?

Ecological economics: sane, humane; fitting the capacity of the earth; serving people

The consequences of ignoring enough

The **ecological ceiling** and the **social foundation** are breached and safety is compromised (Kate Raworth, Doughnut Economics)

-- biophysical and socioeconomic **shocks and breakdowns** – already happening – we don't know how they will play out over time

Why does enough get ignored?

- Cheap fossil fuels (until recently)
- Money moving easily around the world
- Most money is lent into existence, with interest, by private institutions, economies have to expand to service debt
- Speculation on land values -- high land /house /rent prices
- People have to constantly increase their 'productivity', often in useless or harmful jobs (Margrit Kennedy), regardless of social or ecological costs

Political decisions let this happen

The global food system: a significant point to examine, because everybody eats: agriculture and food are both personal and political

Rich countries

- concentrate on capital-intensive, low-labour, mechanisable, transportable commodities for export – eg wheat, maize, beef, dairy, rice (65% of global cropland devoted to 10 crops)
- minimise the numbers working in farming
- ‘outsource’ labour-intensive farming to poor countries, where labour is cheap and regulations may be less stringent -- large numbers of poor people, mostly far away, invisible

Intelligent agriculture of enough

Farmers are not a homogeneous group, but many have been encouraged into this global system and have taken on debt in order to 'compete'

The way of enough:

job-rich fossil-free agriculture (mostly horticulture): useful rewarding work providing one of life's essentials.

Aim for about 20% of population involved in growing and preparing food for local populations

aim for adequate output with no fossil fuels

La **Via Campesina** -- promoting small diverse farms all over the world, food sovereignty,. **Irish Affiliate is Talamh Beo**

Getting there: Ease pressures to expand, for everybody (next slide)

What might be 1:

Lessening the pressures to expand and earn (for everyone): immediately do-able 'enough' measures – political decisions

- **Social wage**: basic income, public services, housing, transport, other amenities (public luxuries); decrease pressures to maximise one's productivity; go beyond 'survival/firefighting' mode
- **Commons-based taxes** -- starting with site-value taxes (SVTs) -- curb speculation on property values and associated high prices /rents
- **Debt reconstruction** – with conditions
- Prevent land-grabs and re-possession; keep land in use for farming

All in the context of strict environmental regulation and a massive educational programme

What might be 2.

Harder-to-achieve 'enough' measures: political caps and management upstream in economy

- **Cap and Share** – hard and declining cap on fossil fuels, dividends for all – economy has to adapt, with appropriate supports (BOGA – Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance is a start)
- **Caps** on extraction of other resources
- Cap on monetary **wealth** and asset accumulation
- **Public money systems** / debt-free money / public stakeholder banking / governments actively manage the supply of money in the economy – Eurozone task

How likely are we to see such measures? What is and what might be?

Standing in the gap between what is and what might be: active, mature citizen-leaders engaged in sufficient, simultaneous

Coping: quality of attention to oneself and to others; rest; renewal; health; appropriate load, speed and rhythm; kindness; leaving margins; even more important with increasing breakdowns

Critiquing: close attention with our whole selves to what is really going on; not denying or playing down; who benefits from stories about progress, wealth, success? Economic literacy (but: paralysis of analysis)

Resisting: refusing dominant stories and practices; 'tell the truth'; strike; act with other people

Creating/ crafting / building/ pioneering / participating in communities and projects of sufficiency and care; political activism; building culture of enough

Messy: like a household
– oikos

-- simultaneous
attention to multiple
tasks and concerns

-- personal autonomy
and healthy democratic
systems – connected,
interdependent

-- **reconciliations** rather
than **resolutions**
– like a civic republic



Resources / reading

Recent Feasta working paper: **Land, Labour, Housing, Money, Farms: Moving the economic goalposts of Irish agriculture**

<https://www.feasta.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/202205-Feasta-ag-goalposts.pdf>

Chris Smaje *A Small Farm Future: Making the Case for a Society built around local economies, self-provisioning agricultural diversity and a shared earth*. Chelsea Green: 2020

<https://finalstraw.org/en/> The Final Straw, a film about natural farming